CONSTRUCTIONS OF GANG MEMBERSHIP AMONG HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH

BRIAN EDUARD VAN WYK

Thesis presented in fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Master of Science (Psychology) at the
University of Stellenbosch

Supervisor: Ms. W.H. Theron

March 2001

STATEMENT

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this thesis is my own original work, and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it at any university for a degree.

Signature   Date

ABSTRACT

The problem of gangsterism in the Western Cape is taking on huge proportions especially among high school youth. Previous studies found that the initial expectations of gang members and their actual experience of gang membership differed. An ethnographic study was done with high school pupils from a semi-urban setting in the Western Cape who were gang members to find out how they constructed meaning out of their membership to the gangs. Transcripts of unstructured interviews with five participants were analysed using Strauss and Corbin's method of Grounded Theory. The analysis showed that the pupils from this setting predominantly joined the gangs because they were exposed to the gang members, who operated in the same streets that they live in, and as a result received much more positive information about the gang from their friends. They chose to remain committed to the gang because the gang members were perceived as being very supportive, providing for them financially, emotionally (by giving them acceptance) and physically (protecting them). The study found that conflict was a major part of the gang life or culture. Members could not escape the violent gang activities, despite all their attempts to make peace. The gang culture which resembled that of the prison gang culture, was perpetuated and sustained by the persistent group dynamics and processes that imposed social roles and expectations on members. The members became more deviant in behaviour out of loyalty to the gang. Contrary to current beliefs on the causes of gangsterism, the present study found that social control and feelings of relative deprivation had no conscious influence on the participants' decision to become gang members. The research suggests that future gang intervention should seek to develop programs around providing alternative modes of support to youth at risk.

OPSOMMING

Die bendevraagstuk in die Westelike Kaap neem groot afmetings aan onder die jeug van verskeie plaaslike hoërskole. Vorige studies het getoon dat die aanvanklike verwagtinge van die jeug en hulle werklike ervaring van bendelidmaatskap verskil het. 'n Etnografiese ondersoek is geloods waarin hoërskoolleerlinge uit 'n semi-stedelike gebied van die Westelike Kaap betrek is om die betekenis van bendelidmaatskap te konstrueer. Die ongestruktureerde onderhoude met vyf deelnemers is aan die hand van Strauss en Corbin se metode van analise ontleed. Die daaropvolgende analise het getoon dat hulle hoofsaaklik by 'n bende in hul woonbuurt aangesluit het omdat hulle baie blootstelling aan, en positiewe terugvoer van die bendelede gekry het. Die deelnemers het verkies om lojaal teenoor die bende te bly omdat die bende hulle emosionele (aanvaarding), fisiese (beskerming) en finansiële ondersteuning gebied het. Die huidige studie het gevind dat konflik 'n integrale kern van die bendekultuur gevorm het. Ten spyte van die vele pogings wat bendelede aangewend het om vrede te bewerkstellig, kon hulle nie daarin slaag om die geweldadige akitiwiteite te stuit nie. Hierdie bendekultuur wat sterk ooreenstem met die tronkbende-sisteem is in stand gehou deur groepsdinamika wat sekere sosiale rolle en verwagtinge op lede afgedwing het. Bendelede het groter gedragsafwykings getoon soos wat die lojaliteit aan die bende toegeneem het. In teenstelling met algemene bevindings betreffende die oorsprong van bendelidmaatskap, het hierdie studie getoon dat sosiale beheer en die ervaring van relatiewe deprivasie geen noemenswaardige invloed gehad het nie. Daar word voorgestel dat programme vir intervensies moet konsentreer op alternatiewe vorme van ondersteuning vir hierdie "riskante" jeug.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Much praise to the LORD who inspired and gave the idea for the study.

To the people who helped to grow this study to fruition:

- My supervisor, Ms Theron - for her patience and support at just the right time;

- Mario Smith, my research consultant – thanks for understanding my language;

- The principal and staff of Cloetesville secondary school – in particular Mr Lynons who was really helpful;

- The participants - for their time and trust;

- Basil Arendse, Chris Ferndale, Lira Franken, Ds. Nel, Wilfred Scharf, Solomon Staggie – for giving the time to speak to me;

- Shophar Christian Church and Medical Research Council - for providing infrastructure;

- The Titus family – for allowing me to borrow your car;

- Heinrich Titus, Marieka Joubert, Marniel Botha and Leslie Swartz – for proofreading the scripts;

- To all those who constantly asked me how far my thesis was;

- My Mom – you were a constant source of encouragement;

- Hester van der Walt – for your support and understanding, as well as technical advice;

- Victoria – for seeing me through the last phase.

This thesis is dedicated to:

- *my sister Laeticia – you have a bright future ahead of you. Keep on looking up.*

- *all those people we see sweeping the streets, cleaning the halls and doing all the menial tasks for very little compensation – you are the real crimefighters of South Africa.*

CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

As in any developing country (nation) we are faced with probably one of the greatest challenge in our history other than apartheid. That challenge is <u>crime</u>... In Natal it takes the form of political violence, in Gauteng it takes the forms of mass slaughterings, hijacking and bank robberies. In the Eastern Cape it takes the form of taxi violence... In the Western Cape it is characterised by GANGSTERISM (Kinnes, 1995a, pp.1-2).

Thousands of teenagers, who are resident on the Cape Flats, are members of street gangs participating in a variety of delinquent acts (Pinnock, 1985). Since 1986 there has been a significant increase in the activities and membership of street gangs in the Western Cape (Schärf, 1990). Within a decade gang membership grew to between 80 000 and 100 000 constituting about sixty gangs (Healy, 2000).

Gangsterism has embedded itself in the culture of the people living on the Cape Flats. A British Broadcasting Corporation documentary made about gangsterism on the Cape Flats, described this region as the "Cape of Fear" as a result of the reign of terror that gangs exercised in these townships. These gangs were violent in nature. More than half of all attempted murder charges in several communities or townships of the Western Cape were gang-related (Kinnes, 1995a). Crime rates escalated within the greater Cape Town area. C. Ferndale (personal communication, July 25, 1996) of the Western Anti-Crime Forum reported that gang syndicates use members of street gangs to drive their illegal operations. The syndicates fund the gang wars by supplying the street gangs with guns and ammunition to drive out rival gangs within their neighbourhoods. Innocent people die in drive-by shootings as the rage of the street gangs is enflamed in the quest to take possession of their respective territories. The streets of Cape Town have become unsafe to its own residents, especially after dark. Residents, who stayed in the "hot spots" of violence, are not safe even inside their own houses!

The gangs invade the local high schools harassing and robbing other pupils on the school grounds (Allie, 1996). The pupils graffiti the walls and furniture to signal their gangs' presence in the schools (Cantrell & Cantrell, 1993). Gang fights break out on the school grounds as each gang is set on making the school grounds, which is neutral ground, their gang's territory. Mail & Guardian (1998) reported that the classroom has become the nurturing ground of South African's violent crime and that this is the place where gang wars start. The teachers are not skilled enough to deconstruct these attitudes that tend towards violence. Burke (1991) also reported that in the United States of America teachers had similar difficulty in enforcing discipline on the pupils because those that were gang members would threaten and harass them. Various schools on the Cape Flats are forced to employ security personnel to ensure the safety of the pupils and school staff.

Several communities tried to organise themselves in attempts to break the grip of fear that the gangs have on the residents, but with mixed success (Kinnes, 1995b). Most of these communities do not possess the necessary resources to stem the surge of gangsterism. The gangs are much more organised than the community leaders. In these economically deprived communities the gangs portray images of power, success and wealth. C. Ferndale, the director of the Western Cape Anti-crime Forum, (personal communication, July 25, 1996) reported that some gangs would even sponsor local junior soccer teams. Furthermore, they would provide food supplies for the widows staying in the areas in which they operated. Businesses that comply with the gang's requests and demands receive protection against other gangs.

Kinnes (1995c) said that gang members and gangs have become something of a fad to many teenagers. Children observe the lives of these gang leaders and aspire to become gang leaders too when they grow up. The syndicates use the teenagers and children for drug peddling and other minor roles in their criminal activities. The youth are drawn into the gang by the prospects of easy money and flashy lifestyles, which eventually leads to many of these youth dropping out of school both voluntarily and involuntarily. Some get expelled from schools because of delinquent behaviour on the school

grounds. Others choose to become fully-fledged gang members and make their living by robbing other people and engaging in other criminal activities, despising the hope of pursuing a white-collar job by completing their education. Many end up in juvenile institutions. Others lose their lives prematurely in gang fights and clashes with the police. The youth of the Cape Flats and greater Cape Town area are at high risk of becoming gang members, and measures have to be implemented to resolve the problem of gangsterism (Healy, 2000).

1.1   MOTIVATION FOR THE RESEARCH

Social scientists' knowledge about youth gangs and how their membership differed from non-gang youths is limited and controversial (Dukes, Martinez & Stein, 1997). It seems as if little has changed since Johnstone (1983) reported that fifty years of research on juvenile street gangs contributed little towards understanding this phenomenon. It is agreed that certain types of settings enhance the formation of gangs; yet no causal relationship has been proven between any of these factors and the joining and forming of gangs (Clark, 1993; Pinnock, 1990; Thrasher, 1936; Yablonsky, 1962). There is little agreement on the classification of gangs (Winfree, Bäckstrom & Mays, 1994). Theory has to be developed to explain how and why different types of gangs are formed and why individual gang members differ from each other in terms of the level of gang involvement.

Professor W. Schärf of the University of Cape Town's Criminology department (personal communication, February 22, 1996) stated that there has been no psychological investigation into what motivates a youth from the Cape Flats to join a gang. Most studies on gangsterism done in the Western Cape dealt only with the criminal aspects of gangs. Almost two decades ago Johnstone (1983) stated that the process of gang recruitment was not fully understood. W. Schärf confirmed that social scientists in the present decade could still not explain the difference between youth that are drafted into street gangs, and those that are not recruited successfully. The question on why some youth become gang members while others opt to become street children has not found any explanations. He suggested that explorative studies be

undertaken into the differences in the structures of street gangs and street children. In this regard Matza (cited in Pinnock, 1990) previously stated that *"the process of becoming deviant makes little human sense without understanding the philosophical inner life of the subject as he bestows meaning upon the events and material that beset him" (p.3).* Therefore, to answer the first question of why youth choose to become gang members, research must seek to explore and study the world of the gang member as the gang member views it. The contemporary resurgence in gang activities and its criminal impact have to be viewed from the gang member's perspective. Social psychology provides powerful theories to view the gang member within the context of the gang (Taylor, Peplau & Sears, 2000). Schärf proposed that gangs on the Cape Flats should be studied from a social psychological perspective.

To fight gangsterism there has to be a *"systematic, concerted and sustained effort from all communities if it is to succeed"* (Kinnes, 1995b, p.8). Any intervention policy that purposes to counter gangsterism must address the unmet developmental needs of children and adolescents who are the potential gang members (Healy, 2000). Thus the needs of the youth of South Africa that are at risk have to be searched out. McConnell (1994) found that American high school students' knowledge of gangs tend to be very broad and reliable. He found that the label, *gang member,* is a social status that defines the way certain young people within a community are perceived and dealt with by adults in that community. Takata and Zevitz (1990) also found that these perceptions tended to be stereotyped and biased because it is informed by the official perceptions of law enforcement, social workers and the media. In South Africa a similar pattern of discrimination against youth occurs as noted in Schmid's report (1995) which describes how youth offenders have become the target of the public's anger when the Correctional Services Act[1] was amended in 1995. In the Western Cape labelling of youth as *gangsters* by professional workers create negative images of the residents of these townships. This led to the creation of 'delinquent areas' as modelled by the renaming of the Cape Flats as the *"Cape of Fear"* (Van Breda & Vernon, 1996). The consequent discriminatory acts against the youth have bred a delinquent subculture of gangsterism on the

---

[1] The amendment prevented the detention of children for more than 48 hours.

Cape Flats similar to the process described by Gill (1977) which happened in Britian. The attempts from the judicial systems failed to stem the resurgence of gangsterism, because the real issues of the youth were not addressed (Dissel, 1998).

The present study attempted to provide insight into the thoughts and emotions of those young people with behavioural problems who are disregarded by their own communities and are being labelled as gangsters. The researcher explored the gang problem as experienced in a small township in the Western Cape to understand the factors that contributed to the decision of scholars in this community to join the gangs and, once joined, the decision to remain a gang member. The researcher purposed to stimulate further research in other townships in order to break down destructive stereotypes that permeate perceptions and interventions aimed at resolving the gang issue in the Western Cape. A further goal of the present study was to empower future intervention programmes for youth at risk with knowledge of how teenagers view gangs and gang membership.

In the present study the gang problem in the Western Cape was explored and described at the hand of the specific experiences of gang members who were pupils at a local high school in a semi-urban setting. Several social psychological theories that are frequent in non-South African literature on gangs were briefly described and tentatively tested to see if they would provide adequate explanations to the social construction of gang membership among school-going gang members from a township in the Western Cape. Youth in the Western Cape were placed in the context of the youth of South Africa at large for the purpose of easing the process of drawing of inferences about gangs and youth in other areas in South Africa. The present study therefore aimed to provide a thorough description of the development of gangsterism and gang interventions in South Africa to provide a good contextual understanding to the specific setting as is common in the tradition of ethnographic studies. To stay true to the data, no attempt was made to translate the abovementioned information in social psychological terminology, i.e. by translating the verbatim interviews into psychological meaningful units.

1.2 AIMS

The aims were to:

i. Describe how youth from a high school in a semi-urban setting construct gang membership.

ii. Describe the attitudes/perspectives of youth prior to, and, after joining the gang.

iii. Provide a contextual description of the broader setting wherein gangs in the Western Cape operate.

iv. Explore social psychology theories on groups and tentatively test whether they provide adequate explanations to the social construction of gang membership by adolescent gang members.

v. Counter stereotypes and discrimination through providing information that would facilitate better understanding of the mindset of the youth gang members.

vi. Provide stimulus for further research on gangs and make recommendations for future gang intervention initiatives.

2. CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

This chapter seeks to clarify a few concepts that relate to the current investigation into gangs in the Western Cape. In the first place, *youth* is defined in the broader South African context. Secondly a few working definitions of *gangs* and *gangsterism* are related. Finally the researcher defines the concepts, *culture* and *subculture,* as these phenomena are very pertinent to the study of gangs.

2.1 YOUTH IN SOUTH AFRICA

The task of defining youth in South Africa is indeed a complicated one because South African society is very complex. It varies greatly in class, race, culture, language, gender and generation. South Africa is the only country in the world with nine official languages in its Constitution. Even prior to this Cross (1993) conceptualised the complexities that arise as a result of different ideologies that are present within each culture as seen manifest in the numerous dialects which exist in each of the now official languages of the country. We will consequently look at a few commonly used definitions of youth and see how these concepts apply to the South African context. Drawing from the psychology literature we will look at youth from Erikson's (1950) definition of the psychosocial developmental stages in life. South African literature portrays a more political view on youth (Freeman, 1993). We will explore the *youth culture*. Youth has been commonly described as *Generation X* by writers in the media (Codrington, 1998). An introductory philosophical discussion is put forth from a generational theory perspective to define *Generation X*.

2.1.1 Adolescence

Most first-world psychology literature defines youth as the boundaries of adolescence, which are from the onset of puberty (which is around 12 years of age) to around the early twenties (Freeman, 1993). Erikson (1950) proposes that the psychosocial development of humans can be divided in eight stages. The underlying assumption is that these stages follow a biological plan for growth that allows each function to emerge in a systematic way until the fully functional organism has developed. He defines adolescence as the stage that spans the ages 12 to 22 years.

Newman and Newman (1987) refine Erikson's definition of the psychosocial stages to distinguish between *early adolescence* (12 to 18 years) and *later adolescence* (18 to 22 years). Early adolescence corresponds to the period where the adolescent undergoes physical maturation in his or her body, as well as emotional development and changes in his/her thought processes (formal operations). In westernised societies this period corresponds to the teenager's time spent in high school. In this period the teenager experiences a crisis to resolve his or her group identity. Peer pressure is commonly experienced in this period because membership in a peer group is a central task. Later adolescence corresponds with the period a young person spends in a tertiary institution or in some form of training or preparation for his/her career. In this phase the young person has to find his/her individual identity and meaning in life. Choosing a career path is integral to this process.

Although this approach holds merit, its application to the diverse South African social context is troublesome. Firstly, it assumes that children start school at the "right" age and secondly, that learners pass every grade the first time round. African children from rural areas enrol for school later than six years, because many of them have to attend to sheep on the rural farms in the homelands for a couple of years (S. Fipaza, personal communication, July 28, 1996). When considering the business centre of Cape Town, one might get the impression of a thriving first world country, yet the townships that surround this megalopolis depict the character of a third world country (Pinnock, 1982). In these townships one finds the squatters, the overcrowding and the poverty of Africa. Its residents, who are predominantly Coloured or African, do not own property or capital, and the majority is unskilled or semi-skilled labourers. Thus Pinnock argued that South Africa could more aptly be described as a *developing country*. Sixty percent of the youth stay in rural areas or suburbs (townships) under socioeconomic conditions that are similar to that of third world countries. Freeman (1993) argued that a first world definition would not be appropriate for the youth of South Africa because this definition assumes stable socioeconomic conditions for development, which is mostly found in the middle and upperclass white societies.

2.1.2 Youth as a political categorisation

Historically *youth* in South Africa denoted a political categorisation that referred to politically active or politicised young people (Freeman, 1993). *Youth activists* included individuals who were much older than adolescents. Individuals who engaged in joint political activities such as boycotts, rallies and riots, became part of the *youth culture* even though they may not have reached their puberty yet. The African National Congress Youth League who posed their upper age limit for joining as thirty-five years of age, also regards youth as a political categorisation (African National Congress, 1996). The veracity of this demarcation is demonstrated by the National Youth Commission (1998) which defined the scope of youth as the age span between 15 and 35 years of age. It is estimated that black youth constitute 75% of the total youth population in South Africa (Malan, 1997). The black and coloured youth of South Africa were at the forefront of the struggle against apartheid. The period between 1970 and 1990 was hallmarked by political unrest and "states of emergency" announced by the government of the day. The youth population of South Africa born in the abovementioned period grew up not only being very politically aware, but being forced to participate in the political struggle (Cross, 1993). According to Freeman, the crisis of the struggle shaped the identity of most of the youth growing up in the townships. These politicised young people found their identity in their participation in politics and the choices they made relating to their degree of involvement rather than being dominated and influenced by social roles that were tied to age-defined categorisation.

Cross (1993) noted that even the abovementioned definition of *youth* is full of complexities because the number of politically active youth and the degrees of political involvement varied at different times in history. He stated that the underlying reasons why the youth engaged in political activities were also different. Motives varied from emotionalism to rational well worked out ideological understanding; from peer pressure to forced participation. White youth grew up in this time period unaffected for the most part by the political turmoil in the country. That meant that their identity forming was not primarily influenced by politics. The psychosocial development of most white youth could continue without major social interruption. On the other hand, the political categorisation suits the black youth population better than the first-world psychological definition. Which ever way one looked at the South

African scenario, the legacy of apartheid and the struggle against the apartheid government had to be kept in reckoning when attempting to explain and describe the youth of this country. Freeman (1993) correctly stated that the depths of impact that the political struggle had on the development of the youth of South Africa are yet to be uncovered!

2.1.3 Generation X

Codrington (1998) described the youth of South Africa as Generation X. Generation X (or Xers for short) is the generation that was born between 1970 and 1990. That means he classifies youth as those between the ages of 10 and 30 years. This correlated well with the National Youth Commission's (1998) definition of youth as mentioned previously. Codrington characterises this generation by the fact that they were:

> *old enough to remember apartheid and be judged by history to be a part of it, and yet not quite old enough to have been involved in any form of struggle against or on the side of apartheid. White Xers would have just missed out on national service, and black Xers would not have been old enough to join the school children of 1976 who demanded "liberation before education" (p.16).*

The above-mentioned statement exposed the root to the misunderstanding that surrounded the South African youth. The youth were defined and judged at the hand of criteria that they had no control over: *politics*. A description of Generation X posits a philosophical framework wherein South African youth can be placed. In the next chapter a broader discussion on the characteristics of Generation X is given and evaluated at the hand of contemporary studies that were done in South Africa.

In this study *youth* will be conceptualised as a combination of all three abovementioned definitions, because individually each one fails to cover and define the whole scope of South African youth. However, collectively these definitions provide excellent coverage of the youth in terms of the pscyhosocial, political/philosophical and sociological factors of the South African society. The participants in the current study will be evaluated on a continuum using these dimensions portrayed in these definitions.

2.2 GANGS AND GANGSTERISM

2.2.1 The gang

According to Siegel and Senna (1981) a gang can be defined as "*any congregation of youths who have joined together to engage in delinquent acts*" (p.7). The above-mentioned definition is criticised because it does not make a distinction between specific structures such as street gangs and street children (W. Schärf, personal communication, February 22, 1996). Street children live in small, informal groups on the streets where they engage in criminal activities for meeting their basic needs (Peacock & Theron, 1992). According to Pinnock (1980) street gangs have rigid group structures and definite hierarchies. Polsky's diamond (see Appendix A) sketched a good example of the hierarchy of the street gangs (B. Arendse, personal communication, June 12, 1996).

Miller (cited in Palmer & Tilley, 1995) defined a youth gang as "*a self-formed association of peers, bound together by mutual interests, with identifiable leadership, well-developed lines of authority, and other organizational features, who act in concert to achieve a specific purpose or purposes* "(p.213). Gang members are seen as humans, with desires and needs that are similar to those of the rest of society. Their choice to engage in such a risky behaviour is motivated by the rewards they get from their gang membership. The drawback of this definition of a gang is that it does not accommodate the South African definition of youth (National Youth Commission, 1998). American studies confirm that gang members are predominantly males between the ages of 15 and 35 years (Dukes et al., 1997; Lasley, 1992). With the age differences ranging up to twenty years, gang members could hardly be called 'peers.' Furthermore, Takata and Zevitz (1990) have shown that leadership within American street gangs are not always as clearly defined as portrayed by the adult community. B. Arendse (personal communication, June 12, 1996) confirmed that the structure of gangs on the Cape Flats has a measure of fluidness to it since the members would drift in and out of gangs as they and/or their families relocated from area to area. He suggested that the various membership types as portrayed in Polsky's diamond (see Appendix A) are more important in terms of their functions rather than their fixed positions.

The present study used the definition of a gang that was given by the California Council on Criminal Justice (cited in Hochhaus & Sousa, 1988). They define a gang as a *"group of people who interact at a high rate among themselves to the exclusion of other groups, have a group name, claim a neighbourhood or other territory, and engage in criminal and other anti-social behaviour on a regular basis"* *(p74)*. This definition captured the essence of street gangs of the Western Cape as confirmed by Chris Ferndale (personal communication, July 25, 1996):

1) *Group* – they are a group of individuals that act together.

2) *Exclusivity – in-group vs. out-group; group cohesion is strong within the gang, while feelings of hostility are shared towards other groups/gangs.*

3) *Gang name* – they have a distinct group identity that is signified by their name.

4) *Territorial* – they occupy a specific area of the neighbourhood where they exercise their rule as a gang. This is usually marked by graffiti on the public walls.

5) *Conflict with society* – their actions are deviant and therefore clash with society's accepted norms of behaviour and values.

2.2.2 Gangsterism

This term referred to the actions or methods of gangsters. The New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary (1993) defines a "gangster" as a member of a gang of violent or armed criminals. Thus the reference to *gangster* or *gangsterism* would denote the violent and criminal nature of the gang or gang member. Alternately the term gangsterism is loosely used in the current study to refer to the phenomenon of *being a gang member and engaging in gang-related activities*.

2.2.3 Types of gangs

Worldwide it is acknowledged that there are different types of gangs (Winfree et al., 1994). In the Western Cape there are several groupings of gangs distinguished by the territories that they occupy and their hierarchy and membership constitution as well as their activities (Pinnock, 1982). Pinnock did an extensive study on the street gangs of Cape Town to trace the roots of gangsterism on the Cape Flats, that has

become the textbook for all subsequent researchers on gangsterism in the Western Cape (Douglas-Hamilton, 1995; Healy, 2000). He identified five types of gangs that were prevalent in especially, but not exclusively, the Coloured communities of the Western Cape. These are the corner kids, defense gangs, reform gangs, Mafiosi and syndicates.

(a) Corner kids

According to Pinnock (1982) the *corner kids* are the most common or noticeable types of gang. They are the groups of young people standing on the street corners or hanging around at shops. They have to be distinguished from the street children who sleep on the streets because they do not have a home or made a choice not to stay at home. Street children decide to make the streets their *home* (Peacock & Theron, 1992). *Corner kids* typically have homes to go to. They generally choose to stay/sleep at home. They hang around on street corners and shops as a past time not as a mode of physical survival as was the case with street children. *Corner kids* in general are better dressed and cared for. *Corner kids* form the gang because their homes are typically overcrowded or unpleasant conditions prevail there. These gangs are formed from their association that started in instititual playgroups.

(b) Defense gangs

Defense gangs are formed in response to the increasing incidences of violence on the Cape Flats (Pinnock, 1982). These defense gangs traditionally consisted of older men who organized themselves to counter the threats of invading gangs in the neighbourhood. The youth also form gangs out of the need for physical defense as well as their growing demand for certain commodities. According to Gastrow (1998) defense gangs are traditionally involved in pay-packet robbery, house-breaking and theft of firearms from motor vehicles.

(c) Reform gangs

Reform gangs have the characteristics of defense gangs but differ in the respect that they are formed in reformatories, schools of industry and prisons (Pinnock, 1982). These gangs have a rigid structure and a definite hierarchy. In prison, gangs are formed to protect the individuals from abuse by rival gangs. Reform gangs in prison are also commonly known as *prison gangs*. The influence of prison gangs is extended outside the confines of prison walls, influencing the behaviour patterns of gangs in the streets. The 'super gangs' of the 1970s such as the Cape Town Scorpions and the Born Free Kids were reform gangs. They operated from shebeens.

(d) Mafias

The *Mafias* are families from the old social order who operate a wide range of 'informal sector' activities, many of which are illegal (Pinnock, 1982). They are more organized than the previously mentioned gangs and run extortion rackets, do large payroll jobs (rather than simple armed robbery) and large-scale warehouse or shop thefts (rather than housebreaking). The *Mafias* can be classed as defensive class organizations within the system. Gastrow (1998) added that they also acquire drugs in bulk before reselling it to other gangs.

(e) Syndicates

According to Pinnock (1982) *syndicates* are even more organized than the Mafias. They trade in illegal merchandise (drugs) or with legal goods in illegal ways (liquor networks or shebeens) or stolen goods (cars). They are also the most profitable.

The purpose of this section was to clarify the distinctions between different classes of gangs and to provide a better understanding of the levels of participation and types of operations of gang members of the different types of gangs. The participants in the current study belonged to gangs that were either of the *corner kid-* type, *defense gangs* or *syndicates*.

2.3 CULTURE

2.3.1 Culture

Culture refers to the patterned way of life of society (Moss, cited in Van Niekerk & Meier, 1995). When people share certain forms of behaviour and ways of believing, they could be said to share a common culture. In the present study the term culture would refer to the community or to a segment of the community.

2.3.2 Subculture

A subculture is essentially a "culture within a culture" (Baker & Rubel, cited in Van Niekerk & Meier, 1995, p.70). It is a segment of the main culture that has its own unique characteristics, yet still share some of the features of the main culture. It can be defined as a *"distinct set of norms and values shared by a specific group within a society. Each subculture contains its own construction of reality, which gives meaning and order to the lives of members" (p.70).* In the present study a subculture was refered to by the name of the group and "culture" added to it. For example referring to the gang as a subculture was noted as *gang culture* rather than *gang subculture.*

3. THEORETICAL PRINCIPLES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In attempting to explain why youth join gangs, it is not sufficient to only analyse the personalities involved and the personal relationships between the relevant individuals. Allport (1924) stated that *"There is no psychology of groups which is not essentially and entirely a psychology of individuals"* (p.6). This led to a focus on searching out the "causes within the individual" where research studies did not consider the influence that the social structure has on the individual (De la Rey, 1991). De la Rey contended that the intergroup interaction that takes place within the group as well as how the group relates to other groups in the society have to be taken into consideration, if one attempts to answer the question why individuals choose to become members of that specific group. Baron and Byrne (2000) defined social psychology as the scientific field that studies the manner in which the behaviour, feelings, or thoughts of one individual are influenced and determined by the behaviour and/or characteristics of others. This implies that the properties of the gang (as a group) have to be investigated if one sought to understand why the individual members chose to become and stay members of the gang (Brown, 1988). The individual decision is influenced by the intergroup interaction that occurs between the gang and other significant groups within the community. The decisions that the gang makes collectively influence the potential member together with the decisions that the rest of the society makes.

In this chapter several theoretical principles are discussed and related to group membership and dynamics within the gang. Tajfel (1982) strongly advised that all social, cultural, economic and historical factors have to be taken into cognisance when social psychological concepts are applied to real-life social contexts. In the present study greater emphasis is placed on the group influence than on personality traits because of the predominant nature of the South African

setting, which leans more towards the collectivist culture than the individualist culture, especially in the cultural arena under study. In this section however, several theoretical orientations on group processes and personality traits are mentioned that might provide some explanation on aspects of gangsterism and gang membership based on searches on gang literature. Aspects of these theories that relate to gangs and gang membership are discussed briefly. The discussion starts with a basic outlay of the processes that happen within a group, clarifying the main concepts, and moves on to describe the theories that underpin these processes or concepts. Where necessary, multiple explanations of the group processes are offered as illustrated by different theories. The researcher then proceeds to relate the theory to the processes that draw adolescents into gang membership and/or the processes that influence the construction of gang membership among adolescents. These deductions are the researcher's own since there are few literature studies that connect gang membership processes in South Africa with theories in Social Psychology.

3.2 GROUP PROCESSES

Various South African studies have shown that the group processes are very central in the drafting of adolescents into gang membership (Douglas-Hamilton, 1995; Pinnock, 1998). Brown (1988) stated that the process of becoming part of a group could often provoke anxiety. It is for this reason that the group develops patterns of behaviour, divide tasks and adopt different roles to reduce the uncertainty experienced by the new entrant into this novel situation. These social norms, rules and expectations for behaviour in the group are crystalised into a group structure. Members are given *social roles* that signify the measure of prestige and authority that is given to each. The amount of *social status* or prestige afforded to each group member is related to his or her ability to contribute to the achievement of group goals. If a member's social role contributes greatly towards the group goals, higher social status is afforded to that member. For the group to retain its members, the *cohesiveness* between

members of the group has to be high (Taylor et al., 2000). This means the forces that push the members away from other competing groups and/or pull them closer to the group, have to be strong. Factors that influence the cohesiveness of a group are discussed under the section about *Social Learning Theory*. Brown mentions two processes that are at work when a new entrant joins a group. In the first place changes take place in the self-concept of the new group member. This process is further discussed in the section 4.3 about *Social Identity Theory*. The other process is the group's attempt to accommodate the new member through *initiation*. The rationale behind initiation is discussed in the section about *Cognitive Theories*.

3.3 SOCIAL IDENTITY THEORY

Many researchers and theorists have linked gang membership with social identity (Campbell, 1994; Cross, 1993; Freeman, 1993; Vigil, 1988). Tajfel (1982) developed social identity theory (SIT). Social identity is a central concept in social psychology (Deschamps & Devos, 1998). SIT posits that the self-concept consists of personal identity and the social identity. According to Tajfel *personal identity* refers to the individual characteristics that are more specific and more idiosyncratic, while *social identity* refers to those social features that show the individual's membership to a group or category. At any given moment the psychological processes governed by one or both of these components to varying degrees motivate the self-concept, creating the impression with the individual that he/she is moderately similar to other in-group members and moderately different from other out-group members. This theory is built around three main concepts: social identity, social categorisation and social comparison.

Social identity involves the process whereby the individual becomes a part of the gang as social group and the gang becomes a part of the individual's self-concept (Tajfel, 1982). This means that the individual behaviour might at times be according to his/her gang membership rather than out of personal

conviction. *Social categorisation* is part of the cognitive process known as categorical differentiation whereby objects are grouped together based on certain criteria that would determine their similarities and equivalences in actions, intentions and behaviours. These characteristics are used for the forming of different groups or categories. Similarities within the gang and differences between gangs are exaggerated or accentuated, while the differences within a gang are ignored. Tajfel claims that this process forms the root of the use of social stereotypes. The outcome of this process adds evaluative and emotional components to the perception of gangs. The individual places him/herself within a specific group, while excluding others from his/her group. Through the process of *social comparison* the evaluative dimension of gang membership is determined. One's own gang is compared to specific out-groups using some dimension of comparison. Each dimension of comparison is weighted according to the importance that the individual ascribed to that aspect. The outcome of this process is a graduation of differences, termed a *status hierarchy*. The sum of these comparisons determines the status of the gang. The perceived status of the gang (in-group) relative to other groups and gangs (out-groups) determines whether the gang membership contributes positively or negatively to the individual's social identity. If the results of the comparisons between in-groups and out-groups confer high status to the in-group, its members will have positive social identity. If the social comparison leads to a low status for the in-group, the individual will have a negative social identity. SIT postulates that individuals have a need for, and are thus motivated to strive for a positive self-concept. If the outcome of social comparison bestows a negative social identity on in-group members, these individuals will try to achieve some type of change so as to gain a positive social identity. They might leave the gang and join another group or another gang. Another attempt would be to change the status of the gang to compare more favourably with other gangs. Youth would join a gang as its gang membership would enhance the social identity of the individual. If membership to the gang establishes a negative social identity on the youth, the gang member would want to leave the gang. Others will

endeavour to change the public perception of the gang in order to gain a more favourable outcome in comparison with other groups in the community.

3.4 SOCIO-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

Tajfel's (1982) definition of social categorisation has been criticised because certain categories such as "race" are the products of social activity in specific historical contexts, rather than an expression of individual perception (De la Rey, 1991). Culture is important in understanding differences in people's behaviours because it constitutes the shared beliefs, values, traditions and behaviour patterns of the particular groups whether these groups are nations, ethnic groups, religious communities, youth gangs/subcultures or college fraternities. International literature on gangs points to strong associations between gang membership and ethnic minority groups because these youth would find their ethnic identity and values come under strain from the majority groups (Calabrese & Noboa, 1995; Conquergood, 1994; Deyhle, 1998; Vigil, 1983). The norms and values of the gang culture are taught by one generation to the next through the process of *socialisation*. The gang culture presents the gang members with many pre-established social rules of behaviour with the distinct characteristics of having a life apart from the situations that gave rise to them and being able to endure beyond the demise of those situations (Ross & Nisbett, 1991). Ross and Nisbett distinguish between (1) individualised culture and (2) collectivist culture. In an *individualised* culture a person's behaviour is guided largely by individual goals rather than the goals of the family, work group or tribe. If a conflict arise between an individual's personal goals and the goals of the group, it is acceptable to put self-interests first. In this type of culture the gang members make their choice to become a gang member based on whether the gang will help him to realise his or her personal goals. A person's sense of self-worth is based largely on individual attributes and accomplishments, rather than membership in social groups. The gang member gains his self-worth based on the measure of prestige and status that is conferred on him by the gang. In a

collectivist culture where loyalty is emphasised, the individual has to be committed to the preservation of harmony in social relationships with members of one's group. Examples of collectivist societies are generally found in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Cultural norms and values are emphasised. This means that group goals are expected to take priority over individual preferences, which is the case with most gangs. The self is largely defined in terms of group membership, that is, the status of the gang determines the individual's definition of himself. The socioeconomic status of the culture has an effect on the perception of the members belonging to this group (Ross & Nisbett, 1991). People of lower socioeconomic status are more likely to place the locus of control outside of them by referring to external causes when explaining events that pertain to them. Gang members would justify their status by claiming to be victim of the political and economic system. Sociologists have associated gang membership in South Africa to the lack of social control in the townships (Pinnock, 1980; Schärf, 1990).

3.5 COGNITIVE THEORIES

Gang membership has been attributed to defective decisionmaking processes by which adolescents make their choices (Calabrese & Noboa, 1995). The cognitive approach assumes that adolescents are trying to arrive at meaningful impressions of whole persons rather than absorb each new piece of information separately (Taylor et al., 2000). The decision to become a gang member is thus hypothesised to be the result of a rational search of all the information gathered from their environment. Through a process called *social cognition*, adolescents gather information from their environment and make social judgements about other individuals or groups, about social roles and about their own experiences in social settings. These informations are then integrated and put together in the form of *traits*, that are enduring dispositions that gang members have towards forming certain impressions and drawing certain conclusions about the social world (Bandura, 1986). *Social memory* is

built by the process whereby the gang member stores and retrieves these traits. *Central traits* are inherently more meaningful than others and form the basis for Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance (Brown, 1988). Brown explained that though initiation is an extremely unpleasant experience for the individual, a more severe initiation leads to greater attraction to the gang. Members will deal with the inconsistencies of negative experiences in the gang by relating these to their initiation experience by reasoning "*if I went through all that to become a member of this group, it must be really attractive for me*" (p.25). In general people will overlook the negatives about gang membership in favour of those salient characteristics of the gang that they find very appealing.

According to Taylor et al. (2000) the processes of data gathering and combining social information are most often illogical because they involve the complex integration of many contributing factors. The process of gathering information by gang members can be biased by their prior expectations, which are in most cases positive. Gang members select only information about the gang life that is consistent with their initial positive expectations. For example, adolescent gang members who hang out with their gangs exclusively, have limited exposure to other social groups. The situation arises where they draw inferences about gang membership based on the information obtained from their own experience and that of other gang members mostly. Gang members are more likely to make frequent use of a few case histories about positive events that happened in the gang to base their inferences and judgements about gang membership on. These inferences would lead gang members to disregard any contrary evidence with regard to their gang. These inferences constitute the construction of gang membership for the adolescent. Negative information has a more powerful effect on the eventual inference that would be made from the data in the sense that it would even negate the overwhelming frequency of occurrence of evidence that proves the opposite (the positive). Adolescents who have a few negative experiences of rejection in society will decide to become gang members as a means to get away from the probability of this experience

being repeated, even though there might be more instances where society have shown acceptance towards the adolescent. Taylor et al. also mentioned that frequency in occurrence seems to be less influential in social cognition than good *case histories*. Adolescents will typically stay in gangs despite having numerous negative experiences as a gang member in favour of a few good things that happened with him in the gang. Stories that captivate the human imagination are powerful influencers of social cognition. Gang members tend to qualify their own inferences or judgements by quoting another, the gang leader or some senior member of the group or by relating a good gang story as a case history. Gang members love to tell stories of their battles to each other and these stories powerfully influence and attract current and potential members.

According to *Lay personality theory* people move very quickly from the observable information to personality trait inferences (Ross & Nisbett, 1991). This tendency to infer personality traits from people's appearance and behaviour occurs rapidly, spontaneously and automatically from the first moment of observation. The way gang members look and act are clear indicators to the community of their gang status and to which gangs they belong. These trait inferences contain evaluations of the adolescents in terms of their task-related qualities or intellectual competence and their interpersonal or social qualities. Gang members are evaluated by the rest of the community on the basis of their gang membership status. In similar fashion gang members evaluate other adolescents and society based on their appearance and behaviour that describes them as good (which is bad), weak and passive. The gang members infer on themselves traits of being bad (which is good), strong and active. Taylor et al. (2000) remarked that once personality traits inferences about the meaning of another's behaviour are made, those inferences take on a life of their own. Trait inferences persist long after the information on which they were originally based has been forgotten. Impressions made in one context are extended to most other situations and even to other seemingly unrelated characteristics.

Taylor et al. (2000) mentions two ways in which individuals handle mixed impressions. The *averaging principle* explains that when mixed impressions are formed about the group then the value of every individual trait is scored and the average of the traits determines the outcome of the over-all evaluation, whether the adolescent find group membership fulfilling or not worth his while. The other method was motivated by people's tendencies to form evaluations that are internally consistent, even when they have only a few pieces of information. This means that people are categorised as either good or bad (not both), and that other traits are perceived in a manner that is consistent with this evaluation. These principles could also be applied to the adolescent's perception of the gang as a group. The *halo effect* occurs when the gang, who is labeled as good by the gang member, is surrounded with a positive aura and other good qualities are attributed to the gang. In similar fashion the *forked tail effect* occurs when adolescents who are labeled as gang members and therefore as bad, are seen by the rest of community as having all bad qualities. Gang members on the other hand will follow the halo effect and surround fellow gang members with positive regard and attribute only good qualities to them. Thus gang members distort or rearrange information that portrays their gang negatively to minimize or eliminate the inconsistency that this latter information cause within the individual.

3.6 DECISION MAKING THEORIES

Bandura (1986) stated that people are motivated to obtain rewards and avoid costs. Adolescents calculate the costs and benefits of joining various groups and choose the one that will yield the greatest (most) benefits at the lowest cost. In this sense it could be argued that the adolescents would join gangs if they perceive that the gang holds the greatest promise of benefit to them. *Incentive theory* views adolescents' decision making as averaging the pros and cons of various alternatives. Applying this theory to gang members' actions would mean that they are motivated to join the gang in order to obtain the anticipated rewards of gang membership and to reduce the likelihood of

anticipated punishment that is associated with not joining the gang. The rewards for joining the gang come in various forms such as social, monetary, activity, status and power or self-evaluative incentives. *Expectancy value theory* considers the costs and benefits, adding an assessment of the probability that each alternative would occur. Thus decisions are based on (1) the value of each outcome, and (2) the probability that each outcome will actually result from the decision. Bandura contended that individuals are motivated to optimising the favourable outcomes. Decisions are swayed by motivational factors such as emotional reactions and personal goals and are therefore not always rational. Most persons would rarely examine all the alternatives, and thus a decision taken by adolescents *to join the gang* would be based on a limited array of possibilities. He also noted that decisions are influenced by how easy it would be to achieve the outcome. According to Calabrese and Noboa (1995) some adolescents decide to become gang members (even though this is a lesser outcome), because they can get the rewards for joining the gang (e.g. fulfillment of material needs) sooner than having to finish school and go through a longer period of training.

3.7 RELATIVE DEPRIVATION THEORY

Social comparison plays a fundamental role to the concept of relative deprivation (Olson, Roese, Meen & Robertson, 1995). Relative deprivation occurs when:

(1) Person/group perceives another group/person have something that they don't have.

(2) The person /group desires to have that object.

(3) The person/group feels entitled to that object.

(4) The person/group feels that it is acceptable to have that object.

(5) The person/group feels he/she/they is/are not personally responsible for not having that object.

Relative deprivation theory rests on the premise that people respond to their subjective perception of reality and not to the social reality itself (De la Rey, 1991). *Reference group* is the group people use as reference in formulating their values, attitudes, self-image and behavioural disposition (Appelgryn, 1991). These reference groups are a standard for evaluating their self-concept, social identity or position in society, and as a framework for their attitudes and behaviour. Group status in a society rests largely on the political and economic structure of that society. Gangs constitute the lower income group members of society who enjoy lower group status (Schurink & Schurink, 1994). Majority groups tend to enjoy higher status then minority groups. It is therefore not uncommon for the gang as a minority group to experience relative deprivation at the hand of the rest of the society (Nott, Shapiro & Theron, 1990). *Contact* with other gangs through the media, brings occasion for social comparison and provokes feelings of relative deprivation in South African gangs. The gang will then fancy themselves as *socially mobile* and strive to become just as powerful, influential and affluent as these American gangs (Hinkle, Taylor, Fox-Chardamone & Ely, 1998). If the gang compares favourably to the reference group, i.e. they perceive they have the ability to become like their American counterparts, they consider themselves upwardly mobile. Gang members will be more motivated to stay in the gang. Negative comparison to their reference group (the American gangs) leads to feelings of frustration as the individual gang members or the gang feels that their upward mobility is stunted. If relative deprivation is experienced as an individual, that individual would react by denial of these feelings of deprivation and attempt to improve his or her own position through individualistic strategies (Olson et al., 1995). An adolescent who feels relatively deprived might join the gang because he sees gang membership as a means to improve his social status. A gang member who experience relative deprivation might leave the gang if the reference group is outside of the gang, or seek promotion in the gang, if the reference group is other gang members. If the gang or individual gang members experience relative deprivation, they will respond by engaging in collective protest against those groups that invoke these

feelings of deprivation on them. Such gangs would exaggerate the problem at hand and take *social action* to restructure the social hierarchy in their community (Brown, 1988). These social actions usually amount to acts of violence and crime against society. Another attempt would be for the gang to seek to redefine their characteristic in positive terms through the process of *social creativity* (Hinkle et al., 1998).

3.8 SOCIAL LEARNING THEORY

Researchers like Winfree et al. (1994) applied elements of social learning theory to a wide variety of criminal, delinquent and deviant behaviours including gang membership. According to Winfree et al. Bandura's social learning theory elucidates that adolescents become gang members as a result of the positive and negative reinforcing they get from the community setting. The central idea to social learning theory is that the adolescent's current behaviour as a gang member is determined by his or her prior learning about that specific gang and other gangs/groups. There are three ways in which individuals learn about groups: (1) *association*, (2) *reinforcement* and (3) *observation.*

In Pavlov's classic experiment he showed how behaviour is learnt by the association that is formed between the stimulus and reward (Taylor et al., 2000). In groups where the members like one another and are connected by bonds of friendships, the group cohesiveness is greater (Bandura, 1986). He explained that the group members form a strong *association* between the friendships they have with fellow group members (the reward) and membership to the group (the stimulus). It can thus be deduced that adolescents learn that being part of the gang will mean that they will be friends with the members of the gang. The greater the prospect of finding friendships in the gang, the more likely the individual will become and remain a member of the gang. The prospect of making friends in the gang is the *interpersonal attraction* that the gang as a group has on its members or potential members. Adolescents would be less

likely to withdraw from the gang when the interpersonal attraction, and thus the cohesiveness, in the gang are high.

The *instrumental goals of the group* is another positive force that enhances the cohesiveness within a group (Bandura, 1986). If the member feels that the pursuit of the goals of the group would aid the accomplishing of his/her individual goals, then that would *reinforce* his/her decision to become and/or remain a member of that group. This results in greater cohesion between that member and the rest of the group. Adolescents, who feel that the gang is complimenting their goal needs, would be more loyal and more motivated to help the gang achieve its goals. Such a member would engage more freely and frequently in the gang's delinquent activities. Bandura also stated that when the group goals and that of the individual member are contradictory, the member will be less supportive of the group activities. Gang members who feel this way will be more likely to leave the gang or have the intention to leave the gang.

The harmonious and effective *interaction* between members of the group attracts potential members and reinforces the individual members' initial decision to become a member (Bandura, 1986). This results in greater group cohesiveness between the newly joined member and the rest of group. Outsiders who *observe* the harmonious interaction between group members, are attracted to that group. In similar fashion increased exposure by adolescents to the gang and observing the friendships in the gang, could motivate them to join the gang. Through observing existing group members finding satisfaction and enjoyment out of their membership, the potential members learn that it would be beneficial for him/her to join the group.

There are also negative forces that discourage members from leaving the gang even when they are dissatisfied with the group and their membership role (Brown, 1988). For these members the costs of, or the punishment for, leaving the gang are considered to be too high. According to Bandura the individual is

motivated to choose the option that will bring the least likelihood of punishment. Observing another gang member being punished for leaving the gang or a non-member being punished for not joining the gang, would motivate the observer to not act in the same manner. He or she would then join the gang or remain in the gang to avoid the punishment that the gang would meet out.

3.9 PSYCHOSOCIAL APPROACH

Clark (1993) has noted that the psychosocial and biological changes that adolescents experience can play a central role in the formation of deviant subcultures in this stage of their lives. Erikson's (1950) psychosocial development stages provide a good description of the experiences of adolescents and this theory could be used to explain why adolescents become gang members and why they choose to remain gang members. Newman and Newman (1987) divided Erikson's adolescence stage in two: early adolescence and later adolescence. Between the ages of 12 to 18 years of age the youth is in his/her early adolescence. The adolescent experiences the psychosocial conflict called *group identity versus alienation*. During this stage the individuals experience considerable pressure to ally themselves with a group of peers as they are spending more of their free time away from home. Adolescents seek to answer the question "*Who am I, and with whom do I belong?*" for themselves. The adolescent is confronted with his/her personal needs and values and the values held by relevant groups in the environment. The adolescent who is exposed to gangs via personal friendships and/or the nature of the neighbourhood setting, would evaluate himself within the context of the gang (if the gang is a meaningful entity to him). The adolescent's group identity crisis would be resolved by joining the gang if the outcome of the abovementioned evaluation is positively weighted in favour of the gang. As the adolescent affiliates himself with the gang, he is exposed to the pressure and social influences of the gang. The gang, in turn, expands the adolescent's feelings of self-worth and protects him from loneliness. Family conflicts can cause the

adolescent to seek the comfort and intimacy of fellow gang members. The adolescent would remain a gang member if he is willing to suppress some of his own individuality, in exchange for finding pleasure in focusing on those attributes that he shares with his fellow gang members.

CONCLUSION

All these theoretical principles have been described as possible explanations to the current inquiry. As no research has been conducted in South Africa that relate psychology theory to gang membership, the applicability of these dispositions all need to be assessed in the local South African context. To reduce the probability of the researcher being biased when analysing the phenomenon under study, qualitative tradition recommends that theoretical perspectives be reviewed only after the analysis of the data. In this chapter the researcher breaks away from this tradition to acknowledge previous research and theoretical orientations that might adequately "explain" gangsterism in the South African context, because he did not want to re-invent the wheel by seeking to develop new theory (grounded theory) where adequate theory already exists.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

Bloch and Niederhoffer (1958) noted that since the end of the Second World War every major city in North and South America, Europe, Africa and Asia have been characterised by the seemingly spontaneous development of gang behaviour among adolescents. Before evaluating contemporary studies on youth gangs, it is necessary to look at the pioneering studies that were done on youth gangs in this century. Most of the current research is rooted in and grew out of the pioneering work that was done in those classic studies by Bloch and Niederhoffer, Cohen (1955), Gill (1977), Thrasher (1936), Whyte (1943) and Yablonsky (1962). In the following section some of the issues arising from these studies are discussed.

4.1 THE HISTORY OF RESEARCH ON GANGSTERISM

The history of gang research started with Thrasher's (1936) ground breaking study on 1313 gangs in Chicago. Thrasher's study made a significant contribution to the social science literature on gangs and it still remains an exemplary model of fieldwork done in a dangerous research arena. The influence of Thrasher's research could still be felt by way of the many citations that are made of its findings and procedures by other researchers. Thrasher's contemporaries did follow-up studies into gangs as a phenomenon in the working class (Cohen, 1955; Whyte, 1943). Bloch and Niederhoffer's (1958) investigation focused on gangs as a passage to adulthood in various cultures. Yablonsky (1962) looked into issues of control in his study on violent gangs. In the next section the effect of parental control and inner control on gang formation in lower socio-economic societies will be discussed. Virtually no South African studies have been done on gangs in this period. Bloch and Niederhoffer included the "kaffirs" (a black group in South Africa) as one of the cultures that they studied but conducted it in a fairly superficial manner.

The most prominent issues found pertaining to gangs as represented by the abovementioned classical studies are the following:

4.1.1 Gangs as a working class phenomenon

Thrasher (1936) associated the economically deprived status of the communities living on the Chicago ganglands with the high prevalence of gangs in this area. Cohen (1955) followed up on this finding in studying delinquent gangs in working class societies. Cohen found that the middle class societies set standards of living that were taken on by the working class. The adolescents from the working class were pressured by the adults of their community to measure up to these standards. They were expected to achieve what the middle-class teenagers achieved without the resources that the latter had. The failing adolescent would find himself exposed to continual domination and rejection by the family and community. Gang membership was an open protest against the feelings of inadequacy that the society imposed on them. The gang members handled their failure by rejecting the values and norms that dictated that they be strong in these areas. Cohen found that the forming of the gang accompanied acts of hostility and vandalism against middle class society as well as everybody who adhered to the values of the middle class. The adolescents in his study demonstrated a culturally ingrained inability to defer the gratification of wants. The gang members wanted the same status that was inferred on the middle class without following the same route that the latter took to gain that status. Delinquency was the means to obtain status. Crime was the means that the gangs used to impose and declare their independence.

4.1.2 Gangs as informal groups

Thrasher (1936) found that gangs are formed spontaneously out of playgroups that become deviant. This deviance occurred where the culture of the society was not well established. On the Chicago ganglands the values and

norms of society were confused or diffused between the emigrant and dominant cultures. Whyte (1943) described in his study how working class men would "hang" out on the corner of specific streets, forming their own "society." Although they perceived themselves as just an informal group, other adults in the community would label them as a gang. As a result of the group's strong liking towards doing things together, a strong group subculture developed within the group. They would sit on the curbs, stand on the corner, go to the movies, play ball, smash windows and go robbing. These things were not the simultaneous expression or the magical coincidence of so many discrete impulses but each had their own history and was fully understandable apart from the others. The working class was preoccupied with toughness, smartness, excitement and freedom from constraint. These values created a leaning towards delinquency and led to crime becoming a core activity of the group's developed culture. The group's culture consisted of a set of understandings, common sentiments and common loyalties that bonded them together. Criminal activities added to the status of the individual and therefore also enhanced the manly characteristics of the adolescent.

4.1.3 A passage to adulthood

Bloch and Niederhoffer (1958) contended that across all cultures adolescents were dependent on the community for support and preparation for adulthood. In their study they found that adults in westernised societies did their best to postpone the conferring of adult status on the adolescents. These barriers caused tremendous inner strain on adolescents. Bloch and Niederhoffer interpreted gang membership as an effort by adolescents to achieve the status of adulthood under these conditions of great strain. This resulted in excessiveness in conformity, delinquency, hostility and idleness. Yablonsky (1962) added that the disapproval and opposition to these groups of American young people by their communities aided the forming of violent adolescent

gangs. These interstitial groups were integrated into violent street gangs when the playgroups conflict with the rest of the community. The gang's rituals and symbols served as symbolic equivalents to adult behaviour. Gang activities such as fighting and values like loyalty stimulated the members' striving for manhood. As Thrasher (1936) discovered, the religious practices in the cultures that Bloch and Niederhoffer studied, also held no relevance for the adolescents. Religion was like a drug to the society, and they (the adolescents) had better drugs with which to relieve their agony. This status quo left the youth frustrated with their role models. Yablonsky found that where religion lacked meaning, the gang provided its members with a code that they could embrace. This code inspired them to live and die for the gang. The gang did not pressure the members to conform to community values and principles as other members of the community did. The gang accepted its new members unconditionally. The gang-life offered many alternative activities to fill the void caused by the community's rejection of the gang member. Joining the gang empowered them to end the unwanted control that the adults exercised over them.

4.1.4 Social control and gangs

Yablonsky (1962) offered another explanation why gangsterism was more prevalent in the lower socio-economic stratum of the American society. He contended that because the parents were poor and had to work long and irregular hours, they spent little time and energy to exercising control over their children. The communities consisting of families that relocated, were still relatively new and no bonds had been forged between the residents. In the estranged relationships between residents and lack of involvement in each other's affairs the residents sorely missed the support of the extended family and friends. The children were left in the streets with little or no parental control because residents had no concern over their neighbours' chilidren. Society on the whole did not exercise the pressure of social conformity on the youth of the

community because of the parents' personal disorientation within the new environment and circumstances.

4.1. 5 Unfulfilled needs

According to Yablonsky (1962) American mass media projected ideals in the minds of the youth, to which the parents could not attain. The parents were unable to meet the adolescents' material needs/wants. There was growing frustration as a result of the conflict between the adolescents' expectations and the parents' inability to provide for those needs. These adolescents then choose to find their support system outside of the home. They join the street gangs to acquire the things they need in delinquent ways. Apart from the youth's material needs, Thrasher (1936) found that in Chicago lack of fulfillment of the youth's social needs were associated with gang forming. Many families on the Chicago ganglands were disintegrated, which left the adolescents with no family support system. Thrasher reported that adolescents felt that the values of the society were not sensitive to their needs or interests. The political system discriminated against the community leaving the area neglected and deprived of basic services. There were no recreational facilities or opportunities for the children. All these factors were contributing to the high prevalence of gangs in this area.

4.1.6 Personality disorders

Yablonsky (1962) found that the playgroups that grew up in the poor conditions of New York developed "sociopathic" personalities. They were unable to form satisfactory relationships with other groups and were thus deprived of membership and healthy involvement with more socially acceptable groups. As individuals they acted in ways that were labelled as pathological by their peers and their adults of the community. They were impulsive and aggressive because they did not learn the skill of delaying gratification. They joined a gang because

the gang propagated values and norms that accepted their "pathological" behaviours. The gangs not only accepted the behaviours of these youth, but also conferred status and power on them and thus perpetuated this type of pathological behaviour.

4.1.7 Stereotyping

Many studies have associated gangs with lower socio-economic status and working class societies. Gill (1977) showed with his description of Luke Street, a township in London, how stereotyping an area by housing officials coupled with labelling by professional workers – social workers, police and youth workers- contribute towards the creation of a delinquent area. Gill rejected the notion of a delinquent subculture, pointing to the fact that there was no consistent pattern of delinquent behaviour over a period of time. The delinquent behaviour that occurred was the result of a confluence of circumstances and situations that set off particular (delinquent) events. He argued that these were normal people with problems rather than "problem families." Stereotyping the area, and thus also the youth of that neighbourhood, caused the police to expect certain behaviour from the youth. This expectancy led to inaccurate attributions being made of the youth's behaviour. The youth would in turn react against this attribution, "proving" to the police officials what they originally perceived the youth to be – namely troublemakers. Gill illustrated how the youth changed from committing crime for self-preservation (delinquent behaviour) to violent crimes against their society in an angered response against being labelled as "vandals" by the police and other law officials. Though the youth committed crime[1] the injuries were in a sense directed against the state rather than their own society. Being wrongly accused bred anger in the young people, which led to violence and non-material crimes against their own society.

---

[1] Crime is defined as breaking the law; doing injury to the state. Social injury is described as an injury to life and property and what is valued by society.

Conclusion

In conclusion the contribution of the classical gang studies can be summarised as follows:

• Thrasher's study (1936) illustrated the importance of doing fieldwork when studying subcultures like gangs. He placed tremendous emphasis on entering the setting to study the culture of the setting wherein the gangs operate. His study inspired the works of his later contemporaries Cohen (1955), Whyte (1943) and Yablonsky (1962).

• Even though earlier studies mostly associated gangs with the lower income class, Gill's (1977) powerful description of Luke Street warns against ascribing a causal relationship between gang membership and low-income status.

• The study of Yablonsky (1962) provided tentative hypotheses for further testing the role that lack of parental control and internal factors such as the pathological personality types, play in adolescents becoming gang members.

• Whyte (1943) provided valuable insight to stimulate further research into "adult" gang members.

4.2 GANGSTERISM IN SOUTH AFRICA

Although there have been many gang investigations done in South Africa, very few studies have been published in the psychology literature. Most South African gang studies that were published were done in the sociology and criminology disciplines. Due to the scarcity of published literature on gangs, the present study draws on informal documents and personal communications from experts in various fields and organisations that are involved with gang intervention programs and actions. This section purposes to form a review on the knowledge on gangs in South Africa, and particularly the Western Cape. The

gang phenomena in South Africa were related to contemporary gang studies that were done internationally and/or locally in order to provide a psychological framework for understanding the phenomena.

The gang phenomena in South Africa will be discussed in the context of the history of *apartheid* and the out-flowing consequences thereof: *poverty*, the breaking up of the family structure, which resulted in *dysfunctional families* and the *marginalisation of the youth*. The latter had further spin-offs which are discussed under the youth's *search for social identity* and the association between *low self-image and gang membership*. Another legacy of apartheid is the inadequate education system that resulted in South African youth being drawn into gangs as a result of *poor academic performance*. Finally this section ends with a discussion of the role that *excitement* plays in drawing youth to gangs.

4.2.1 The legacy of apartheid

Apartheid legislation has greatly contributed to the growth of gangsterism in both the African and so-called coloured urban communities. Historically, the Group Areas Act, the pass laws, the migrant labour system, and the job reservation laws played a role in disturbing the careful web of internal authority and control in these areas. (Nott et al., 1990, p.3)

South African history of apartheid led to the forced displacement of a quarter of all Coloured families, a third of the Asian families and nearly a fifth of the black population (Malan, 1997). With the Group Areas relocations in the Western Cape, the poor were sealed off in single-class townships *"with no one to buy their labour or products" (Pinnock, cited in Cross, 1993, p.384)* - which meant no access for them to income opportunities. The physical networks that the residents built around them, that is the networks of streets, houses, corner shops

and shebeens, had been taken away from them. One of the greatest complaints about Group Areas removals was that individual people were removed to the Cape Flats and not whole neighbourhoods. These residents lost their businesses and properties when they were forced to relocate. They were moved to other places where they had to start all over again. The stresses that resulted from these changes brought with them psychological difficulties and skewed 'coping' behaviour. Gang functions offered the youth a substitute for what society failed to give (Kinnes, 1995b). Pinnock (1990) contended that gangsterism represented an attempt to resolve the contradictions that remain unresolved in the parent culture (unemployment and poverty), as well as retrieve the socially cohesive elements which were present in the parent culture, but was destroyed by the Group Areas Act. In this sense *"ganging was primarily a survival technique in response to the socio-economic system that reproduced poverty"* (p.384).

4.2.2 The effect of poverty

Van Niekerk and Meier (1995) stated that a deprived social environment is the single greatest cause of the emergence of sub- or counter-cultural youth movements in South Africa. A survey by Schurink and Schurink (1994) revealed that the majority of juvenile offenders in South Africa (71%) had low socio-economic status. In this regard it should be noted that the Cape Flats exhibits many of the characteristics of deprived communities in other third world countries (Pinnock, 1990). Most of the houses and flats are overcrowded. Schools are packed to the point of bursting. Street life would be the only life for these youths. Their choices are to stay inside the flat, shut off, cramped with no private space from the family; or move outside into the courtyard or street. There is a lack of space in which to play and a lack of recreational facilities, so they meet their friends on the street corners or at the shops. They form playgroups, which are very tightly area-bound. With lack of parental control, supervision and attention from adults as a result of poverty (Codrington, 1998), children from the same

street or block of flats group together to form a gang. They give their gang a name that is derived from the flat names or street names or some outstanding characteristic that the group would adhere to. This type of gang is called *corner kids*. The ages of these kids range from 10 years and upward.

4.2.3 Dysfunctional families

Malan (1997) remarked that the young people in South Africa grew up in an environment marked by family and community instability. A South African survey revealed that 45% of juvenile offenders grew up in the care of a single parent (Schurink & Schurink, 1994). A more recent survey of Malan done among matriculants indicated that 22% of white, 20% of Asian, 32% of coloured and 40% of black families were headed by females. International studies found that the prevalence of emotional and behavioural problems of adolescents in single-parent homes were two to three times higher than homes where both natural parents were present (Burke, 1991). In the Western Cape the gangs flourished in these areas where family structures have been broken down as a result of the Group Relocation Act (Pinnock, 1990). The closely grained communities on the Cape Flats were ripped up, disintegrating a whole culture. The space that these communities had won for themselves socially (the networks of kin, friendships, neighbourhood and work) had been taken away from them. These social spaces were a mixture of rights and obligations, intimacies and distances, which provided a sense of solidarity, local loyalties and traditions. These spaces that they created, represented and constituted their very form of life. Pinnock best described the situation of the communities in the Western Cape with the following analogy:

> *Like a man with a stick breaking spiderwebs in a forest. The spider may survive the fall, but he can't survive without his web. When he comes to build it again he finds the anchors are gone, the people are all over and the fabric of generations is lost. Before, there was always*

something that kept the community ticking over and operating correctly … there was the extended family; the granny and grandpa were at home, doing the household chores and looking after the kids. Now, the family is taken out of this environment where everything is safe and known. It is put in a matchbox in a strange place. All social norms have suddenly been abolished. Before, neighbours reprimanded the children who got up to mischief in the streets. Now there's nobody, and they join gangs because that's the only way to find friends. (Wollheim, cited in Pinnock, 1990, p.30)

The collapse of social control over the youth was one of the major problems facing the people from these communities. This informal control was described to John Western (cited in Pinnock, 1990) during his work on the suburb of Mowbray:

When I was 15 or 16 if we did anything rude, offhanded, in the street - like going to bars or smoking or taking a dame out - you'd get a 'pak' [slap] at night at home; they [the parents] knew about it right away … it was the old men who used to stand at the corners chatting or sit on the stoops; they'd pretend to be reading the Koran or a comic or playing karem or whatever, but out of the corner of their eye they were really watching you. (p.30)

Dissel (1998) stated that when the family becomes dysfunctional and discordant, the children leave the family home - either permanently or just begin to spend increasingly more time on the street, which gradually draws them into criminal associations. Pinnock (1990) called the gang a "surrogate" family because it acted as a support for estranged youth. An international study done by Clark (1993) confirmed that the gang is a subculture that replaces the family by providing companionship, loyalty, identity and status to its members.

In another international study Cooke and McEvoy (1997) argued that the arena of the parents of gang members is not researched well enough to deduce

that dysfunctional families are the cause of adolescents becoming gang members. They interviewed a couple of mothers who had teenagers in gangs. They found that there were gang members whose parents were loving and hard working, and who did all they could to raise their children in safety, in virtue and in health. These parents could not by themselves overcome the messages of the gang culture that pervaded the neighbourhoods and schools. In areas that were replete with gangs, what was going on outside the home was as important as what happened in the home!

4.2.4 Marginalisation of youth

Juvenile misconduct in South African can be related to marginalisation of young people from their families, schools and communities (Schurink & Schurink, 1994). Many young people have become very disillusioned with society because they have been the victims of national political and socio-cultural crises. Prior to the commissioning of the National Youth Commission in 1997, the youth have largely been alienated from the political structures of South Africa. In this state of disconnectedness from primary sources of support the youth has been conditioned by society to look out for themselves. Beaudoin (cited in Codrington, 1998) aptly remarked that *"Xers not only personally learned about the fragility of commitment but were also forced into a premature- and untutored- adulthood"* *(p.4).* Codrington stated that the youth in South Africa distrust all institutionalised authority. Malan (1997) indicated that only 16,3% of all youth belonged to a youth club and only 8,4% belonged to a cultural organisation because they are generally sceptical of all institutions. Even schools have lost their position of prominence and pre-eminence in the psyche of this generation of young people! The Green Paper on National Youth Service by the National Youth Commission (1998) reported that this state of disengagement led to a vulnerability of young people to becoming involved in antisocial behaviour. Malan reported the results of the above-mentioned state as alcohol and drug abuse, crime, and

indiscriminate and unprotected sexual activities. It was therefore not surprising that in that period in the last decade the number of street children and street gang membership have increased dramatically (Hudson, 1995; Peacock & Theron, 1992; Pinnock, 1990).

The youth of South Africa are commonly called a "lost generation" - a generation of maladjusted children. Sisulu (cited in Freeman, 1993) described them as *"militaristic automatons incapable of participating in their own destinies"* (p.158). Malan (1997) revealed that only a small percentage of South Africa's youth could be considered *"truly marginalised."* The commission led by Van Zyl Slabbert found that there was no "youth crisis" as of such and described the South African scenario rather as one where the youth were in the midst of a range of crises that pertained to broader society. A study by the Community Agency for Social Enquiry (CASE) done in 1993 found that 5% of South African youth were *'lost'*, 27% *marginalised*, and 43% were found to be *at risk*. Politically aligned youth of the day call those youth that are not politically involved, the "lost generation". According to Freeman the description "lost generation" has been attributed to various segments of South African youth according to the criteria that the perceivers imposed on the youth. In general the term "lost generation" referred to a generation that has lost its significance in society either through personal neglect or imposed deprivation.

4.2.5 The search for social identity

Across all cultures the rite of passage is a ritual led by the adults to introduce new adults to the community (Pinnock, 1990). This ritual signified the maturation of adolescents into responsible and respected adults. In many Western societies, the adults who are supposed to do this, are absent from community life. The result is that the adolescent had to seek his or her own passage to adulthood. Gangs and other subcultures provided initiation rituals

into gang membership, which fulfilled the adolescent's need for a rite of passage (Van Niekerk & Meier, 1995). Rite of passage represented the youth's need to be accepted by the adult members of society and to win their esteem.

International literature on gangs confirmed the high occurrence of gangsterism among ethnic minority groups (Calabrese & Noboa, 1995; Deyhle, 1998; Dukes et al., 1997; Vigil, 1983; Vigil, 1988). The minority groups investigated in the above-mentioned studies had the following two features in common: (1) they all lived in the poorer, neglected sections of the cities, and (2) all the adults from these communities worked in menial, low-paid industries. Thus Vigil contended that these immigrant societies were marginalised ecologically, socio-economically and socio-culturally. Many youths struggled to find their identity in either their own or the dominant culture. According to Calabrese and Noboa the gang subculture provided a refuge for the adolescents to adapt to and make sense of their living conditions that offered no hope of prosperity. In the gangs they could also fulfill their immediate needs for material commodities. Vigil found that the gang also provided avenues for frustrated youth to vent their feelings of anger and hostility. Deyhle discovered in her study of the *Breakers* that adolescents could find their identity in the gang member.

> *These breakers danced to communicate cultural solidarity, skill, and self-worth and to express an assertive response to their subordinate social position. For them, break dancing provided an arena in which to compete for success that would stand in direct contrast to the repeated failure that they experienced in classrooms. And if one believed in movies and the heroes that they produced, there was a chance for success, fame, and money, even for break dancers.* (Deyhle, p.16)

The *Americans* from Manenberg (in the Cape Flats) express their allegiance to the gang by *posturing on the street corner* - hanging out on their

turf, prowling around and displaying themselves to the community, flashing gang signs to each other (Douglas-Hamilton, 1995). Many other similarities could be found between the situation with the ethnic minority groups studied in these three studies (Calabrese & Noboa, 1995; Deyhle, 1998; Vigil, 1983) and the situation with the coloured communities on the Cape Flats. Although the coloured community is not the minority, they were the victims of oppressive legislation and social discrimination (Pinnock, 1980). They were also forced by the relocation act to live in the poor, neglected areas of greater Cape Town. Most of the inhabitants on the Cape Flats worked in the textile industries in the industrial areas. As already mentioned the coloured community also experiences the same culture conflict, unstable family situations, urban pressures and adolescent identity crisis (Pinnock, 1982; 1990). The reaction of the youth from these areas show high resemblance to the gang forming that happened in the ethnic minority groups studied by Calabrese and Naboa (1995). Gangs on the Cape Flats take on many of the characteristics of the American gangs (Pinnock, 1982). The gang culture have rooted itself in the lifestyle of the people from the Cape Flats providing alienated youth with a social identity (Kinnes, 1995b). It seems that the gang lifestyle has the similar effect of routinising and stabilising the marginal existence of the adolescents on the Cape Flats, thus providing them with a social identity as Vigil found with the Mexican youth.

The American flag as a symbol of the American nation, defines the 'American' gang's territory… The six white stripes are for the clean work (money) and the seven red stripes for the dirty work (blood)…The 14 stars are the states in America, and one of the stars represents the 'American' gang. (Douglas-Hamilton, 1998, p.29)

The external factors that contributed to the forming of the *cholos* gang subculture (underclass and racial discrimination) are also present in the Western Cape. Vigil (1983) found that the socio-psychological marginalisation of the Mexican youth caused them to gravitate into the gangs. In the gangs they found

belonging, fraternity, power, protection, material goods and structure, which provide the members with a sense of social identity. The costs for these rewards were irresponsible sex, violence, drugs and crime. The Americans gang from the Cape Flats are known for their lifestyle of violence and crime as they live by the motto *"In GOD we trust; in money we believe"* (Douglas-Hamilton, 1995, p.30).

The Navajo youth were another example of an ethnic minority who turned to gangs as a means to find their identity (Deyhle, 1998). Their gangs were formed around break dancing. Being a "breaker" (part of the gang of break dancers) meant freedom from a repressive system. Codrington (1998) found that music culture was not only an outlet for energy, but also influenced the social identity formation of South African youth. It is interesting to note that in the eighties South African youth also went through the same break dance craze as the Navajo youth. No conclusive evidence has been noted that correlated "dancing" with the gangs in South Africa.

4.2.6 Low self-image and gang membership

The coloured community was, to a large extend, alienated from the political struggle against apartheid, since many coloureds neither identified with the majority black African populace, nor with the white minority. …In terms of language, culture and political affiliation, they are homeless, but identify with African Americans, as they are portrayed in popular communication media. (Dissel, 1998, p.2)

Freeman (1993) contended that South African township youth of the 1990's are struggling to find their sense of identity. Nott et al. (1990) attributed gangs to the youth's seeking for a way of life that will give them self-respect. Dissel (1998) explained that in the coloured communities the gangs provide the members with a sense of belonging as well as opportunities for gaining a sense of power,

acceptance and purpose. International research have confirmed that adolescents who had low self-esteem and negative self-image have a better prognosis to become gang members (Clark, 1993). Wang (1994) evaluated the self-esteem of high school gang members in the United States of America compared to their uninvolved (non-gang) peers and found that the gang members possessed lower levels of overall self-esteem than those who were not gang members. He concluded that negative self-attitudes prompted individuals to engage in deviant patterns of behaviour such as joining a gang and engaging in gang activity. Gangs provide a vehicle by which devalued adolescents insulate themselves from the negative judgements others made of them (Dukes et al., 1997) and provide a sense of status and success (Hurrelmann & Engel, 1991).

4.2.7 Poor academic performance as a precursor to gang membership

The education system did not provide the youth of South Africa with relevant and quality education (Malan, 1997). The majority of black and coloured youth had restricted access to traditional secondary schools. In these schools the places were limited and the facilities substandard. The teachers were not properly qualified. Access to subjects such as mathematics, physical science, economics, business economics and accounting were limited due to a shortage in qualified teachers in these subjects. The young people were deprived of legitimate means to acquire status and success in society. International researches have shown that adolescents who performed poorly in their academics are more prone to join gangs when approached by the gang (Clark, 1993; Reyes & Jason, 1993). The poor academic performance of youth in the schools on the Cape Flats causes them to drop out of school and join the gangs as is happening in the American schools (Allie, 1996). Schurink and Schurink (1994), in addressing crime amongst South Africa's marginalised youth, stated that young people have a driving need to acquire status and success. They want to fulfil the South African dream of being successful, earning lots of money,

driving a luxury car and wearing designer clothes. These items are symbols of status and success within the South African society. Tertiary education is one of the legitimate means for the youth to realise the South African dream. Only 40% of young people between 14 and 35 years of age are students or scholars (National Youth Commission, 1998). This means that a large proportion of youth (43%) in this country have to resort to alternative, often illegal means such as stealing and robbing, to acquire status and success. This situation is further implicated by the fact that many matriculants are struggling to find employment. Many of these young people who have jobs, do work that is not meaningful and often degrading and demeaning. Having such role models, young scholars are not very motivated to finish school. Gangs seem to them a much more profitable option than a blue -collar job. According to Dissel (1998) the gang provides the members with opportunities for economic improvement.

4.2.8 Gangs as a source for excitement

*"War brings out the best and the worst in mankind. What boys need
is the moral equivalent of war." (Hahn, cited by Douglas-Hamilton,
1995, p.1)*

Codrington (1998) argued that excitement is very important to South African youth who are addicted to thrills and adrenaline. For example, young South Africans engage in sexual encounters, being fully informed about AIDS, yet not taking the necessary precautions and thus playing Russian roulettes with their lives. In an international study Palmer and Tilley (1995) argued that male teenagers are drawn into gangs because the gang provides them with the excitement of free sexual access to women. A common occurrence on the Cape Flats is to see teenagers playing "guard[2]" for the taxis (Van Wyk & Links, 1995). They are exposed to a life of sex, violence and excitement they never would

---

[2] A guard in the taxi, is the person that collects the travelling fees from all the passengers.

have had otherwise. Van Wyk and Links found that these adolescents who are living in the shadow of death, have a very short-sighted view on life. This makes them easy targets for recruitment into street gangs and crime syndicates. One gang member was cited by Douglas-Hamilton (1998):

It was nice to hear the sound of the gun in the gang fight. Every time I hear a gun shot I imagine that it is me standing with a gun in my hand. That was my only wish before I was a gangster, to stand with a gun in my hand … I thought it would be fun to join a gang, to go out in the night and walk with a gun to shoot someone. (p.26)

Hochhaus and Sousa (1988) found that members partook in gang violence as a result of group pressure placed on them and that these activities were not considered as part of the excitement of gang life. In their study done on American gangs they found that there was no loyalty among gang members when they investigated the difference between expectations and the realities of gang membership. Their study which was based on the self-reporting of gang members reported that their initial expectations of the gang differed from the actual experiences. All of the gang members interviewed in their study suffered from disillusionment, as their expectations for *companionship*, *protection* and *excitement* in the gang-life were not met. The members only had a few true friends in the gang. The rest of the friendships were superficial and maintained out of fear. The gang spent a great deal of time antagonising other gangs, as well as the public, trying to prove that they were superior, and in the process endangering the lives of the members. Douglas-Hamilton (1998) reported that South African gangs operate in similar fashion where gang members are bound to help fellow gang members when the latter is in trouble, even to the point of dying with them. The gang as a whole promoted violence, while the individual members opposed it. This was the primary reason why the majority of Hochhaus and Sousa's sample wanted to leave the gang. The excitement that the gang

members wanted was provided through drug use and materialistic lifestyles. The resources to provide for these items were obtained through stealing and drug dealing.

4.3 RESURGENCE OF GANGSTERISM IN SOUTH AFRICA

"If there's one thing uniting South Africans today, from PAGAD to parliament, it's the tide of anti-gang fervour that has even the press by the balls" (Roper, 1996, p.37).

Although Bloch and Niederhoffer (1958) claimed a surgence in gangsterism since the end of the second world war, many writers have reported a distinct increase in gang activities in the late eighties and early nineties (Cantrell & Cantrell, 1993; Palumbo & Ferguson, 1995; Schärf, 1990; Winfree, Esbensen & Osgood, 1996). Palumbo and Ferguson noticed that newspaper publications about gangs increased significantly in the period between 1985 and 1988. Cantrell and Cantrell attributed this increase in tendency of American children to join gangs to the over-exposure to violence that they receive from the media. In South Africa there has been a resurgence in gangsterism since 1986 (Schärf, 1990) which lasted until 1996, just prior to the public execution of Rashaad Staggie by People Against Gangsterism And Drugs (PAGAD) (Haefele, 1998). From 1996 onwards no real increase in the number of gang members in the Western Cape was found, which could be attributed to the various anti-gang movements during this period. According to S. Staggie (personal communication, August 17, 1998), an ex-gang leader, no decline in gang membership was noted either, as the number of new recruits equalled the number of members exiting due to deaths and gang leaders leaving the gangs. Douglas-Hamilton (1995) noted in this regard the difficulty of estimating the number of gang members because membership is hard to define. It is also difficult to decide which groups to include as gangs.

4.3.1 The spread of gangs on the Cape Flats in the 70's

With the relocation of thousands of families from certain areas of Cape Town, such as District Six, Diep River, Claremont and Constantia in 1970, the gangs were spread all over the Cape Flats (C. Ferndale, personal communication, July 25, 1996). The gangs were still in the process of establishing themselves in the newly formed townships. Pinnock (1982) discovered that defence gangs battled to enforce their control over certain townships on the Cape Flats. Older men from these areas took it upon themselves to maintain peace within their neighbourhoods. They were called the *Peacemakers* and operated between 1973 and 1976 (Kinnes, 1995). Pinnock classified this group of vigilantes as another defence gang. They were very successful in countering gang activities in their areas of operation. They were notorious for the excessive violence against gangs that they used. Their actions were stopped by the government of the day. The "Riotous Assembly Act" of 1976 restricted residents within the black and coloured residential areas from grouping together. The South African Police demanded that the Peacemakers all become police reservists. The residents refused and that led to the disintegration of the operations of the Peacemakers.

After the Peacemakers, the *young lions* emerged as the dominant force in the communities (Schärf, 1990). They were a militant youth that fought for liberation from the oppressive apartheid government in the period from 1976 to 1984. The youth culture of South Africa experienced what Cross (1993) called the *development of youth resistance culture* in the period that started in 1976 and lasted until 1985. In this time the youth actively rallied against the government order and political establishment of the day. They were all members of banned political organisations and many of them were detained and put in

prison during the state of emergency[3]. Schärf argued that the imprisonment of youth in this period, contributed to the decline of gangsterism. Some gangs collaborated with the state security to spy on the political activists in the townships (C. Ferndale, personal communication, July 25, 1996). In exchange for identifying the political activists in the community, these gangs could continue their operations unhindered by the South African Police. The youth growing up in this culture of violence learnt that violence is the only solution to their problems.

The adults in the communities networked to establish peace in their neighbourhoods by negotiating with the gangs (Schärf, 1990). These initiatives were called *peace talks.* Kinnes (1995b) judged these attempts to be ineffective, because the gangs were not loyal to their commitments. The communities simply did not have the resources to force the gangs to keep to their peace agreements. Schärf, however, argued that the increased cohesion in the community as a result of the *peace talks* initiative had the positive effect of stemming the surgence of gangsterism. At this time much research was done on gangsterism, which caused the mystique that surrounded gangs to subside and this diminished their attractiveness to the youth (Schärf). These investigations were mostly done by Pinnock (1980, 1982, 1985) who was then head of Criminology at the University of Cape Town.

4.3.2 Establishing the drug trade in the 80's

In South Africa it was reported that the gangs established themselves in the drug trade in the eighties (C. Ferndale, personal communication, July 25, 1996). The gangs merchandised predominantly in 'soft' drugs like mandrax and dagga. The period from 1985 until 1990 witnessed the emergence of youth middle class cultures and the evolving of the *crisis of youth resistance culture.* Pinnock (1982) reported two defence gangs, the *Sicilians* and the *Hobos*, who were formed by

---

[3] State of emergency was declared by the government in 1986.

youths who left school after the 1980 school boycotts in Cape Town. The imprisonment of many youth during the youth resistance era led to the forming of the reform gangs. Haefele (1998) reported that since 1980, the involvement in mandrax trafficking has resulted in the "26" and "28" gangs (who are types of prison gangs) extending their links outside the prison. First-time offenders are often hurriedly recruited into the "26" and "28" prison gangs while awaiting trial, because they have access to mandrax traffickers outside. According to Schärf (1990) these gangs flourished in the prisons and reformatory schools in their drug trade before conditions and policies in prisons were improved to reduce inmates' need to rely on prison gangs for protection and other illegal goods.

4.3.3 Gangs become more organised in the 90's

The 1990's witnessed street gangs in Cape Town transitioning into syndicates, as they became increasingly more organised (C. Ferndale, personal communication, July 25, 1996). With the advent of democracy and the opening up of international borders, local gang leaders realised the enormous opportunity for increased business by forming partnerships with international syndicates (Haefele, 1998). At the same time international syndicates saw South Africa as an easily accessible new market for drugs. Drug merchandise on the Cape Flats changed from dagga and mandrax, to hard drugs such as cocaine and heroine as the gangs became more organized. According to C. Ferndale crime syndicates recruited street gangs in their drug operations, which meant that gang members got more money and more guns: drive-by shootings were the result of the fierce battle for drug territory. On the international front Winfree et al. (1994) observed that American gangs were also growing and changing in size, location, ethnic diversity, complexity of structure, and level of violence. These changes happened at such a pace in South Africa that it exceeded the resources of local law enforcement. According to Haefele gangs and gangsterism have expanded from the inner city of Cape Town and the Cape Flats to the rural areas such as

the Boland and Swartland towns as the gangs sought to extend their drug market.

4.4 RESPONSES TO GANGSTERISM IN THE WESTERN CAPE

The late 1990's saw the emergence of many anti-gang movements. People Against Gangsterism and Drugs (PAGAD) gained much media publicity with their active campaign and controversial methods of attempting to stop gangsterism (Haefele, 1998). This section aims to provide the background against which the present research was undertaken. The State's responses to gangsterism as well as the community initiatives that are currently employed to counter gangsterism on the Cape Flats are discussed. These are factors that influence the gang member to a greater or lesser extent and an awareness of these factors were necessary as a means to enculturate the researcher into the gang's cultural arena as is the tradition of ethnographic studies. The information also served as a means to triangulate data findings collected from other sources.

4.4.1 Community responses

Neighbourhood watches are operational in many residential areas on the Cape Flats (Kinnes, 1995b). This is a low-level intervention in the same manner as the *Peacemakers,* the vigilante groups of the middle 70's, who defended the neighbourhood against gang violence and other petty crimes. The success of the the neighbourhood watches were limited to the affluent areas where the residents possess weapons and vehicles to counter the threats of the gangs. In other areas the gangs intimidate the members of the neighbourhood watch to the point that latter has no real effect. The residents are in general not trained and sufficiently organised to counter the gang operations. According to Kinnes (1995a) **police community forums** were established in an attempt to get the police and the community to work together towards establishing peace in the

communities. They had isolated successes on the Cape Flats. The police are still blamed for the atrocities of the apartheid regime and the role they played in imprisoning the young political activists, which left them with little credibility in the eyes of the communities.

4.4.2 State responses

The State responded by setting up **anti-gang units** at the local South African Police stations (Kinnes, 1995b). These units commanded the respect of the gangs because they were stronger and better armed than the gangs. This detracted from their success because they were simply regarded as another gang. They only succeeded in motivating gangs to be tougher and become more armed and dangerous. Furthermore, the State's attempt did not have the community's support and failed to address the deep-rooted nature of gangsterism especially in the Western Cape (Pinnock, 1998).

The **Western Cape Anti-Crime Forum** was set up in June 1994 to deal with crime in a holistic manner (Kinnes, 1995b). This is an umbrella body that consists of religious, political, education, civic and community leaders who focus on addressing the socio-economic and political causes of gangsterism. They operate with anti-crime committees in various townships and areas, who are committed to crime prevention and crime investigations in their respective areas. The nature of their task demand full-time police representation (in order to detain the perpetrators). Kinnes reports that the lack of collaboration between the South African Police and this committee hampers its success severely. The rationale of the Anti-Crime Forum holds promising prospects but the organisation lacked the funding to carry out its proposals. The organisation also lacked the necessary authority and power of execution because the government was only a guest on the board and not an active member as was witnessed at the Western Cape Anti-crime conference that was held in 1995.

After 1996 the Western Cape government set up the **Directorate for Crime Prevention and Community Safety** under the umbrella of the National Crime Prevention Strategy. Vigilante groups like PAGAD forced the government to address the gangsterism and drug problems that polluted the Cape Flats. The gangs countered the PAGAD onslaught by grouping together to form The Firm (Haefele, 1998). A bloody war was threatening over the Cape Flats. The Government responded by passing new legislation to combat the looming lawlessness that hung over the Cape Flats. New legislation was passed in order to apprehend gang leaders (the Organised Crime Bill) and to counter the illegal possession of weapons. The South African Defence Force was deployed to control the gang situation on the Cape Flats. According to S. Staggie (personal communication, August 17, 1998) this legislation was very successful in putting pressure on gang leaders, yet did not counter the recruiting of new gang members from the streets. The gang leaders "quit" their positions (as leaders) and went into hiding. This left young, inexperienced gang members to run the gangs who were more prone to violence than their predecessors.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter the researcher reviewed the global gang phenomenon as it developed over the past century, zooming in on the South African /Western Cape developments over the past three decades. The history of research on gangs revealed that the quality of information obtained from these pioneering studies still influenced contemporary research. The magnitude and depth of these studies are still unsurpassed to this day.

In ethnographic tradition the researchers usually delay the search into literature till after the analysis of the data so that it would not influence his analysis or data collection. In the present study the researcher deviated from this norm. The reason for this was two-fold: (1) the researcher sought to

contextualise gang membership to the South African and particularly, the Western Cape setting; and (2) to provide for possible triangulation of the findings drawn from the analyses of the interviews. In order to achieve these two goals the researcher drew much of the information from personal communications and informal sources. The focus of the literature review was to provide an overview of gangsterism in the Western Cape and the responses of the communities and other stakeholders to this phenomenon of gangsterism (that is, gang activities) before looking at gang membership in particular.

5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Foster (1991) stated that the latter school of social psychologists are mostly informed by hermeneutical and interpretive approaches. These approaches argue that human beings reflexively interpret the meaning of a socially constructed world and are not subject to forces that determine them. The central focus of these social psychologists tended towards the study of language, discourse, meaning, interpretation and identity. Social psychology has tended to be dominated by positivist methods such as experiments and standardised questionnaires. Foster noted that in recent years there have been increasing criticism of quantitative and experimental methods. Strong advocating of the use of qualitative methods, such as interviews and observation of interaction in naturalistic "real-world" settings are taking place. These methods have the advantage of providing a greater sensitivity to the social context under study.

This chapter explores the field of ethnography and seeks to explain the rationale and methods that are used in ethnographic studies. The details are related in an attempt to prepare the mind for the forthcoming research process, with specific focus on the analysis of the qualitative data. The researcher then provides a critical overview of ethnographic studies, discussing its shortcomings and strengths. The chapter is concluded with a look at the ethical implications of such a study, as ethics have become a critical issue in the contemporary South African context.

5.2 RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY

Spradley (1979) described ethnography as a type of qualitative research methodology that is based on the paradigm that *reality is constructed through*

coherence. Thus idealism premises that truth is established through the consensus of subjective experiences and accounts. According to Spradley ethnographic studies focus therefore on culture which is the *"acquired knowledge that people use to interpret experience and generate general social behaviour" (p.5).* Ethnographers attempt to describe culture as how the participant views events, how he/she feels about life and how he or she sees the world. A comprehensive understanding of the culture as a phenomenon is sought with the least possible imposition of psychological theory or method, personal and cultural prejudice or need, or language habit (Van Kaam, cited in Kruger, 1985). In essence ethnographic studies seek to learn from the people under study. That means that inferences are made from what people say, act and what they validate. From these inferences hypotheses are developed, which can be tested in follow-up studies.

An essential feature of ethnographic studies is that they study people's behaviour in everyday context, rather than under experimental conditions created by the researcher (Hammersley, 1990). The research is aimed at capturing the character of naturally occurring human behaviour which can only be achieved by first-hand contact with people under investigation in *natural* settings that exist independently of the research process. Social events and processes must be explained in terms of the relationship to the context in which they occur. This is the essence of the notion of **naturalism** in ethnographic inquiry. Naturalism implies that the researcher should seek to minimise his/her effects on the behaviour of the people being studied in their natural setting.

Ethnographers are committed to gaining an **understanding** of the cultural perspectives on which human actions are based in order to explain behaviour (Hammersley, 1990). Hammersley argues that this does not imply a mechanical causality between culture and behaviour which would equate human behaviour to the actions of animals that simply consist of fixed responses and learned responses to stimuli. His argument is that because human actions

involve the interpretation of stimuli and the construction of responses, this evidences for the existence of causal relations in the social world. Researchers agree that participant observation and unstructured interviewing are central to ethnographic research methodology because these instruments facilitate the learning of the culture before valid explanations are attempted (Ackroyd & Hughes, 1992; Hammersley & Atkinson, 1994; Rubin & Rubin, 1995; Spradley, 1979). Only in studying the culture the relationships between variables within the research arena are discovered.

Another feature of ethnographic research process is that it is **discovery-**based or inductive (Hammersley, 1990). The researcher starts the research with minimal assumptions so that her/his capacity for learning might be maximised. Approaching a phenomenon with a set of hypotheses makes the researcher biased and blinded to observe the true nature of the phenomena. It is for this reason that ethnographers rarely begin their research with specific hypotheses. They assume the research with a general interest in some type of social phenomenon, theoretical issue or practical problem. In the course of the research its focus is narrowed and sharpened, and theoretical ideas are developed to frame descriptions and explanations. These theoretical ideas are considered a valuable outcome of the research and not regarded as a precondition for the research. This epitomises the ethnographers' commitment to do justice to the phenomenon under study and their firm resolute not to bias the findings. The researcher does not indulge in attempts to explain the phenomenon within a pre-given framework (Kruger, 1985). The researcher is wary of theoretical observations and accepted opinions lest prejudging that which has yet to be discovered he fails to be faithful to the phenomena as they appear. The investigator remains true to the facts as they are happening (Van den Berg, cited in Kruger, 1985).

Merriam (cited in Jacob, 1995) defined the qualitative case study as an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single entity, phenomenon or

social unit. Jacob (1995) noted several advantages that case studies have over large-scale quantitative surveys. In the first place case studies are more manageable. Large-scale efforts of surveys in Third World settings produce a multitude of technical, logistical and management problems, which place the reliability and validity of the findings under serious doubt. In these surveys the data collection are so expensive that little time or money is usually left to analyse and use the data. Case studies ensure that the volume of raw data collected is kept under check because the volume can be easily controlled by carefully regulating the number of the cases. The researcher has more control over the data, which enable him/her to produce trustworthy results.

Jacob (1995) describes three features that distinguish an ethnographic case study and make this research design particularly appropriate for the current investigation. In the first place ethnographic studies are **descriptive**. It seeks to produce thick descriptions and thick complex explanations. Any attempt to establish causal relationships are judged as secondary and inferior to the main objective mentioned above. Secondly the ethnographic case study is **holistic**. In the present study emphasis was placed on understanding gang membership according to the meaning that it holds for the gang members. Research strategy is based on the naturalistic point of view (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1994). The ethnographer is committed to view gang members in *their* world (Ackroyd & Hughes, 1992). This involves an immersion in the setting to get close acquaintance with the people under study. The main goal of the ethnographer is to come in touch with the real world setting of his/her participants. The third feature that Jacob mentions about ethnographic case studies is that they are **dynamic.** The cases must be studied over a period of time to capture the changes over time rather than depict or analyse a particular point in time. This is a powerful feature of this type of research design, yet costly in terms of time and finances. In the present study, however, the cases *were* studied at one specific point in time due to the time and financial constraints placed on the researcher. To do justice to the people under study the researcher endeavoured to provide

as broad as possible descriptions of gangsterism in the greater Western Cape as well as the history of gangs and gang interventions in the broader context as seen in the previous chapter on gang literature.

5.3 RESEARCH STRATEGY

Spradley (1979) considered gaining access to the setting under study as an integral part of the research process. In bargaining with informants and key persons in the setting, the researcher has to win these people's trust in him/her as researcher. Equal in importance is the challenge to the researcher to learn to trust the informant(s) as co-researchers (Ackroyd & Hughes, 1992). They argued that the researcher should be real and transparent about the research: its rationale and process. In many instances the researcher and informants or key persons have to come to an agreement on the terms or conditions on which access and/or assistance is provided for the research. Issues such as remuneration and/or other forms of reward have to be discussed. This means that the researcher has to engage in some real bargaining and negotiating with key persons in the setting.

These key persons in the setting who act as co-researchers in the study are called **informants**. They are residents who have been thoroughly enculturated into the setting and who provide the researcher with expert knowledge of the cultural arena. Spradley (1979) stressed that they must not be new entrants to the cultural arena and they must be currently involved in the cultural arena in order to act as a bridge between the researcher and the occupants of the setting under investigation. The informant aids the study by identifying potential participants and introducing the researcher to them. In Whyte's research (1943) one of the residents of the setting, *Doc,* performed the role of the informant when he briefed the researcher on the protocol of relating to members in the setting. *Doc* also introduced the researcher to the other members of the gang. Part of the informant's function is then to interpret the

culture to the researcher. He or she aids the researcher in defining folk theory by translating the concepts of the culture into the language of the researcher. Spradley said that it is imperative that the informant does not analyse nor give conclusions or psychological explanations to the phenomena under study since this would bias the data collection process.

In ethnographic studies the interviewees are called *participants* because they are partners with the researcher in the research (Spradley, 1979). The contract between the participant and the researcher concerns two things: (1) the researcher gets the information he/she needs for the research; and (2) the participant gets the satisfaction of sharing his/her experience and contributing to an academic cause. Spradley propogated a moving away of participants from the social scientific role where they are called subjects, respondents or actors. Calling the participants *subjects* imply that their responses are predefined and confined to the set of questions being posed to them by the researcher. The researcher would be guilty of making assumptions about the phenomena even before really knowing (and studying) the phenomena. The underlying presumption is that the researcher knows the cultural arena better than the "subject" who has been living in this setting. Spradley also said that it is inappropriate that the participants be called *respondents* because in qualitative studies they are allowed to speak freely in their own language about their views on the phenomenon under investigation. The participant in an ethnographic interview is not restricted to responding to a rigid interview schedule. The data collection in ethnographic studies is not biased by psychological theory, which is the language of the interviewer.

In selecting participants Giorgi (1985) recommended that the following criteria be implemented:

1. The participant must have experience of the culture or phenomenon under study.
2. Must be verbally active – to make for good interviews.

3. Must have the same home language as the interviewer.

4. Must display a willingness to be open and transparent about his/her experience towards the researcher.

5. He/she must preferably be naïve relative to the psychological theories.

5.4 INTERVIEWS AS RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

the best way to learn what people are like is to get them, one way or another, to tell us, whether directly by question and answer ... to which we simply listen, or indirectly by covert communications, paintings, dreams, stories, gestures, etc. which we can interpret. (Maslow, cited in Tesch, 1990, p.12)

Interviews are good tools to use in research to learn about people's feelings, thoughts and experiences (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). There are two basic purposes of qualitative interviewing. The first purpose is to find explanations to the research question under investigation (academic) and the second purpose is to attempt to solve the specific problem or problems under question (practical).

Rubin and Rubin (1995) suggested that the research interview be open-ended and conducted in an informal non-directive manner because this yields greater flexibility. In this type of interview the participant is given freedom to share information around his/her experience of the phenomenon under study. According to Hammersley and Atkinson (1994) a more rigid methodological technique like structured interviews would not facilitate free description from the participant because closure of analytic categories occurs even prior to the point of data collection. They argued that the above-mentioned type of interviews yield little understanding of the experiential world of the participant because their use is limited to the testing of already formed hypotheses.

Spradley (1979) strongly recommends that the interviewer seek to minimize his/her influence on the interviewee as far as possible. Leading

questions are therefore avoided because the data can be biased by the theoretical presumptions of the researcher as the interviewer. The interviewee is given complete freedom to express feelings and experiences pertaining to the phenomenon. Rubin and Rubin (1995) permit the interviewer to ask clarifying questions to further his/her understanding of particular points or information provided by the participant during the course of the interview.

The interviewer has to establish rapport between him/herself and the interviewee (Kruger, 1985; Rubin & Rubin, 1995; Spradley, 1979). Kruger suggested that rapport could be established by creating a situation where the participant as interviewee will feel relaxed. The interview should be done as unthreatening as possible. Special care should be taken in choosing the venue that will be used to conduct the interview. The researcher has to do preliminary research into the possible significance that the chosen venue or room would have on the participants. It is not always possible to avoid these influencing factors. The researcher should be aware of the presence of these strange variables, and keep these in consideration when analysing the data.

5.5 ANALYSIS

In ethnographic case studies analysis of the data happens concurrently with the collecting of data. Data analysis starts as soon as the taped interviews are transcribed (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Qualitative data revolve around words rather than numbers. Words contain meanings and in order to understand the meaning of the words involves a process of reducing the volumes of data into meaningful units or themes that would be used to build theory. Analysis in the current study was done by using Strauss and Corbin's (1990) form of grounded theory.

As soon as interviews are done, verbatim or selective transcriptions of the interviews are made (Kvale, 1996). Verbatim transcriptions have the advantage

of being a fail-safe method of recording the taped interviews without losing any data at the early stages of the analysis because priority is placed on presenting an as-faithful-as-possible transcription of the spoken interview. An added advantage of verbatim transcripts is the fact that the researcher can back-track on the tape for enhanced clarity. No interpretation is made of the data as the stage of transcribing. In the current study verbatim transcriptions of data were done to remain as faithful to the data as possible and not to prematurely close off any information at the initial stages. Selective transcriptions, on the other hand, are more readable than verbatim transcriptions and are less time consuming to produce than verbatim transcriptions which takes on average five hours for a one-hour taped interview (Crabtree & Miller, 1991). Selective transcriptions are theoretically driven and thus more fitting for use with later tapes when definite patterns have already been established from the data. The researcher decided against selective transcriptions because he sought to remain as close as possible to the ethnographic tradition of taking good care to the language and the actual words of the participants.

Kruger (1985) warned that it is inevitable that the descriptions will be incomplete or imperfect. Participants are prone to forgetfulness, poor vocabulary and the inability to express themselves clearly. The participant's state of mind is also a telling factor on the degree of completeness and maturity of the data. He argued that imperfect descriptions do not make the participants' experience or account invalid. Even when essential information has been omitted by the participant, the interview transcript is still valid. Kruger suggested that the researcher could enhance the validity of the individual interviews by interviewing more than one participant. Doing this would enable the researcher to find underlying constants or themes in the many forms of expression that the phenomenon under study takes. The problem of data loss due to certain aspects being omitted from individual interviews is minimised. Those aspects that are more important should and would appear more frequently. According to Rubin and Rubin (1995) the basic assumption is that the participants would most likely

articulate the most important aspects. A participant might concentrate on some aspects of the phenomenon and not describe other aspects of personal experience. This does not imply that transcript contains all that the participant experienced about that phenomenon. It only states emphatically that the participant has not described the other aspects of the phenomenon. The reasons for these are plenty: time constraints, emotional and cognitive state of the participant at the time of the interview, significant events in the setting. Interviewing more than one participant means that what is explicitly articulated by one participant is implicit to another participant's description.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) stated that it is imperative that the different descriptions of the participants be compatible. In this regard Huberman and Miles (1994) recommended that verification of findings be done to check for biases that might steal into the process of drawing conclusions. Triangulation is the process used to make sure that the variance that is reflected in the findings does come from the data and not the method used to gather the data. Triangulation involves using different measures and sources that are independent of each other to confirm a certain claim. These measures include peer reviews, observations of the phenomena and other documents pertaining to the phenomena under study.

Straussian form of grounded theory is a good tool to process transcripts to build theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The Straussian form improves on Glaser's method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) of generating grounded theory because it provides a more systematic approach to code generation. Strauss laid out a procedure to process raw data in response to the criticism that grounded theory was very subjective and not standardised as an analytic procedure. Straussian form of grounded theory constituted three levels of code generation: (1) open coding, (2) axial coding and (3) selective coding.

The initial phase in Straussian grounded theory purposes to ensure that no detail of the transcribed interview is overlooked (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). This phase of analysis is called **open coding**. Unimportant or mundane details are seperated from the relevant data that will be coded in the next phase. The researcher seeks to establish the general direction and purpose of the dialogue. The researcher looks at the data and seeks to answer the question of *why* this piece of information is related by the participant in response to the research question posed to him/her.

Having established the basic direction of the interview in the open coding phase, the researcher proceeds to the next step where the analytic importance of the data is tested. Strauss and Corbin (1990) refer to this as testing the robustness of the data. The researcher seeks to determine *how* the analytic importance of the open codes is demonstrated in the data. No assumptions are made concerning the assumptions of any coded data's importance except when it is proven in the text. The data are analysed in this phase according to the heuristic approach. Each open code must prove its reliability in terms of the information that it carries. This step entails a rigorous interrogation of every word and phrase, comparing it with other codes that might disprove its reliability. The researcher engages in a process that Miles and Huberman (1994) refer to as looking for negative evidence. Words are turned around "flip-flop"-ed to search out the meanings behind the words. It should be noted that the abovementioned processes not only eliminate certain codes, but also add a few other codes. These codes typically include the direct words of the participants that form key concepts to the understanding of certain information. These key concepts are called *in vivo* codes (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). These represent the first triangular formulations of the open codes generated in the first step of open coding. That is, they prove the reliability of the codes generated in the abovementioned phase. The theorists agree that it is critical that the researcher adopt an attitude of being suspicious of the data and his/her analysis when developing grounded

theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

The second level of analysis in the Straussian form of grounded theory is **axial coding** (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). In this phase the codes that were generated in the first phase are dimensionalised to form coded categories. Dimensionalisation of the open codes is achieved by determining *what* aspects of the phenomenon are being described by each specific open code. The open codes that describe the same aspect of the phenomenon are grouped together, forming a dimension of the phenomenon under study. The code name would then include the dimension that the code describes or pertain to. Underlying categories of the open codes can also be discovered by investigating **how** the code came into existence. These underlying categories provide a higher level of description of the code that represent the context in which the open code was generated.

The final phase of analysis of Straussian form of grounded theory is **selective coding** (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Selective coding involves the integrating of coded categories and their properties through a process of specifying and clarifying the coded categories to form core categories. These core categories are the main or central themes that emerge from the axial coding phase. The core category or theme interrelates several coded categories forming either a summation of the coded categories or describing the origin of the coded categories. The core category is, in essence an analytical story line that describes the phenomenon under study along a specific theme and constitutes a set that consists of a small number of high level concepts. These themes, which represent the regularities that were drawn from the data form the basis from which hypotheses are developed. Distinctive patterns in the codes are the originators of grounded theory. Further research has to be done to test these hypotheses in order to build new theory. Similar research done with different samples can be used to confirm or disconfirm the findings of the analysis.

Theory is established when the point of theoretical saturation is reached, that is when no new data emerges from several investigations into the same phenomenon.

The outcome of the analysis of qualitative data is aimed at describing the phenomenon as studied in a particular setting (Hammersley, 1992). Generalising the findings to other samples is an added bonus, and not the primary goal of this type of study design. The researcher seeks to do justice to the culture under study. Hammersley emphatically states that failure to establish strong hypotheses does not imply failure in ethnographic studies.

5.6 RELIABILITY, VALIDITY AND REPRESENTATIVENESS

Ethnographic fieldwork usually involves fewer cases but more variables than traditional social surveys (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1994). *Reliability* of ethnographic studies is difficult to judge since the study is taken under the assumption that the researcher as well as the participants are dynamic entities and do not remain static for any two moments in time. The rationale that drives qualitative studies presupposes that the findings are time and place bound. The issue of reproducing the results of a study is therefore redundant. It is therefore not the intention of ethnographic studies to prove theory or hypotheses; but rather to add to existing theory and stimulate new hypotheses (Jacob, 1995).

The internal reliability of ethnographic studies can be enhanced through the careful selection of informants and participants (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Usually some criteria are laid out to govern the choice of participants that are included in the study. The interviewer as research instrument can enhance the reliability of the study by doing self-reflection. Doing self-reflection makes the interviewer more aware of own attitudes and ways of acting that might influence the participant during the interview. This process involves writing down in a memo or journalising the interviewer's feelings and thoughts as the study

progresses. Rubin and Rubin also propose that care have to be taken regarding events that impact the mindset of the researcher in the process of data collection and analysis. These events and their impact on the researcher have to be notulated, so that colleague review of the study can be done in the future.

The participants should be encouraged to provide information and not interpretation (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). The interviewer must be skilled to draw information out of the interviewee without drawing the latter into the role of the psychologist, analysing and interpreting the data he/she provided.

Qualitative studies are often criticised as being too subjective, and therefore unreliable as research tools (Hammersley, 1990). Kruger (1985) pointed out that natural scientific data is ultimately derived via the researcher as investigator's experience. Objective knowledge is a derived and secondary way of knowing the world and is dependent upon the way in which the world appears in a primary and reflective way. Merlean-Ponty (cited in Kruger, 1985) elaborates

> *All my knowledge of the world, even my scientific knowledge, is gained from my own particular point of view, or from some experience of the world without which the symbols of science would be meaningless. The whole universe of science is built upon the world as directly experienced (p.142).*

Furthermore, Giorgi (1985) argues that objectivity in natural science is considered to be adequately verified by the measurable evidence of consensus or intersubjective validation by a group of like-minded scientists. The presence of the human element in the research situation should be taken into account (Kruger, 1985). The researcher should specify the extent to which he/she is present to that which he/she is studying by making explicit the perspectives from which he/she proceeds. The knowledge derived through future researchers adopting the same perspective as the initial researcher, and applying the same procedures should prove intersubjective validity.

Representativeness is not an essential feature of qualitative studies because the samples are usually very small consisting of only a few cases (Hammersley, 1990). By studying smaller samples the ethnographer can study the cases more in depth. In contrast survey research sacrifices depth for breadth. Choosing this option, survey researchers are able to generalise the results of their studies. Ethnographic studies are generally trading off representativeness for greater depth of information because they are more concerned with making theoretical inferences. This means that the conclusions of ethnographic studies can not be generalised to the greater population. Ethnographers are often not concerned with empirical generalisation. Hammersley argued that by comparing the features of the case studied with the aggregate data about the population, the findings of the qualitative study can be generalised to those settings or cases which have the similar characteristics to that of the case study. In general qualitative studies describe a single (or a couple of) setting/case and restrict the conclusions to that specific setting or case study. Hammersley and Atkinson (1994) showed that through theoretical sampling all the theoretic possibilities - which include other cases or settings - can be covered, setting up a strong case to generalise the findings of these studies to the greater population.

On the other hand, qualitative studies claim to hold *validity* that is superior to quantitative studies. Human behaviours are constituted by the many experiences of an individual. Psychology seeks to understand these everyday phenomena or the pattern thereof in its own terms and in a more precise way. Social psychology in particular seeks to understand the individual behaviour as influenced by the actual and implied presence of others (Taylor et al., 2000). In daily life every person is a social psychologist and therefore has practical ways of perceiving, understanding and dealing with other people's behaviour as individuals and as part of a group (Giorgi, 1985). These pragmatic modes do lack clarity, precision and systematisation that are desired of a scientific perspective. Traditionally social psychologists attempted to gain this precision

and systematisation with either a laboratory setting or some type of quantitative measurement (Foster, 1991). In doing this, many important aspects of these phenomena as lived and experienced, were either overlooked or severely distorted. Giorgi stated that natural science deals primarily with the phenomena of nature and not the experienced phenomena. To do justice to the lived aspects of human phenomena, he suggested that one has to know how someone has actually experienced the phenomena under investigation. Qualitative research designs study cases and phenomena in their context (Ackroyd & Hughes, 1992). In contrast, quantitative studies take the cases out of their context into a laboratory situation where the subjects are subjected to the testing instrument. This process brings in numerous strange variables that are uncontrolled and can influence the test results. Quantitative studies do not always succeed in isolating the variables that they claim to study. Thus it is open to debate whether they are studying the variables that they claim to study. Qualitative designs are based on purposive selection of cases. Therefore only relevant cases are selected and observed in their natural habitat. This ensures that the researcher is ensured that he or she is studying what he or she claims to study, hence the claim that qualitative studies hold higher validity over quantitative studies in studying cultural phenomena (Hammersley, 1990).

Rubin and Rubin (1995) mention several advantages to ethnographic studies. It is a systematic mode of inquiry about cultures that serves to inform culture bound theories. The results provide alternative realities to that which do exist in social science. Thus data emerging from ethnographic studies can be used to develop new hypotheses through the process of grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Through ethnographic studies causal relations can be discovered to help understand behaviour. Complex societies can be described to stimulate future research into this specific research arena.

5.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Data collection in ethnographic studies involves a hands-on approach where the researcher immerses him/herself in the setting (Ackroyd & Hughes, 1992). Rubin and Rubin (1995) considered this personal involvement of the researcher to be a great strength of qualitative research methodology. The role of the researcher in the data collecting process is important because this will impact the quality of the data that are collected. They argued that the interviewer is subjective, and as research instrument can not be objective. In order for the interviewer to hear data, he/she needs to know him/herself. The interviewer needs to be aware of his/her prejudices and control for it in the data collection stages as well as in the later analyses. It is essential that the interviewer remain ethical so that the interviewee's human rights and dignity is not violated (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1994). According to Ackroyd and Hughes the degree of participation between the researcher and the setting varies from peripheral involvement to active membership and full membership. The decision will be a play-off between the researcher's personal style, the demands of the study and the nature of the setting. In some settings fieldwork would hold potential danger for the researcher engaging the research arena. In such cases the researcher should seek alternative methods of data collecting via indirect measures such as documents, social reports or through interviewing community officials. In some research settings, the participants' lives are endangered if it is discovered that they were disclosing information to an outsider. Definite measures have to be taken to secure as far as possible the safety of all those involved in the research.

Ackroyd and Hughes (1992) warned that the researcher has to exercise maturity in maintaining a measure of detachment, when immersing him/herself in the setting to do fieldwork. The researcher as fieldworker needs to take care to his/her emotional state so that his/her judgement as researcher is not impaired. Great caution has to be taken by the researcher that he/she does not violate the law or place the participants or the researcher in danger. In doing research

among gangs and other dangerous settings, the informants and participants can find themselves in life-threatening situations when secret information are given.

The interviewer has to inform the participant that the interviewer has legal responsibility to report any criminal act or intention or in the case of court prosecution that all information can be subpoenaed by the court of law (Kruger, 1985). Anonymity and confidentiality should be offered and guaranteed if the participants so desire. This would protect the participant's identity in the case of the research content being subpoenaed by the court of law. Confidentiality would afford the participant greater freedom to express him/herself during the interview.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion it can be noted that in certain research situations qualitative research designs are more appropriate than quantitative study designs (Hudelson, 1996). Qualitative designs such as ethnographic case studies, are more suitable for exploratory research on gangs in South Africa because the relevant psychological concepts either lack definition or the definitions are unclear because these concepts and definitions have not been applied and tested in the South African context. In the current study the aim was to find the meaning of gang membership rather than the extent of gangsterism and gang membership in South Africa. Many studies have been done already that provide the detailed numerical descriptions of gangs in South Africa (Pinnock, 1982, Schärf, 1990). Doing an ethnographic inquiry into gangs provides explanatory depth so that aspects of gang behaviour can be related to the broader South African context - its segregated society and socioeconomic conditions. The final point for choosing an ethnographic case study design is that it is flexible enough to allow for the discovery of the unexpected, and to investigate these aspects more in-depth.

6. OPERATIONALISATION OF RESEARCH

6.1 PROCEDURE

An ethnographic case study was implemented to conclude how adolescent gang members constructed meaning from their gang membership. The researcher first sought to gain background information about the research arena (Cloetesville) and to negotiate access to the secondary school in the setting (Cloetesville Secondary School). A non-probability sample was drawn by the informant from the setting as described by Hammersley and Atkinson (1994). The selection of pupils as participants was done purposive so that the most suitable case studies would be obtained. The researcher used a teacher from the above mentioned school to aid him in the current study as an informant.

Data was collected through qualitative interviews with the individual participants. Soal (1988) found that interviews are more effective than questionnaires when seeking to gather data from pupils. The interview served as an instrument to test the participants against the criteria for selection. Interviews with participants that did not meet the criteria were excluded from the final analysis. The interviews also provided a more sensitive test of the independent variable - which in the current study was the pupil's construction of gang membership (Fitz-Gibbon & Morris, 1978). The interviews were recorded on tape and transcribed verbatimly. Each transcript was analysed as an individual case study according to the Straussian form of grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The case studies were then combined to form one group and analysed further. Analysis of the individual case studies produced *thick* descriptions of the participants' construction of their gang membership and analysis of the group yielded explanations for gang membership in the setting as well as dominant characteristics of gangs and gang life in this particular setting.

In the rest of this chapter the researcher will be describing the implementation of the ethnographic study by describing how he (1) gained access to the setting; (2) chose an informant and (3) the subsequent choice of participants; (4) how he collected data and (5) the analysis of the data.

6.2 GAINING ACCESS TO THE SETTING

The researcher met with the various interest groups that were involved with intervention programs for gangs in Stellenbosch in order to familiarise himself with the setting. These groups included the Peace Committee, Child and Family Welfare, the department of Social Work at the University of Stellenbosch and Cloetesville Secondary School. Meeting representatives from these organisations informed the researcher about current gang activities in the research arena as well as the various intervention projects and initiatives that were happening at the time of the study. These organisations build good rapport with the Cloetesville community through the community initiatives they have launched. Liaising with the Peace Committee increased the researcher's credibility with the community. The principal of Cloetesville Secondary School accepted him quite readily when the researcher mentioned that he had met with the Peace Committee.

6.2.1 Meeting with the Peace Committee

The researcher was informed about the work of the Peace Committee when the latter came to address the researcher as the primarius of a hostel for students of the University of Stellenbosch, as part of their work to relieve racial tensions on the university campus. At this meeting the Peace Committee introduced their executive to the researcher, as well as all the other projects that they are involved with, including the gang violence project. Before embarking on the current study the researcher sought to meet with representatives of the

Peace Committee. The researcher met with the chairperson of the Peace Committee.

The Peace Committee is a remnant from the Peace Directorate, who was responsible for maintaining peace in the 1994 elections. After the elections the Peace Committee decided to reform their structures and endeavoured to play a proactive role in resolving conflict in the Stellenbosch area. One wing of their operations was gang conflict resolution. They acted as negotiators when conflict arose in the *shebeens*[1] to prevent the outbreak of gang wars. They acted as the marshals over the flash points in the townships. They monitored the movements of PAGAD[2] who were threatening to disturb the peace in the communities and stir up gang violence. Another project that they have launched was that of a youth focus group which consisted of pupils from various high schools in the area of Stellenbosch. The Peace Committee was committed to the monitoring of the Stellenbosch Community Police Forum (CPF) and the progress of the local RDP projects.

They were severely handicapped by the lack of resources and they relied on volunteers to help them on an ad hoc basis. The meeting with them conveyed their need to get definite direction for successful gang intervention. The chairperson suggested a multi-disciplinary approach where sociology, psychology and theology all contributed towards a workable solution. They stated imperatively that academic involvement by the University of Stellenbosch should be added as a necessity. The researcher bargained with them to attend their meetings and move around with them as an observer. The researcher would contribute to the Peace Committee's work on gang violence by informing them on the outcome of the current research.

---

[1] Shebeen – a place or house where alcohol and drugs are sold illegally. Also called a "yard".
[2] PAGAD – People Against Gangsterism and Drugs

The researcher only attended one meeting of the Peace Committee. Details of this meeting are related because this information throws much light on the gang scenario in Cloetesville and Stellenbosch surroundings. Here follows some points on discussion in the above mentioned meeting:

- Stellenbosch members of PAGAD were suspected of being the "third force" in the renewed gang conflict in Cloetesville. The Peace Committee suspects that PAGAD instigated the gangs to violence so that they could retaliate. The PAGAD members are also suspected of being involved in setting the different gangs up against each other.

- A Neighbourhood Watch was established to maintain peace in the residential area. There were allegations that they only operated when under the influence of alcohol or drugs. The members of the Watch would first sit in the shebeens before going out on their rounds. The gangs perceived them as just another gang. Thus this initiative was not very successful in countering gang violence in Cloetesville.

- The morale of the Cloetesville Police staff was very low. The community did not trust their superintendent. The station is understaffed and under-resourced.

- The CPF was very capable of handling conflict issues; yet did not have the support of the police.

- A gang leader from Stellenbosch wanted to join with CORE[3] (Community Outreach).

Following up on these initial two meetings, the work that the Peace Committee did on the gang violence project came to a stand still when the field worker became pregnant and took leave from the organisation. No clear documentation was made of the work on this project to this stage, which made it difficult for others to follow up on her work. The Peace Committee was also involved in an office move, which led to a period of tremendous instability for themselves and no real output in the community in the period that the data collection took place.

---

[3] CORE is an alliance of leaders from syndicates from the Cape Flats who joined forces to counter the movements of PAGAD.

At the same time the Peace Committee directed more energy towards racial tensions on the University of Stellenbosch campus.

6.2.2 Meeting with Child and Family Welfare

This meeting took place in the Child and Family Welfare offices in Stellenbosch. The researcher made an appointment with the social worker that was overseeing the Idas Valley area. At that stage the social worker that worked in Cloetesville had just resigned. There was speculation that she resigned because of burnout.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the extent of the gang problem in Stellenbosch and to ascertain the possibility of using this organisation to gain access to gang members. The social worker confirmed the reality of the gang problem in Stellenbosch, and mentioned that it is particularly severe in the Cloetesville township. Their work at Child and Family Welfare involved predominantly those children that came to them for help. Their primary focus was on troubled families. They worked with groups that were involved in critical issues that affect the family life. Just prior to this interview, a woman was shot in Idas Valley. One gang member, a boy of 12 years old, was blamed for the murder. The accused claimed that he was innocent. The accused felt that he could not collaborate with the police, because his old "friends" will *plan*[4] on him. This youth came to the Child and Family Welfare worker for help. The social worker described her job as being a *"TRC"* (Truth and Reconciliation Committee) to resolve contentious situations in the community between conflicting parties.

The social worker linked the gang problem with the existence of shebeens and drug trade in the community. She recommended that a youth development forum be developed to coordinate the different programs done by different organisations and parties. She expressed the urgency of winning the trust of the

---

[4] That is, his fellow gang members will make plans to kill him.

youth of the community by implementing coherent and consistent programs. These programs should be preventative in nature, such as teaching life skills in schools. It should also include job creation for youth who are out of school and at risk of becoming gang members.

6.2.3 Meeting with a student from the Department of Social Work (University of Stellenbosch)

This meeting was an informal meeting held in the University library. The researcher met with a final year Social Work student who did practical work in Cloetesville with the Child and Family Welfare Society. This student did a research project in Cloetesville on the role of community leaders in developing communities.

She started a support group for women who endeavoured to fight gangsterism in Cloetesville. Together with another social work student she founded this group "*Mothers against crime*," after a needs-survey revealed that gangs were very active in the Cloetesville community. Streets like Primrose, Eike, Pine, Curry, Vredelust and Quarry streets were rife with gang activity. The students engaged one of the mothers from the community as an informant and participant to their project. This woman connected them to other women from the community who had similar interest in getting involved. Apart from being founder member of Mothers against Crime, this young grandmother was also involved in other gang interventions in the community like the local Community Police forum where she served as an active committee member. The student suggested that the researcher contact her as an informant for the proposed study.

When the researcher approached the informant, she was not willing to participate in any gang intervention studies anymore. The gangs had started to threaten her and her children's safety. She was afraid for her life and especially that of her five-year-old grandchild. She felt that she had to lessen her active

campaigning against gangs in Cloetesville. Her withdrawal from active participation in gang intervention led to the dwindling away of *Mothers Against Crime* campaign without it really achieving any of its potential for impact. Thus the gangs were very successful in intimidating members of the community who endeavour to fight them or their operations.

6.2.4 Meeting with Cloetesville Secondary School

The researcher met with the principal of the secondary school. This meeting was set up after an informal interview with one of the teachers from that school revealed that they were experiencing big problems with gangs at the school. The teacher informed the researcher of an incident at school that led to a few pupils who were also members of local gangs being expelled from the school. Consequently there were a couple of burglaries at the school and it was suspected that they were gang related.

The goal of the meeting with the principal was to negotiate for access to gang members that were still in school. The researcher explained the purpose and intent of the current study as well as the requirements to implement the study. The school principal was very keen to assist and offered to disclose the names of pupils that were members of gangs. He was known for his strict attitude of giving "no rope for gangsters in his school." In the interview he related the incident that led to the expelling of pupils. These pupils were involved with gang activities notably in the form of bullying and robbing other pupils on the school grounds. The principal made it clear that there are a few pupils that are known to be gang members, who exhibited good behaviour in school. Against these pupils, he does not take disciplinary action.

The principal agreed to introduce the researcher to the guidance teacher who in turn could act as informant to get interviews with pupils who are gang

members. In turn the principal asked for help with the new Religious Education curriculum.

6.3 THE INFORMANT

The task of finding suitable participants was very challenging because the label "gang member" was loaded with bias. Finding a reliable informant is thus crucial to the integrity of a study (Ackroyd & Hughes, 1992). The guidance teacher was a reliable informant because she was an experienced teacher at the school who knew most of the pupils, as well as being a respectable member of the Cloetesville community.

The researcher informally interviewed the informant to establish what the general relationship between her and the school pupils were like. This interview revealed that the informant was very eager to help with this research since she experienced considerable difficulty with the problem of gangsterism at school. The researcher found that her judgements to be very valid because she was very informed about the pupils in this particular school. She had a good rapport with the pupils of the school because her teaching subject was non-academic and thus facilitated more open relationships with the pupils. This trust meant that the pupils would inform her about the gang activities of other pupils in the school. They would report to her that this person was seen to *walk with gang members regularly* or that pupil is seen *carrying knives on weekends*. The abovementioned behaviours are interpreted as clear indicators of gang involvement. McConnell (1994) found in his study that peer reports of gang involvement are very high in reliability, and can thus be use as a trusted source of information.

6.4 PARTICIPANTS

With the aid of the informant six participants from the setting were approached for interviews. The interviews served as a measure to determine if

the interviewees are suitable participants. This decision was based on specific criteria to ensure that the selection process is as uniform as possible for all participants.

6.4.1 Criteria for selection

Criteria for inclusion of participants in the present study were that they be:

1) male;
2) between the ages of 14 and 18 years;
3) pupils at Cloetesville Secondary School;
4) resident in Cloetesville;
5) identify themselves as gang members and be identified by the community members as gang members.

6.4.2 The rationale for the proposed criteria

The motivation for setting criteria for the selection of participants was to keep the sample group as homogenous as possible, which would allow for cross analysis of the case studies. The present study focussed on *male* gang members because international studies have confirmed that predominantly adolescent males join street gangs (Palmer & Tilley, 1995). In the current setting there have not been reports of female gangs in operation.

The **age** criteria from 14 and 18 years classify the sample as early adolescents according to Erickson psychosocial development stages (Newman & Newman, 1987). The age limits were specifically chosen to focus the research on pupils that would typically be in grades 9 to 11. The researcher purposed to exclude younger pupils who might be very inexperienced in the gang lifestyle and still be romanticising about the gang life and would thus not make for good interviews. They would still be swept in the euphoria of gang membership, and

not have begun the process of crystallizing the values and norms of the gang for themselves.

The researcher purposed to exclude grade 12 pupils from the sample by choosing the upper boundary as 18 years. The assumption is made that matriculants would be looking to their future with a greater urgency. Grade 12 pupils are under pressure from the community to enter a career or job of some sort. If they were involved in gangs, they would at that stage be considering leaving the gang and staying elsewhere. The researcher assumed that interviewing this group would provide a negative bias toward gang membership.

The third and fourth criteria were set to provide a homogenous group relative to the social setting, so that findings might be triangulated to all the male high school pupils from this semi-urban and other semi-urban areas who are gang members. In order to answer the question why youth from this semi-urban area become gang members, the researcher had to find participants from the setting who would be experiencing the same social trends.

The rationale of the fifth criterion that pupils have to identify themselves as gang members and be identified by community members as gang members, was motivated by reports of adolescents pretending to be gang members as found in a study by Van Wyk and Links (1995). The research found that the participants proved to be unreliable because they exaggerated the facts about their involvement in gang activities to impress the interviewers.

The informant identified six pupils as possible suitable participants for the current study. All six participants were male pupils from this particular high school and stayed in the township. The participants were:

1. *Mark* was 16 years old and in grade 10. He was a peripheral member of the A's.
2. *MC* was 17 years old and in grade 9. He was a member of the BeeCee's.

3. *Richardo* was 16 years old and in grade 8. He was a member of the Tee's.
4. *Vincent* was 16 years old and in grade 9. He was a current member of the Zee's and an ex-member of the HL's.
5. *Justin* was 18 years old and in standard 7. He was member of the Dee's.

The sixth participant was excluded from the analysis because he identified himself as an ex-gang member of the A's. In the interview with Mark he insisted that he is not a "gangster." This violated the criteria that states that the participant must identify himself as a gang member. The course of the interview revealed that he could be considered a peripheral member. He admitted to consistently hanging out with one particular gang and participated in their activities. Polsky's diamond (see Appendix A) refers to such a member as the "con artist." Mark enjoyed the protection of the Americans and accessed all the priviledges of membership by making deals with them as seen by him asking them to share the spoils of their robberies with him. The interview also revealed that Mark's definition of a gang is confused with the concept of a syndicate. He considered members of a syndicate to be real gang members. Street gangs or defense gangs were not perceived as gangs, and their members were thus not real gang members. Thus the researcher concluded that Mark's denial of gang membership status was based on his distorted definition of gangs, and thus this interview was included in the final analysis.

A similar inconsistency occurred in the interview with Vincent who at first stated that he was not currently in a gang, yet continued to talk about his current experiences as a member of the Zee's. He also implied that the HL's, who was a syndicate, was considered to be a *real* gang. The other participants were on the contrast very clear on their gang affiliations.

6.5 THE RESEARCHER

The researcher is an integral part of any ethnographic study. In the current study the researcher was both interviewer and observer and analyst of the data. True to the ethnographic orientation the researcher is convinced that the above mentioned fact is the strength of this study and not a weakness. It is however, necessary for the researcher to be aware of personal biases and beliefs. To control for personal influence the researcher is committed to self-awareness. Rubin and Rubin (1995) stated that to hear data one has to know oneself. This section provides a brief profile of the researcher's background.

The researcher grew up in a township in the Cape Flats that is notorious for gang activities. The researcher observed gangs and gang members as a child growing up in Bishop Lavis. He went to the Bishop Lavis Secondary School where he observed that many of his friends dropped out of school at various standards to become gang members. The researcher was well informed about the dialect that gangs speak and this prepared him for the role of researcher into this field. Even at that time a few crucial observations were made by the researcher that triggered some questions about the dynamics of adolescent gangs. There were many pupils who were members of gangs but only a few gangs operating in the school with high visibility. The other gang members were not visible as a gang on the school grounds but were visible as gang members when they operated in the streets. Gangs operated on different levels according to the intensity and frequency of violent and criminal activities. This gave certain gangs the reputation of being violent gangs. The members of these violent gangs enjoyed higher status compared to other gangs. The researcher observed how adolescent social gangs became more violent and deviant as they interacted with other violent gangs. The social gangs were similar to the defense gangs described by Pinnock (1982). The violent gangs were similar to Pinnock's reform gangs. Many of the members from these violent gangs had prison or reformatory school experiences. The question at what stage the social gang transitions into

violent, deviant gangs stirred the researcher's interest in understanding adolescent gang members' behaviour as high school pupils.

The period between 1986 and 1990 when the researcher was attending high school coincided with the peak political activities in South Africa. The researcher experienced the "struggle" first-hand and the effects it had on the townships on the Cape Flats. These observations were not made as an activist but as a high school pupil who was condemned to non-participation in political activities because of his strict religious background. With these conflicting realities, the researcher spent much time reflecting on the events of his youth. It could be said that at that time a researcher and analyst was born.

6.6 PROCEDURE OF DATA COLLECTION

6.6.1 Interviews

The researcher conducted unstructured interviews with participants to give them freedom to give their accounts of gang membership (Hochhaus & Sousa, 1988). The researcher conducted the interviews at the school in a room that was normally used as a sick bay[5]. The room was distanced from the classrooms, which provided the participants with a measure of spatial freedom or separation from the other pupils. The entrance to the room was situated in such a manner that the other pupils could not see the participants entering and leaving the interview room, which provided a measure of anonymity to the participants. The windows of the room were darkened to prevent other pupils from seeing through them and thus created a bit more privacy for the researcher and participants to work in. The placement of the room provided a buffer to the noise levels in the schools. The room was not highly utilised, which meant that there were not many interruptions during the course of the interviews. All these factors concerning the

---

[5] Sick bay is the room that is used for students that get sick at school. The room had a bed on which the ill pupil could lie down.

venue contributed to an atmosphere of trust and rapport building between the researcher and participants which is essential when conducting ethnographic interviews (Kruger, 1985).

The interviews were conducted over a period of two weeks while the pupils were engaged in mid-year examinations. This time period was very suitable because most of the teachers were cooperative in giving the participants leave from class as no lecturing was taking place at that time. The informant suggested this period because school attendance was compulsory to all pupils including those who did not write tests on any particular day. The nature of the setting did not allow for fixed appointments with participants so the researcher contacted the informant every day to hear if there were pupils present to interview on that particular day. At first the informant tried to set up appointments with the various participants but these had to be rescheduled often due to absenteeism of participants, some special program on at school that specific day or school being dismissed earlier. The informant and researcher agreed on an alternate work style where the researcher had to visit the school several times to do the interviews.

Only one participant was interviewed at a time. Great care was taken to note the participant's mental state of being at the time of the interview, and to make the participant feel at ease. Every participant was asked what the informant told him about the reason for the interview and what his expectations were of the interview. Before commencing the recording of the interview, the researcher made sure that the participant did not have distorted perceptions or expectations of the interview. The researcher purposefully set out to counter and destroy any connection that the participant might make between the researcher and the school authorities. The researcher briefed the interviewee on the purpose of the research. He explained to the participants that he was not there to judge their actions or perceptions as right or wrong. The researcher explained to them that the purpose of the study was to find out about their experience as a gang member. The participants were without exception very open and set at ease

when the researcher provided them with an explanation of the intent of the research. This was consistent with the findings of Soal (1988) and Hochhaus and Sousa (1988) who propogated that gang members would be eager to engage in studies where they were free to air their feelings and perspectives.

Permission was asked from each participant to record the interview on tape. The participants initially felt very uneasy with the tape recorder. The researcher explained that the tape recorder was only to help the research so that no information would go lost and that all information that the participants give would be treated confidentially. The participants were advised to use pseudonyms to introduce themselves on the tape. The assurance of anonymity set all the participants at ease and they contributed information without noticeable restraint.

The researcher conducted the interviews in the home language of the participants, which was a dialect of Afrikaans that the "Coloured" community of the Western Cape conversed in. The goal was to make the interviewees at ease and to encourage further openness in sharing information. This proved very successful. One interviewee even assumed that the researcher was staying in the research arena. All the interviewees related events with great detail because they assumed that he (the researcher) stayed in Cloetesville or at least was familiar with the Cloetesville community and the physical setting (the neighbourhood).

The interview agenda consisted of two loosely formatted questions: (1) How do you currently experience being a gang member? (2) Why did you join the gang initially? The researcher started the interviews by asking the participants to identify themselves and to state their age. The participants were encouraged to use a pseudonym if they so prefer which made them feel more relaxed. The researcher started the interview by asking the participants to share their experiences of being with a gang. The participants were allowed to talk freely about their experiences and feelings as gang members. The researcher found

that the participants were very eager to use this opportunity to voice their opinions. The researcher was flexible with his interview agenda and did not resort to putting the questions in a fixed format to the participants. He made use of clarifying questions and reflective summaries to ensure that no detail was misunderstood. Great care was taken not to distort the data as Rubin and Rubin (1995) recommended. The researcher made appropriate use of his personal experience in a similar setting to interpret certain phrases that the interviewees used. Thus the interviewer did not seek to clarify every potentially dubious word or phrase. The researcher took the risk of missing the full meaning at the reward of gaining rapport with the participants. The researcher *identified himself with the mindset of the lifestyle of a gang member* by using words and phrases that the gang members used, when clarifying and probing in the interviews. By demonstrating an understanding of basic gang concepts that the interviewees used, the rapport between the researcher and participant was enhanced considerably. Holding back on clarifying questions when it comes to gang stories encouraged the participants to give more information. The second question was posed to the participant at a later stage in the interview when the interviewer felt that it was fitting, and that the participant's trust has been gained. In some interviews this stage was reached spontaneously without the researcher having to ask it; in some cases even earlier in the interview.

The participants were in general not very articulate which made it necessary for the researcher to be more directive at times with his clarification questions. In the final analysis particular note was taken of those questions that could be considered as leading questions. The researcher treated the information that was prompted by these leading questions with much caution, triangulating it with the other information.

The researcher did self-reflection during the data collecting process, to increase his awareness of his own attitudes and feelings in the research-process. The researcher found that certain interviews strongly influenced his mindset. For

instance the interview with Vincent left an indelible impression on the mind of the researcher. These strong feelings had to be contained so that it would not bias the analysis of the other interviews. The researcher kept record on how his mindset was influenced after the interviews and also by reading and hearing reports on gang activities in Cloetesville as well as the greater Cape Town area. In the course of the study the interviewer was widely informed through contacts with several ex-gang members.

6.7 ANALYSIS

6.7.1 Transcribing of interviews

Verbatim transcriptions of the recorded interviews were done to obtain as much information as possible and to minimize loss of valuable information during preliminary phases. The transcriptions of the interviews were recorded with the aid of Microsoft Word for Windows 95. The transcript of the interview with Richardo is included in Appendix B.

Further analysis was done according to the three phases described by Strauss and Corbin (1990).

6.7.2 Open coding

Before starting the open coding phase, the researcher read through the whole transcript several times to obtain some form of understanding of the interview as a whole - that is, of how the participant perceived the reality of gang membership in its totality. The interpretative approach was followed in the course of the analysis. The researcher approached the transcripts with no preset theoretical inclinations which means he had no prior list of codes. Miles and Huberman (1994) recommended software packages to handle qualitative data analysis, but since these were not available, the researcher used a normal MS-

Word file that was divided in three columns to do the analysis. In the middle column the transcript was pasted. The first column was used to record the codes. The last column was used to type in any remarks that the researcher wanted to record about aspects of the script. These remarks included definitions and descriptions of concepts used in the transcript, clarifications of the text and remarks on the methodology used and other events that happened during the interview that were not recorded in the transcript. The researcher will now illustrate how the analysis was done at the hand of an extract from the interview with Richardo.

Ons was net 'n klomp vriende bymekaar. Nou, hoe kan ek dit nou vir jou stel. Soos jy mos weet hier daar is drie groot gangs - Americans, Vietnam Rotte en ons - ons Homeboys. Nou ja sien jy die Americans. Ons het mos nie van hulle draad gehou nie, sien jy. Hulle wou ons straat oorgevat het sien jy. Eintlik hulle wil die hele Dal oorgevat het, sien jy. Maar ons ons hou mos nie daarvan nie sien jy. Toe net daar waar die stryery gekom het. Wat ons met mekaar baklei het sien jy. Nou ons en die Rotte, ons staan saam, sien jy. Die Americans hulle bots met die Rotte ook. Daai kan ook seker 'n rede wees hoekom hulle met ons ook bots. Dis hoekom die hele ding... hoekom ons vir hulle baklei het.

Nou die ding hoe ek een geword het… Dit is omdat al my vriende, al my vriende wat ek ken, behoort aan bendes.

In the open coding phase the researcher purposed to highlight the main aspects from the transcript. The main aspects drawn from the above extract were *friendships*, the *names* of the different gangs, the *conflict between the gangs* and how this *conflict originated*. The researcher went through the whole transcript in likewise manner to draw the main aspects from the interview and loosely assigned open codes to these aspects. After this the researcher read through the transcript and open codes again to verify the relevance of these codes to the

research question. Using *friendships* as an example: The researcher would ask himself why is *friendships* important to the way Richardo construct meaning out of his gang membership? The extract revealed that Richardo joined the gang because all his friends belong to gangs. The researcher read through the whole transcript again to see if the analytic importance of the code *friendships* was demonstrated in the rest of the data and also to check if there were any discrepancies in the data. In other words, did the context explain why *friendships* was important to Richardo's construction of meaning of gang membership or did this code just appear once? Was there any contradictory evidence to the function that this code played in the construction? Was there any other/additional functions that this code played in the participant's construction of gang membership? Going through the transcript revealed that *friendships* was one of three reasons why Richardo joined the gang. (The other two are *retaliation* and *family members.) Friendships* appear eight times in the interview and thus established its importance in the analysis. The code *friendships* has an added function in that it described why Richardo was motivated to **remain** a member of the Homeboys. Thus the open code *friendships* was expanded along two dimensions, *motivation to join the gang,* and *motivation to remain a gang member.* The output from this phase looked like this:

CODE	SCRIPT	REMARKS
	. . .	
MOT-FR/J **GANG-NM** **CONF-OR**	*Ons was net 'n klomp vriende bymekaar. Nou, hoe kan ek dit nou vir jou stel. Soos jy mos weet hier daar is drie groot gangs - Americans, Vietnam Rotte en ons - ons Homeboys. Nou ja sien jy die Americans. Ons het mos nie van hulle draad gehou nie, sien jy. Hulle wou ons straat oorgevat het sien jy. Eintlik hulle wil die hele Dal oorgevat het, sien jy. Maar ons ons hou mos nie daarvan nie sien jy. Toe*	

GANG-NM **CONF-G** **MOT-FR/J**	*net daar waar die stryery gekom het. Wat ons met mekaar baklei het sien jy. Nou ons en die Rotte, ons staan saam, sien jy. Die Americans hulle bots met die Rotte ook. Daai kan ook seker 'n rede wees hoekom hulle met ons ook bots. Dis hoekom die hele ding... hoekom ons vir hulle baklei het. Nou die ding hoe ek een geword het... Dit is omdat al my vriende, al my vriende wat ek ken, behoort aan bendes.* . . .

6.7.3 Axial coding

In the next phase of axial coding, the open codes were dimensionalised according to what aspect of the gang membership they describe or refer to. *Friendships* was then coded as *MOT-FR/J* (*friendship as a motivation to join the gang*), and *MOT-FR/M* (*friendship as a motivation to remain a gang member*). *Friendship*, *retaliation* (*MOT-RET/J*) and *family members* (*MOT-FAM/J*) were grouped together under the coded category, *MOTIVATION TO JOIN THE GANG.*

In similar fashion the other codes from the extract, the *names* of the gangs, and *conflict* were processed to become the *GANG-NM* and *CONF-G* and *CONF-OR*. The code *name of gang* (*GANG-NM*) was grouped under the category *CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GANG*. The rest of the interview featured the names of different gangs, how they related to each other, and their different characters. The code *conflict* was expanded to form a category of its own, *CONFLICT AS A PART OF THE GANG LIFESTYLE* because of its frequent appearances in the transcript. The abovementioned extract contained two related codes, *conflict between gangs* (*CONF-G*) and *the origin of gang conflict* (*CONF-OR*) which formed part of the abovementioned coded category together with other codes, *attitude towards conflict* (*CONF-ATT*), *conflict with community*

figures (*CONF-COM*), *consequences of conflict* (*CONF-CON*) and *resolution of gang conflict* (*CONF-RES*). Although these codes overlapped at various instances in the transcript, their frequent appearance in the transcript demanded that a separate code be assigned to them.

An example of the output provided by the axial coding phase of the interview with Richardo is included in Appendix C.

6.7.4 Selective coding

This phase of analysis was done when all the individual transcripts have been analysed according to the processes described in the previous sections 6.7.1 to 6.7.3. A meta-analysis was done of the coded categories from the different interviews. The meta-analysis is the "truth" that is derived from integrating the properties of the coded categories into coherent themes. The current study yielded four central themes that are discussed and described in the next chapter. From these themes an analytic story line was developed. The output of this phase is discussed in the next chapter.

7. DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The style of presentation in section 7.2 differs from the conventional qualitative dissertation because the researcher wished to remain true to the ideal of this study which was to provide a microphone to these youths so that they could tell their stories to the adult world out there. This section called "Ghetto stories" contains extracts of their accounts of their life as a gang member in their township. The idea of this type of presentation was inspired by other ethnographic studies by Van der Walt (1998) and Richardson (1994) who urged qualitative research to explore their own processes and preferences through writing. Section 7.3 contains a discussion of the key findings that emerged from the axial coding phase. In the final section 7.4 a theoretical analysis of the four main themes that emerged from the selective coding phase of the data analysis is discussed.

7.2 GHETTO STORIES

The following stories captured the main points of the accounts that the participants gave of their gang membership. These stories are written in a style that was close to their spoken language. The researcher deliberately moved away from a sophisticated writing style to a style that is more suited to the emic tradition that tells the story from the insider's perspective (Denzin, 1994). This was done in following Denzin's suggestion to scientific interpreters to use "*experience-near concepts - words and meanings that actually operate in the worlds studied" (p.506).* The following section focused on specific aspects from the interviews on which participants placed specific emphasis as deduced from the emotional energy they expended in relating these in course the interviews. These accounts do *not* attempt to provide complete accounts of their construction on gang membership, but the researcher did attempt to pay tribute

to the participants by sharing with the reader important aspects of their lives as gang members.

7.2.1 Case study 1: Mark's "real" story

Regarding Mark the noted essence of the interview was his emphasis on the difference between those that were *real* gang members and those that merely acted like gang members.

Mark was adamant that he was not a gangster. He said that he did not have any "chappies[1]" that prove that he was a gangster. To him the A's were *real* gangsters. The other gangs were just "lighties[2]" - "hulle hou maar net vir hulle gangsters" [they just act as if they are gang members]. According to Mark you have to be brave to be a gangster - "jou hart moet sterk wees" [your heart must be strong]. He concluded that those youngsters who tried to be gang members were afraid of going to prison. They just wanted to get out of the obligation of having to work for their mothers, and so they became "gang members" and hung out on the yard by their leader who took care of them by buying them all the material goods they desired.

He liked hanging with the A's because they were not afraid of going to prison. The A's were *real* gangsters because they did gang stuff. His cousins were also members of the gang. He just went along to "portsight[3]" for them. They were very good to him, and shared the spoils of their robberies with him. Mark did not want to join the gang then because he wanted to finish school first. He did consider joining the A's in the future because he had the heart for the gang life.

---

[1] Chappies – body marks or tattoos that denote the gang's symbols.

[2] Lighties – children or minors

[3] Portsight –to stand watch while fellow gang members commited a crime.

7.2.2 Case study 2: MC's rap

In MC's story the researcher picked up the theme around him and his friends who were just out to have peace and some good times.

MC loved music, especially rap music. He and his cousin used to hang out in the street listening to music. They called themselves the *CB's*. They were a friendly and peaceful bunch and soon others joined them. They changed their name to *BeeCee's,* which meant "peace lovers," because this was what the gang was all about. The gang liked to go to different places, socialising. The gang members looked good (dressed well). They liked to go to clubs and take part in rap and dance competitions. MC and his "bra[4]" liked to rap and they took part in competitions.

Otherwise the BeeCee's went to their hangouts, "Soekmekaar" and "Bellville" where they drank and hung out, sharing gang stories to each other on how they *"dahla"* (fight) and so on. MC liked the gang talk that the members of the BeeCee's engaged in. The more experienced members who had been to prison, shared with the rest the rules of the prison gang system - "die Boeke" [the Books]. As a result MC knew what to do when he went to prison. Even though he did not have a "number," he gave a brave account of himself. *"Ek is 'n sterk frans. Sê 'n 8 of so kom na my toe. Vra vir my aan. Dan kan ek hom mos terug antwoord."* [I am a strong 'frans'. If an "8" or so comes to me, and questions me, then I can answer him.]

Even though the BeeCee's stood for peace, conflict seemed to haunt them at every corner. They just did not succeed in avoiding conflict. When there was trouble they did not stand back. *"...as daar moeilikheid kom, dan hanteer ons dit."* [if there comes trouble, then we handle it]. They were also quite bold in

---

[4] Bra – fellow gang member or friend.

starting fights with other individuals that seemed to be causing trouble - *"uitsort as hulle nie uitsort nie. Sê 'n ander gang wil nie uitsort nie, dan vat ons hulle uit vir 'n party"* [sort them out if they don't want to sort out. If another gang does not want to sort out, we take them out for a party]. The BeeCee's were geared for *"local aksie"* [local action] and had a few guns in their possession for this purpose. Only the senior members of the BeeCee's were allowed to handle the guns because the junior members were considered to be too irresponsible with the weapons. MC admitted that the gang tended to rob the people.

MC used to be rough too. MC himself did not like to fight with a knife because he was afraid that he might kill someone. The "groter ou" [big guy] had a tendency of starting fights when he was drunk. MC did not like all the fighting that the BeeCee's got involved in and wanted to leave the gang because of this. He was once involved in an incident where he stood his ground against a rival gang. They overpowered him while his friend ran away. They hurt MC real bad and he consequently stayed away from the gang for three months. The gang members kept on visiting him in this time, asking him to come with them. MC enjoyed the gang talk so much and the stories that they told of how they "dahla[5]" that he joined them again.

He was in two minds: on the one hand MC wanted to leave the gang because of all the violence that they were involved in; on the other hand all his friends were in the gang and he did not want to lose them. He had semi-resolved this dilemma by not hanging with those members of the BeeCee's that were prone to violence.

---

[5] Dahla – to fight

7.2.3 Case study 3: Richardo loves to chase A's

Richardo became a gang member because all his friends belonged to gangs. He joined the Tee's when his father who was also a member of the Tee's, was shot by a rival gang. Richardo thought that joining the Tee's is the best way of avenging his father's death. *"Wat lekker is van Tee wees, is maar om die A's te jaag."* [the pleasure of being a Tee is to chase the A's.]

Richardo found a big family in the Tee's. *"Sê maar ek is 'n Tee en jy is 'n Tee, nou ons twee is broers van mekaar"* [if I am a member of the Tee's and you are member of the Tee's then we are brothers]. The members supported each other in every way - physically when they had fights, emotionally when one was hurt in the hospital, and economically when a Tee did not have money to go into the club. The Tee's liked to go on social outings and do adventurous stuff. *"Ons is jeug, ons is avontuurlustig"* [we are youth, we are adventurous]. The different gangs liked to play soccer against each other. The Tee's were different from other gangs in the sense that they did not invite new members. All that aspiring members had to do to prove themselves worthy to be a Tee was through something that they could do good. The Tee's initiations were not as tough as other gangs' where you had to kill one of the rival gang's members.

The conflict between the A's and the Tee's started when the A's tried to take over the neighbourhood. The Tee's were only defending their territory but the community blamed them for all the gang conflict. The A's had the favour of the community and were appointed to be on the community watch. They only operated when they were drunk and instigated confrontations with other youth in the streets at night. The Tee's desired safety and peace in the community but the community did not believe in them. Instead the Tee's got the blame for everything that the A's did. The Tee's wanted to achieve this ideal of peace by forming their own neighourhood watch that would be fair. They pledged to refrain from drinking

when they were on duty. They endeavoured to work with the police and community care to rid the township of all its gangs.

Richardo wanted to quit the gang because his mother wanted him to finish school. He felt that all the gang violence was getting too much and wanted to get away from it but that this would take some time to do.

7.2.4 Case study 4: Justin fighting to stay alive

Justin and his friends were fighting to survive in a neighbourhood that was dominated by the gangs.

Justin and his friends were all soccer players who stayed in the same street. They started the Dee's to defend themselves against the A's and the R's that were harrassing them. Each one took the oath of the Dee's saying that they will die as a Dee. As members of the Dee's they hated A's. Each one had the sign of the Dee's which meant that they would never leave the gang. They were committed to one another; to protect and to support one another. When Justin had to go to a family member who stayed far away, another gang member would accompany him in case he got into trouble with other gangs. The Dee's were known as a violent gang - "*ons is almal van vleis en bloed*" [we are all of flesh and blood]. The Dee's always got into trouble with other people in the community as a result of their criminal tendencies and violent behaviour. Fights between the gangs broke out when individual members were attacked by other gangs. Justin did not like to fight in these situations because he then had to defend himself by stabbing one of his attackers, which would then lead to the others making court cases against him.

Justin spent a weekend in the local prison. He knew about the prison gang rules, and so he survived the weekend. "*Daar in die tronk sien jy, jy kan nie nog in daai hoek of in daai hoek gaan sit nie. Jy moet eers wag dat iemand jou kom*

haal van stibela af." [In prison you can not sit or sleep where you want to in the cell. You have to stand at the gate of the cell until someone gives you a place to sleep.] When he would go to a real prison, he would get a number for himself. When you had prison experience, the gangs on the outside respect you. They will allow you to leave the gang if you desire to. *"Dan sal hulle vir jou los, sien jy, omdat hulle weet dat jy harde dinge kry daar binnekant."* [Then they will leave (not hinder) you, because they know that you have experienced the hard life in prison.]

7.2.5 Case study 5: Vincent trying to get away from the violence

Vincent's main thrust was how he tried to get away from his past identity as a member of a syndicate that was notorious on the Cape Flats for their iron rule of violence.

Vincent stayed with his mother in another town where he joined the HL's. Initially the members of the HL's were friendly to him but things became real hot when the H's started shooting up the neighbourhood. Vincent was forced to do what they say or they would make trouble at his house. Vincent could not stand it anymore and moved to this grandmother's house in another town. The H's asked him to come back to them, but he just said that he would think about it.

In his new town he joined the Zee's who were just a group of guys who loved to dance. The Zee's kept on clashing with other gangs who provoked them to fight back. Vincent was the only one of the Zee's who was man enough to fight back and so the rest of the Zee's depended on him to stand up for them. *"My chommies, hulle kan nie hul man staan nie, dan moet ek maar vir hulle man staan. Nou staan ek maar vir hulle man vir enige ding."* [My friends can not stand up for themselves, so now I have to stand up for them. Now I have to stand up for them for everything.]

The other gangs knew that Vincent was an HL once and tried to pick fights with him. Vincent was often forced to defend himself and the gang against other gang members who tried to rob them. This was very difficult especially at school because they were not allowed to wear "tools" (weapons) to school. Vincent was afraid of getting into gang fights at school because he did not want to get expelled from school. The Zee's were determined to finish their school careers. The Bee's, a rival gang, often came into the school grounds from the outside, robbed the pupils on the schoolgrounds and picked fights with the Zee's. Vincent and his friends got into trouble with the school authorities who blamed them because they were afraid and not able to act against these outsiders who came onto the school grounds during school times. The school principal was not able to protect the Zee's from the outside gangs during school hours.

Vincent liked to hang with the Zee's because they also prefered to stay out of trouble as far as possible. This was very difficult because the Zee's could not do anything without getting into confrontations with other gangs, especially the Bee's. Initially the Zee's hung out a lot with the Bee's. This alliance turned sour because of the B's tendency to get into fights with other gangs. When this happened they always asked the Zee's to help them in the gang fights. Consequently the Zee's decided to break the alliance and stay clear of the Bee's. The Zee's could not play soccer with the Bee's anymore because this also led to fights with the Bee's. Vincent and three other members of the Zee's partook in the "battles" [dance competitions] as the "*Nothing but troubles.*" They had even stopped dancing because they got into fights with the Bee's after the "battles." Vincent did not want to quit the Zee's because they had such fun times together. The Zee's would for example, make up a bus and go to a dance competition in another town. Vincent felt caught in his past as a member of a hard core gang, the H's, which made life difficult for him as part of his new gang. Vincent did not consider the Zee's as a real gang, because he stated that he used to be a gang member as if he is not one anymore. "*Ek was a gang member gewees.*" [I used to be a gang member.]

7.3 DISCUSSION OF CODED CATEGORIES

In the following section the key findings that emerged from the axial coding phase of the data analysis are discussed. The codes generated in the individual interviews were combined into coded categories. The key findings that are discussed in this section were in most instances applicable to all five participants and were thus aggregated into and presented as one case study.

7.3.1 Friendships with gang members

Friendships with gang members was one of the most noted reasons why the participants in the current study joined the gangs. All of them were friends with the gang members long before they became gang members.

"Ek was mos lankal vrinne met hulle... Hoe ek in die eerste plek ingekom het, een geword het? Hulle was olraait met my in die eerste plek." - Vincent.

[I have been friends with them for a long time... How I joined the gang initially? Initially they treated me well.]

A common factor among the participants was that the gang that they joined operated in the area or the street that they stayed in.

"Ons het in een straat gebly toe stig ons sommer die BCs daar." -Justin

[We stayed in the same street, so we started the BC's there.]

Living close to the gang made it easier for the participants to become members. Since their friends were gang members, they were exposed to the gang's activities and their perceptions of the gang were positively influenced. However, having friends in the gang or gangs, also pressurised them to become gang members as well.

"Nou die ding hoekom ek een geword het: dit is omdat al my vriende wat ek ken, behoort aan bendes." - Richardo.

[I became a gang member because all my friends belonged to gangs.]

7.3.2 Social opportunities

The participants were motivated to remain in the gang, because the gang provided them with new social opportunities, which they did not have access to prior to joining the gang.

" Ons hang nie net op een plek uit nie. Ons hang oral uit." - MC.

[We do not go to one place only. We hang out everywhere.]

Having fun and excitement were great priorites to all the gang members. Thus dancing and meeting women were great attractions to members to remain part of the gang. These activities were organised by the gang for its members.

"Ons is meer met dans te doen, sports, vroumense…" -Vincent.

[We are more involved in dancing, having fun and womanising.]

The gang members provided financial support to needy members to prevent them from being excluded from any social activities.

"Hulle is lief om … miskien nou 'n bus opmaak – deur na 'n jol toe. Dan gaan ek saam. As daar 'n battle kom, dan jol ek saam."-Vincent

[They like to organize a bus to go to a club. Then I go with. If there is a dance competition, then I dance with them.]

Music was central to the gang's activities. The gang members loved singing, listening to music and clubbing. The different gangs "*battled*" against each other in rap and dance competitions.

7.3.3 Camaraderie among gang members

There is a great sense of camaraderie and support among members of the same gang. The gang is like a family and fellow gang members are considered as brothers.

> *"Sê maar ek is 'n Tee en jy is 'n Tee, nou ons twee is broers van mekaar." - Richardo.*
>
> *[If I am a Tee and you a Tee, then we are brothers.]*

This code of camaraderie meant that gang members were committed to physically support a fellow gang member, whenever the need arise.

> *Sê ek kry nie baklei, maar jy kry baklei. En ons is saam. En hulle pak jou aan, dan moet ek uitsteek, want ek is 'n broer. Dit is amper soos 'n familie, 'n groot familie nou, sien jy." - Richardo*
>
> *[If I do not get into a fight but you get into a fight, and we are together, and they outnumber you, then I have to help you because I am your brother. It is like a family; a big family, you see what I mean.]*

Gang members were proactive in ensuring the safety of their fellow members whenever one of them had to go into another gangs' territory.

> *"Ek moet nou alleen opgaan sien jy. Na my auntie-hulle toe of so, dan laat ons een of twee saam met my gaan, sien jy. Hulle is daar sterk bene saam met my. Om saam op te trot. Nou kry ek miskien 'n rol, sien jy, dan rol hulle saam met my. Dan staan ons mos saam as Tee's." - Justin.*
>
> *[If I have to go alone to my aunt, then we will let one or two of the gang members go with me. They are there to support me and to stick with me. If I get into a fight, then they will fight with me. We will stand together as Tee's.]*

Gang members provided genuine emotional support to members that are sick or not feeling well.

> "Ek weet as ek iets makeer - miskien in die hospitaal lê of so - dan
> weet ek my vriende is daar om te support." - Richardo.
> [I know that if I am sick - maybe in hospital or so - then my friends
> will be there to support me.]

7.3.4 Material rewards of gang membership

The gang leaders provided both financially and physically for their members so that they did not have to work for a living.

> " Hulle smokkel miskien - hul leader- dan bly hulle almal daar op die
> yard... Hy koop vir hulle klere en skoene." – Mark
> [They deal with illegal merchandise - their leader- they stay on the
> yard [shebeen]...He buys clothes and shoes for them.]

Being a gang member freed the adolescent of the social obligation of having to provide for an income to their parents. Many the youth chose gang membership to escape the unpleasant obligation of having to go to school and work.

> "Hulle wil nie gaan werk vir hul ma's nie… Wil nie skool toe gaan nie. Gaan
> weg van die huis af; dan word hulle sommer gangsters." - Mark.
> [They do not want to work for their mothers. They do not want to go to
> school. They go away from home and become gang members.]

Gang members dressed well and this attracted prospective gang members. Resources to maintain their external appearance were acquired through robbing and stealing from other people. The spoils of criminal activities were shared amongst all the members of the gang, including those not participating in the activities.

> "Of soos die goede wat hulle afvat. Keppies of so... dan vra ek hulle gee
> daai vir my." - Mark.
> [The goods that they take - caps or so- I ask them give that to me.]

7.3.5 Social perspectives of gang members

Parents' influences on the adolescent's gang membership varied from full support to discouragement and strong admonishing to leave the gang.

> *"My ma het ook al gepraat met my. Ek moet skool gaan." - Richardo*
>
> *[My mother has talked to me: I must go to school.]*
>
> *"My pa was eintlik die leier van die Tee's gewees. Toe is hy doodgeskiet. Nege bullets. Dit is hoe ek begin't het." - Richardo.*
>
> *[My father was the leader of the Tee's. Then he was shot dead. Nine bullets. That is how I began.]*

The gang members still shared many of the social beliefs of the society, such as values regarding church and school.

> *"Ek, myself gaan kerk toe; ek gaan klas" - Richardo.*
>
> *[I go to church. I attend (confirmation) classes].*

Other gang members showed a disregard of their responsibilities towards their parents in refusing to work for their parents or go to school and choosing to live with their leaders on the yard. Gang members' attitudes towards school also varied. Gang members tended to not look far into their future. Even those members who wanted to finish school did not know what they want to do after that.

> *"Hulle smokkel miskien ...hul leader... dan bly hulle daar. Hulle wil nie gaan werk vir hul ma's nie. Wil nie skool toe gaan nie. Gaan weg van die huis af; dan word hulle sommer gangsters" - Mark.*
>
> *[They deal illegally...stay with their leader. They do not want to work for their mothers. They do not want to go to school. They go away from home and become gangsters.]*

7.3.6 Gang membership status

Prospective gang members were initiated by the gang before they could join the gang. The severity of these initiations varied between the different gangs.

> "... dit werk nie so dat jy eers 'n A moet skiet om 'n Tee te kan wees nie. Jy kan jouself bewys. Sê maar jy is die beste in darts miskien nou of so iets. Dan moet ons jou eers in 'n battle vat. Daar's nie nog wette nie. As ons kan sien jy kan byhou by ons, dan kan jy kom aansluit" - Richardo.
>
> [... it does not mean you have to shoot an A in order to become a Tee. You can prove yourself. If you are the best in darts or anything similar, then we will compete against you. There are not any laws. If we see that you can keep up with us, then you can join.]

Those members who engaged in extreme criminal and violent activities were afforded the higher status of being called "gangsters" – that is, real gang members. Members of syndicates and gang members who have been detained in prison are classified as real gangsters.

> "Nou die grotes, hulle is gangsters. Jy kan basically nie vir ons gangsters noem nie. Maar vir hulle, hulle is gangsters." - Richardo.
>
> [The big ones are gangsters. You can not call us gangsters. But they, they are gangsters.]

Gang members swore an oath of allegiance to the gang during initiation which made them hesitant to quit their membership.

> "Jy't mos die sign daar amper. Jy moet mos 'n eed aflê, sien jy. So dat ...jy haat die A's, sien jy. So dan sê die ouens miskien 'naai ek gaan mos 'n Tee dood." - Richardo.

[You have the sign. You have to take an oath that means that you hate the A's. Then the guys respond by saying: 'I am going to die as a Tee.']

It was dangerous for gang members to leave the gang because they would become vulnerable to attacks from rival gangs who might still think they are gang members.

"...die probleem is: jou chommies wat weet jy is nie meer 'n gangster nie, sien jy. Maar die ander ouens teen wie jy baklei het, nie. Nou loop jy lekker werk toe miskien, sien jy. Daai ouens gaan jou pla sien jy. Hulle gaan nog altyd dink jy is 'n gangster, sien jy." - Justin.

[The problem is that your friends will know that you are not a gangster anymore, but the other guys against whom you fought, do not know that you are not a gangster. When you walk to work, they will harass you. They will still think that you are a gangster.]

7.3.7 Perceptions of gangs (gang typologies)

There was a difference in the way gangs were perceived by the youth and other members of the community. This difference in perception seemed to correlate with the typology of the gang. The syndicates were esteemed higher than defense gangs or corner kids because they engaged qualitatively and quantitatively in greater measures of violence and criminal activities. Consequently members of syndicate gangs were esteemed highly by the youth and other gang members alike.

"Die Tee's is 'n klomp lighties ... Maar die A's is ouer - hulle weet wat aangaan." - Mark.

[The Tee's are just boys ...but the A's are older - they know what is going on.]

This distinction in gang typology was not actively acknowledged by the participants, but was apparent in their referring to syndicates as *"real"* gangs and street gangs (defense gangs and corner kids) as *not real* gangs. Gang members that did not belong to syndicates were consequently not considered as real gang members.

> *"Hulle is nie nog gangsters nie. Hulle hou maar net vir hulle gangsters." - Mark.*
>
> *[They are not gangsters. They just act as if they are gangsters.]*

7.3.8 Gang structure/organization

Leadership in the gang was informal rather than formal.

> *" Daar is 'n ou in onse groep, 'n senior. As hulle nie wil hoor nie, dan kyk hy hulle aan... Nee, daar's nie eintlik 'n leader nie, maar ons vat die grote as die ou wat na ons kyk." – MC.*
>
> *[There is one guy in our group who is a senior. If they do not want to listen, then he reprimands them...He is not actually the leader, but we accept that the big guy is the one who looks after us.]*

Within the gang there were informal distinctions made between members based on the level of participation in gang activities and the experience of the gang member.

> *"So ons trust nie meer vir die juniors met die goed [guns] nie; ons gee dit either vir die seniors om te hou." – MC.*
>
> *[So we do not trust the juniors with the stuff anymore; we rather give them to the seniors to keep.]*

7.3.9 The gang culture

Street gangs are classified by the prison gang system. This means that the character of the street gang would be determined by the ranking (numbering) they received according to the prison gang system.

> *"Die 26...Ons is almal vleis en bloed, ons is T's" - Justin.*
>
> *[26... we are all flesh and blood (we stand for violence); we are T's.]*

Gang members who have been to prison are afforded certain privileges when outside the prison. A gang member who had been to prison was allowed the freedom to leave the gang because the gang respected members who had been to prison.

> *"...jy gaan nou tronk toe, jy kom terug. Jy gee aan vir die ouens jy wil*
> *' n beter lewe kyk. Jy stel nie nog belang om 'n gangster te wees nie.*
> *Dan sal hulle vir jou los, sien jy. Omdat hulle weet dat jy harde dinge*
> *kry daar binnekant. Jy weet hoe lyk die wêreld" -Justin.*
>
> *[You go to prison and come out. You tell the guys you want to look*
> *for a better way of life. You do not want to be a gangster anymore.*
> *Then they will leave you because they know that you have tough*
> *experiences inside. You know what the world is like.]*

Any gang member who had not been to prison and consequently did not have a *"number,"* was classified as a *"frans"*. A "frans" was a gang member that was not initiated into the prison gang system.

> *" Ek is 'n sterk frans. Sê 'n ou - 'n agt of so kom na my toe. Vra vir*
> *my aan. Dan kan ek hom terug beantwoord - nou daai's 'n sterk*
> *frans. En 'n swak frans: as 'n bra kom, hy kan nie aangee nie."*
>
> *[I am a strong "frans". If a guy who is an 8 comes to me and tries*
> *me, then I can give him an answer (stand strong). That is what a*
> *strong "frans" does. A weak "frans" can not stand up for himself*
> *when another guy tries him.]*

The prison gang rules applied to all gang members who entered the prison. Therefore the gang members with prison experience informed the rest about the prison gang rules so that they would know how to conduct themselves in prison.

> *"Ek ken mos nie eintlik lekker die Boeke nie, maar die twee brase by ons - die een is 'n 6 en die ander is 'n 8 - wat die Boeke ken" - Justin.*
>
> *[I do not know the Books (prison gang rules) well, but the two members of our gang - one is a 6 and the other is a 8 - who knows the Books.]*

Gang members bonded with each other through the use of gang language, which was very appealing and stimulating to them. The members liked to engage in story telling when they were together.

> *"Ons het weer begin te praat van daai tyd nou. Van hoe ons dahla en so." - MC.*
>
> *[We started to talk about the past; about how we used to dahla (fight).]*

The gang members in their gang language used their own new words to refer to ordinary daily concepts such as fat girls, money, cigarettes and many other words that better describe their activities.

> *"Miskien nou 'n vet kind ... dan sê ons jy 'slapboem,' soos daai. Maar ons sê nie vir haar sy's vet nie; maar ons sê jy 'slapboem', soos daai. En entjies call ons gebruikers of taloepsa... En geld: sommer gee my 'n paar krone." - MC.*
>
> *[A fat girl...we call her 'slapboem'. We do not say she is fat; we just say 'slapboem.' Cigarettes we call 'gebruikers' or 'taloepsa'. Money we say: give me a few 'krone']*

7.3.10 The role of prison in gang life

The fear of going to prison had an inhibiting effect on the activities and degree of participation in crime among gang members. Gang members who had not been to prison were afraid of going to prison and were consequently less willing to engage in more serious criminal activities. Gang members who were ex-prisoners were more uninhibited and participated in more serious crimes. They were not afraid of going to prison again and as a matter of fact were in and out of prison regularly.

> *"Die Tee's hulle was nog nie in die tronk nie. Daarom hulle is bang - hulle sal nie nog sulke troubles aanvang nie. Maar die A's hulle ken al sulke goete. Hulle is nie nog bang vir daai goed nie " - Mark.*
>
> *[The Tee's were not in prison yet. Therefore they are afraid and would not engage in such troubles (serious crimes). But the A's are familiar with those things (serious crimes). They are not afraid of those things (serious crimes).]*

Going to prison signified the decision of the individual gang member to go *deep* into the gang life. Those who do not want to go deeper into the gang life, wanted to avoid doing time in prison.

> *"Ek is bang vir die tronk. Ek wil nie diep ingaan nie." - Mark.*
>
> *[I am afraid of going to prison. I do not want to go in deep.]*

A gang member who had received a "number" in prison was bound to the oath of loyalty to the prison gangs. Leaving the gang life was seen as violating the code and as punishment for this, his fellow prison gang members might require his head (kill or assault him).

> *"Nou soek hulle jou mos in die nommerskap sien jy. Nou kan jy hulle nie aangee nie, sien jy. Dan slaan hulle jou kop sien jy, want jy speel mos met die nommerskap." - Justin.*

[They will summon you because you have pledged loyalty to the prison gang system. When you do not respond appropriately to their summonse, they will assault/kill you because you violate the rule of the prison gang system.]

For some gang members to have a number, is an achievement. They were not afraid of going to prison, but were actually looking forward to it.

" Ek het nie 'n nommer nie. Ek het mos nog nie rerig tronk toe gegaan nie, of so nie, sien jy. As ek nou regtig tronk toe gaan, dan gaan ek my nommer miskien kry." -Justin.

[I do not have a number. I did not go to a real prison. If I go to a real prison, then I will get a number for myself.]

7.3.11 Activities of gang members

The gangs spent much of their time hanging out on the *"yard"* [shebeen], at the leader's house or going on *"skarrelbaan"* [walking around in the neighbourhood]. These activities were the breeding grounds for the gang's criminal endeavours. Alcohol abuse and smoking were common among gang members.

"Elke Vrydag daar...ons is 'n paartjies daar by Soekmekaar. Dan drink ons en wat-wat. Dan val ons met die belsies oor die kop, dan kyk ons vir die ander brase..." - MC.

[Every Friday... we are in a group at Soekmekaar (a forested area) where we drink. When intoxicated, we go to find our other friends.]

7.3.12 Gang violence

There were some gangs that were in constant battle with each other. Other gang members harrassed and intimidated the youth in the community. As a reaction

against this harrassment and intimidation these youth turned to forming (defense) gangs to defend themselves.

> *"Ons loop maar in 'n groepie in, sien jy. Gaan miskien winkel toe. Of na ander vrinne toe. Pla die A's ons en so. En die R's hieronder. Sien jy toe dink ons dit is genoeg dat die ouens ons so afdruk. Ons moet mos 'n slag opstaan. Toe stig hulle maar die bende, die Tees." - Justin.*
>
> *[We walk in a group when we go to the shop or to friends. Then the A's harrass us. And the R's there, you see what I mean. So we thought that it was enough that they were harrassing us in such a manner. We must stand up for ourselves. So we formed the gang, the Tee's.]*

The gangs exercised territorial rule over certain streets, which made it unsafe for members from other gangs to enter these areas.

> *"Ons straat is mos Pinestraat. As hulle vir my gaan kry, wat 'n Tee is, in Primrosestraat, dan gaan hulle my doodmaak." -Richardo*
> *[Our street is Pine Street. If they find me who is a Tee, in Primrose Street, then they will kill me.]*

The conflict between rival gangs was enflamed by repeated attempts to gain territorial supremacy over the other gangs.

> *"Hulle wou ons straat oorgevat het sien jy. Eintlik wil hulle die hele Dal oorgevat het, sien jy. Maar ons hou mos nie daarvan nie, sien jy. Toe net daar waar die stryery gekom het. Wat ons met mekaar baklei het." - Richardo.*
> *[They tried to take over our street. Actually they wanted to take over the whole Dal. But we did not like that and that was where the conflicts started - we started to fight each other.]*

Conflict between gangs that were not archrivals was refueled when intoxicated members assaulted and damaged the property that belonged to other gang members or members of the public.

> *"Hulle sit eers op 'n yard, ne. Drink hulle dronk. Dan kom hulle af. Dan*
> *wil hulle die mense wat laat in die straat loop, wil hulle staan en klap.*
> *Asof die Dal aan hulle behoort." - Richardo.*
> *[They sit at the yard and drink till they are drunk. Then they come*
> *down and want to harass the people that are walking late in the*
> *street, as if the Dal belonged to them.]*

Even though the gang members in general preferred to live peaceably, they always landed in conflict situations. This was normal and acceptable to gang members who did not hesitate to fight back whenever another gang challenged them or acted in a way that they feel is inappropriate or offensive to them.

> *" Maar ons verkeer maar net rustig ... as daar moeilikheid kom*
> *dan hanteer ons maar die moeilikheid...Sê 'n ander gang wil nie*
> *uitsort nie, dan vat ons hulle maar uit vir 'n party." - MC.*
> *[We live peaceably ... if trouble comes, we handle it. If another*
> *gang messes with us, then we fight it out with them.]*

Minor conflicts between two gangs were often triggered by the presence of girls or when gang members compete for the attention of the girls.

> *"Nou as die Tee's kom ...dan wil hulle altyd die vroumense*
> *slaan...As hulle vroumense wil seermaak, dan wil ons vir hulle ook*
> *seermaak." - Vincent.*
> *[When the Tee's come ...then they always wanted to hit the*
> *girls...If they intend to hurt the girls, then we want to hurt them as*
> *well.]*

7.3.13 Gang conflicts at school

The rival gangs that fought against each other in the streets extended their battles to the school grounds if the members of the respective gangs were attending the same school.

> "Ons stry hulle; toe wil hulle bots sommer op die skoolgrond. Toe los ons maar vir hulle. Toe slaan hulle een van ons ouense...Toe het hulle 'n ou van ons aangerand. Hulle was drie op die ou. As ons saam spring, dan haal hulle tools uit. Ons het mos nie tools op die skool nie. Ons dra nie sulke goed skool toe nie." - Vincent.

> [We were conflicting with them and so they wanted to fight on the schoolgrounds. We just walked away. Then they hit one of us... They assaulted one of us. They were three who attacked him. If we join the fight, then they take out their weapons. We do not have weapons at school. We do not carry weapons to school.]

Pupils that were involved in gang activities find themselves in disfavour with the school authorities. Pupils were in general not allowed to carry knives to school, and those who received first warning were at risk of being expelled from school if they transgress this law again. The school principal was strict in acting against pupils involved in gang related incidents.

> "Ons was een keer in die kantoor oor 'n gangster saak. As ons nou weer stront aanvang word ons gepos van die skool ...Die Tee's wil net tools dra. Maar ons kan nie mes dra nie. Dan is ons weer in die kantoor..." - Vincent.

> [We were in the principal's office once about a gang incident. If we are involved in any misconduct, then we are going to be expelled from school... The Tee's just want to carry weapons with them but we can not carry our knives because then we land up in the office again.]

Gang members who were not allowed to carry weapons to school were unsafe because they were vulnerable to attacks from other gangs who came onto the school grounds during school time. The school authorities were not able to provide these pupils with sufficient protection.

> *" Laasjaar toe wil die mister P niks verstaan van die Tee's nie. Elke keer as die Tee's oorkom, dan sê hy hy kan niks aan die saak doen nie. 'Kom ek bel die police'e.' Dan kom die police'e tot hiersa. Dan gaan hulle weer...En as hy ons protect, dan sê hy ons moet in die kantoor staan. Dan kom hulle tot in die kantoor, dan kom haal hulle ons." - Vincent.*

> *[Last year mister P did not want to hear any complaints about the Tee's. Every time the Tee's came onto the school grounds, he said that he could do nothing about it. 'Let me phone the police.' Then the police comes there and they go again. If he protects them, then he tells us to come into his office. Then they come into his office and fetch us.]*

Gang members who wanted to finish their school careers, found it increasingly difficult to stay out of trouble because they were induced into fighting to defend themselves by other gang members that were also pupils but not afraid of being expelled from school. The last mentioned gang members carried knives and other weapons to school.

Gang members were also vulnerable to attacks from other gangs when walking home after school since they had to go through rival gangs' territories without any weapons to protect themselves.

> *"As die skool nou miskien uit is, dan stap ons daar op. Ons gaan huis toe. Dan keer daar altyd ouens vir ons voor... Dan kom hulle, dan skud hulle ons. Soos laas keer: hulle skud ouens van ons. Toe*

klap ons mos hulle hande af ...hulle gaan na hulle yard toe; hulle gaan haal tools daar. Toe moes ons hardloop. Want as ons gebly het, sal hulle vir ons seergemaak het." - Vincent.

[When the school is out and we walk home, then the guys always stop us on the way... and body search us. Like the last time they body searched some of our guys. We fended their hands off our bodies. They went into their shebeen and fetched their weapons. So we had to run. If we stayed they would have hurt us.]

7.3.14 Consequences of gang violence

As a result of the frequent occurrences of gang violence, gang members were denied access to many public places like the clubs and discos.

"Hulle gaan nie meer clubs toe nie. Meesal daar gebeur iets in die jol en dan jaag hulle ons weg. Nou ban hulle ons van die jol." - Mark.

[They do not go to clubs anymore. Most of the times something happens at the dance club and then they chase them away. Now they are banned from the dance club.]

The gang members have been chased away from certain *yards* because they robbed the yard owner's clients when they are intoxicated with alcohol.

"Dan vat hulle die ou se ring af, of wat, vat sy skoene af, sien jy. Nou die ou van die yard, hy gaan miskien sê 'jeh julle kan nie meer hier aankom nie - julle rob dan die mense.' Die ouens gaan mos nie hul monde hou nie... dan ruk die ou miskien 'n gun uit. Dan moet ons weer skarrel... dan kan ons nie meer op die yard kom nie." -Justin.

[They take the guy's ring or his shoes. The owner of the yard will say 'You can not come here anymore because you rob the people.' Our guys are not going to stay silent...then the owner takes out his gun. Then they have to run... then they can not come to the yard anymore.]

The gang members clashed frequently with the law as a result of their violent behaviours.

> "Nou kry jy miskien - hoe kan ek sê - uithaak op jou, sien jy. Nou raak die ou kwaad; steek jy hom miskien. Dan maak hulle sake en so aan. " - Justin.
>
> [When you get somebody jumping you ...and you stab him. Then they make a civil case against you.]

7.3.15 Seeking peace

The gangs generally did not want to fight but felt that conflict was unavoidable.

> "...ons pla vir niemand nie. Nou as ons miskien nou moeilikheid kry, dan moet ons maar moeilikheid aanvaar. Dan moet ons maar aan terug fight. Ons het nou nie 'n keuse nie." - Vincent
> [we do not bother any one. If we get trouble, then we have to accept the trouble. Then we have to fight back. We do not have a choice.]

The gangs made various attempts to promote peace between the gangs. They organised sport events where the gangs competed against each other.

> "Elke yard, elke smokkelhuis het 'n span, sien jy. En nou elke bende het ook 'n span. Soos die As het ook 'n span. Die R's het 'n span. En ons het ook 'n span...Dan speel ons teen mekaar." - Richardo.
> [Every yard has a team and every gang has a team. The A's, the R's and us each have a team. Then we play against each other.]

The community neighbourhood watch was perceived as one of the means to counter gang violence and establish peace and safety in the neighbourhood. The gangs wanted to ensure that they would not be discriminated against in the course of negotiations for a safer neighbourhood. One way of doing this was by being a part of the official

neighbourhood watch of the community. Those who did not succeed in this opted for the second option of starting their own neighbourhood watch.

> " ons gaan ons eie buurtwag stig. Ons gaan regverdig wees. Ons gaan nie drink nie. Niks moeilikheid nie. Ons gaan regverdig wees. Ons gaan try om al die bendes uit te kry uit die Dal uit. Soos hulle in die Vlei gemaak het, so gaan ons maak. Ons gaan saamstaan. Ons vat die Community care. Ons gaan miskien saam met die police'e praat, saam met die Community care." - Richardo.
>
> [We are going to start our own neighbourhood watch. We are going to be fair. We will not drink. No trouble. We are going to be fair. We are going to try to get all the gangs out of the Dal, just like they did in the Vlei. We are going to stand together with the Community care (local municipality. We are going to talk with the police and the Community care).]

Some gangs have made collective decisions to avoid situations and activities that led to conflict with other gangs in order to live in peace.

> "Nou van die Tee's kan ook dans… As hulle wil battle, dan sê ons maar net 'Nee', want ons weet dat as hulle miskien battle en hulle verloor, dan wil hulle altyd moeilikheid maak. " -Vincent.
>
> [The Tee's can also dance… If they want to battle, then we decline because if we battle them and they loose then they will make trouble.]

Individual gang members who wanted to get away from the violence, sought to minimise their interactions with those members of their gang that were more prone towards violence.

> " Die ouens wat so rof is, ek hang nie eintlik met hulle nie." - MC.
>
> [The guys that are so rough, I do not hang around them.]

Gang members, however, could not escape the violent activities that their gangs engaged in and so some of them tried to soften the effects of their participation in violence by not using lethal weapons such as knives and guns when they fight other gangs.

" Nee, ek hou nie van druk nie; vuiste slaan, brickies - daai's al" -MC.

[No, I do not like to stab people (with a knife). I only use my fists and bricks.]

7.3.16 Community participation

The community played an active part in the negotiations for peace among the gangs. The members of the community favoured certain gangs and prejudiced against others and this is a stumbling block to the goal of achieving peace in the neighbourhood.

"Die gemeenskap vat dit so: ons is gangsters. Ons wil nie eintlik nie. Baie aande hou ons vergaderings en sulke goed, maar die gemeenskap wil nie verstaan nie, sien jy ...Elke ding wat gebeur, dit is net ons. Ons moet die skuld daarvoor dra." - Richardo.

[The community's orientation is: we are gangsters. We do not want to be gangsters. Several evenings we had meetings with them but they do not want to understand. Every thing that happened are blamed on us. We must carry the blame for it.]

7.4 THEORETICAL ANALYSIS OF MAIN THEMES

A further analysis of the individual case studies was done to form a single data set. This analysis was done through selective coding of the coded categories of the individual case studies. The output of this analysis revealed four themes that describe the construction of gang membership in the current setting. The four themes that were common to all five interviews were (1) exposure to gang members, (2) support, (3) conflict and (4) the gang culture. The concepts of

the theoretical perspectives could *not* be applied to the complete range of the accounts of gang membership as described in the current study because they respectively lacked thoroughness along certain dimensions when seeking to explain the participants' experiences as gang members. The theories that are discussed under each theme were chosen because they provide the most plausible explanations to that specific theme.

7.4.1 Social learning theory and exposure to gang members

Friendship with the gang members and living in the setting were the foremost reasons why the the youth in the current study became gang members.

> *"ek het nie nog baie chommies nie… Die A's is vrinne wat bende goed doen." – Mark*
> *[I do not have many friends… The A's are friends that engage in gang activities.]*

All the participants noted that the gang that they joined operated in the same streets that they lived.

> *"Ons het daar elke aand tape geluister…Ander ouens kom oor om by ons aan te sluit. Nou en dan change ons die naam." – MC.*
> *[We listened to music every night …The other came over to join us, and so we changed the name.]*

As a result of this the participants received lots of exposure to the gang members as well as to the gangs' activities. *Social learning theory* best explains the process that is happening prior to the participant becoming a gang member. Through the participants' *association* with the gang members as friends, they learnt that the gang would be a beneficial group to belong to. Living in the same street and setting where the gang operated, afforded the participants many

opportunities to *observe* the gang's operations. In their observations of the gang members they learnt that they would receive the rewards of camaraderie, material gains (money) and lots of social opportunities if they became gang members. The friendships that the participants had with the gang members were strong interpersonal attractions that drew them into gang membership.

Living in the same setting as the gang provided lots of opportunities for the participants to join the gangs, and also made the process of joining the gang easier. In these friendships they found that the gang members had similar interests to theirs. These commonalities were strong reinforcements for joining the gang. Another characteristic of the friendships within the gang was their unconditional acceptance and loyalty to their members. Observing the harmonious and effective interaction between the gang members from the outside reinforced their decision to become a member of that gang.

Of interest is the fact that in the current setting, the gangs did not engage in any form of active recruitment of members. The established culture of gangs in the neighbourhood setting seemed to be sufficiently strong to draw new members.

7.4.2 Person perception and support

Support was the dominant reason for gang members remaining in the gang. The gang provided emotional, physical and financial support to its members. The gang provided emotional support through the friendships that existed among the members. They accepted every member unconditionally.

> *"Ja, seker omdat ek nou 'n HL is. Nou kom die ouens elke keer na ons toe. Toe sê hulle is nog olraait, ek moet nog bly. Toe sê hulle naai ons gaan saam battle. Ons staan saam." – Vincent*

[Yes, maybe because I am an HL, the other gangs always come to us. Then they said that is okay and that he should stay. They said that they will fight together. They will stand together.]

The gang members had fun together because they had several key interests in common (like soccer and music/dancing). They had access to a lot of social opportunities where they could meet girls. They supported each other physically and every gang member could "*bank*" (depend) on his fellow gang members to support him if he gets involved in a conflict situation that might lead to violence. They also protected each other against attacks from gangs.

"Ek voel maar net proud dat my vriende altyd daar is om my te help."
– Richardo.
[I feel good about the fact that my friends are always there to help me.]

The gang sponsored each other financially. The one participant related an incident where the gang members would pool their resources to pay the entrance fee for the member who did not have money.

" As ek die een miskien nie geld het vir 'n dans nie, dan sal almal 'n rand bygooi tot die geld vol is, sodat daai ou kan ingaan" - Richardo.
[If one does not have money to go into the club/disco, then the rest will contribute one rand each until the entrance fee is covered so that that person can go in.]

The perception of the gang as very supportive was the result of positive personality trait inferences being made of gang's behaviour by the participants. The participants gave lots of contrary accounts where the gang was not supportive to their needs at other specific times.

"Ons het 'n botsing gehad met die Zee's... Daar het kinders van hulle daar by ons gehang. Toe loop ek en Barnie. Toe kom ons winkel toe. Toe kom hulle aan. Toe gooi hulle vir ons met klippe. Toe sê ek vir Barnie 'my hart staan sterk. Kyk hier kom ons dahla.' Toe tel ek twee brickies op; toe gooi ek. Toe kom, toe raak hulle al hoe meerdere. Toe hardloop Barnie, toe staan ek nog vas. Daar wat hulle my gryp, skop my kop en alles daai... Ek het net by die huis gesit...Dit was so drie maande" – MC.*

[We had a fight with the Zee's...Some of their girls were hanging with us. Barnie and I left to go to the shop. They also arrived there. They started throwing us with stones. I told Barnie 'My heart is strong. Let us fight them.' I proceeded to pick up two bricks and threw it at them. They came for us and more of them joined in. Barnie ran, but I stood still. They grabbed me and kicked my head ... I just stayed at home ...It was for about three months.]

These individual accounts were disregarded in favour of the other positive traits that were made of the gang.

"Ons het weer begin te praat stories van daai tyd nou. Van hoe ons dahla en so"– MC.

[We started telling stories of the past – of the battles that we had.]

The gang was perceived as strong (provides protection against other gangs), active (caters for members' social and material needs) and good (had a good cause/reason for its existence). This perception formed a central trait by which the gang was judged. This led to the situation where, even though the participant desired to leave the gang, he found himself justifying why he could not leave the gang at this stage and still had to remain with a gang member. Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance give an accurate explanation why gang members are

hesitant to leave the gang when they have gone through initiations and have received the gang's "chappies" (body marks).

"Hulle vat dit so as hulle bakleiery kry, dan moet ons maar saam staan met hulle - want ons is ook Tee's. Elkeen dra die merk van die Tee's. Ek het een op my linkerskouer. " – Richardo.
[They think that when they get into a fight, then we have to support them – because we are also Tee's. Everyone carries the sign of the Tee's. I have one on my left shoulder.]

The participants selected information that was consistent with their positive personality trait inferences that they held of the gang. The stories that the gang members told each other influenced the social cognition of gang members. Although these stories were few, they were more powerful influences of the minds and perceptions of the gang members than the other negative experiences they had as part of the gang. The halo effect could be applied to how the gang was seen by the participants. The positive label that was attributed to the gang initially resulted in positive aura and qualities ascribed to the gang. For example, the participants would offer friendships with gang members as the reason why they remain gang members, even though there were only a few good friendships maintained within the gang. The participant's perceptions of the gang are different from society's view because they gather social information about gangs in a way that is different from the rest of community. The participants are also in the habit of discarding information that is contrary to their perception of their gang.

"Die ouens wat so rof is, ek hang nie eintlik met hulle nie. Net miskien in die middae, dan gaan ek kyk wat maak hulle. Dan gaan ek op Bellville toe. Dan hang ons in die huis ..."- MC.

[I do not hang out with the guys that are so rough. Sometimes in the afternoons I go to see what they are doing. Then I go to Bellville and we hang out in the house...]

7.4.3 Socio-cultural perspectives and conflict

Violence is part of the culture of the gangs. Gang members accept violence as part of their gang identity. Fighting was a social role that every gang member had to fulfill even though the individual members in the present study generally did not want to partake in gang violence.

"...hulle het ons gedryf dat ons moet baklei. Ons moet baklei. Ons wil nie eintlik baklei nie." – Richardo.

[...they have driven us so far that we have to fight. We must fight. We do not want to fight.]

Peer pressure from other members and loyalty to the gang code forced them to fight. The gang would habitually engage in specific activities that formed the breeding ground for conflicts with other gangs or members of the community. The gang members would congregate in *"yards"* where they would engage in heavy alcohol consumption. Under the influence of alcohol they usually got into confrontations with other gang members or clients that visited the *yard*. In the evenings the gang members would go on *"skarrelbaan"* [walking around in the neighbourhood] or hang out on the stoops of the shops. These gang activities often led to clashes with authority figures – the police, the school principal, and the owners of shebeens and clubs.

"Miskien in die aande wat 'n man moet huis toe kom ... Soos laas week en Vrydag, toe kom daar 'n police van verby ons. Toe skree daar 'n bra

uit ons groep uit: 'Ja jy ry op en af.' Maar hy het aanmekaar op en af gery. Toe stop die ouens. Toe stop die police van. Toe wil hulle vir ons in die van gooi. Toe sny ons. Toe jaag hy mos vir ons. Toe moet ons hardloop." – MC.

[In the evenings when we go home ...Like last Friday a police van passed us. One of the guys in our group shouted: 'Yes, you drive up and down.' Then the police van stopped. They wanted to put them into the back of the van. They ran away. The police chased them and so they had to run.]

Even innocent activities like soccer matches and "battles" (dancing competitions) led to gang fights.

"Ons was eintlik soccer players gewees. Toe begin die ouens te pla. Toe hou ons maar uit die soccer uit." – Justin.

[We used to be soccer players. The other guys started to harass us and so we withdrew from the soccer.]

The violence that the gang always engaged in can possibly be explained from a sociocultural perspective. The gang members were trapped in this cycle of violence, which had social and cultural roots. The level of involvement in gang fights serves as an indicator to the esteem bestowed on a gang member. In this sense gang members with prison experience were esteemed highly in the street because they survived the tough battles and gang fights in prison. Fighting was a norm for the gang. The members generally claimed that they did not want to fight, but had to defend themselves when harassed by other gangs. The brotherhood of the gangs was all about them standing together and fighting together.

"sê maar hulle steek mes, dan moet jy kan steek. Anders as hulle jou kry, dan kan hulle jou dood maak." –Mark.

[If they fight with knives, then you would have to use your knife, otherwise they will kill you if they get you.]

In addition to these, the gangs were always looking for opportunities to prove themselves stronger than other gangs. The territorial battles that the gangs fought provided outlets for them to prove their superiority over rivals.

7.4.4 Group theory and the gang culture

The effect of gang culture can be adequately explained by drawing from concepts of group processes. The gangs had a definite character of their own which distinguished them as a subculture. Within this subculture crime and violence had become norms.

"Ons is almal vleis en bloed..." – Richardo
[We stand for violence[6].]

The gang structure, which resembled that of the prison gangs, laid out *social roles* by which all gang members had to adhere. Different status was awarded to members based on the social roles they played within the gang. The degree of violence and the type of criminal activities that the member engaged in, determined the status of that individual in the gang. Those members that had been to prison received higher status in the ranks of street gangs.

"So ons trust nie meer vir die juniors met die goed nie; ons gee either dit vir die seniors om te hou." – MC.

---

[6] The direct translation "we are all [for] flesh and blood" refers to the character of a "26"-gang who is classified as a violent gang according to the prison gang code.

[We do not trust the junior members with (the guns); we rather let the senior members keep it.]

The gang engaged in many social events that facilitated the bonding of members with each other. Loyalty to the gang and the gang members was a non-negotiable value. This meant that members could not really miss out on these gang activities.

"Hulle het my elke aand gesoek daar by die huis ...toe gaan hulle na 'n braai toe. Toe gaan ek saam met hulle. Daar begin't ek weer in te meng met hulle." – MC.

[They came to look for me at my house every evening…they were on their way to a braai, so I went with them. I started to hang out with them again.]

Cohesiveness among the gang members was enhanced at the hand of these mutual activities that the gang engaged in. The free availability of alcohol and other substances drew gang members closer to each other. Substance abuse was common among gangs and formed one of their core activities. Under the influence of alcohol the members would become more aggressive and more daring. These activities facilitated the accomplishing of group goals by motivating the members to pursue them.

"As almal miskien 'n party gooi, dan is dit lekker. Alles is daar... Ek is mos nie 'n gebruiker van drank nie of van ander goete nie. Maar dit is olraait, daar is mos paar van my vriende wat nie drinkers is nie. Dan sit ons eenkant, miskien met 'n drink met ons kos."- Richardo.

[If there is a party then it is nice. Everything is there…I do not drink alcohol or any of those stuff. It is okay because there is a few friends of mine that do not drink. Then we sit on one side with a cooldrink and our food.]

As group cohesiveness increased, the gang members became more independent from the rest of society. The individual's loyalty to the group grew stronger, which made him more susceptible to group pressure. The members would deviate from the norms of society and take part in gang activities that they themselves did not approve of! The gang member would lose his individuality, as the gang became a more dominating influence on his thoughts and actions.

"Ons moet baklei …Maar die gemeenskap wil ons nie verstaan nie" – Richardo.

[We have to fight…But the community do not want to understand us.]

These social norms and values were rehearsed and passed over from member to member through the stories that they told each other. The gang language consisted of new words that the gang members used specifically in conversing with each other. These words had special meaning and value to the gang members. They were taught and rehearsed to each other through the process of socialization – which took the form of informal story telling. These events were powerful moments of enculturation for the gang members where the values of the gang were sharpened in to the members.

"Ons het weer te begin te praat stories van daai tyd nou –van hoe ons dahla en so…"-MC

[We started to tell the stories of the past again – of how we used to dahla.]

8. CONCLUSION

The present study set itself the goal of describing *and* explaining the construction of gang membership of so-called coloured pupils from a high school in a semi-urban setting. In order to achieve this goal the researcher conducted unstructured interviews with pupils from the setting who were identified as gang members by their guidance teacher. The participants were asked to reflect on how they are experiencing gang life at present and why they joined the gang in the first place. The conclusion of the analysis revealed some important indications that could be tested in subsequent studies. Even though one would be cautious not to generalise the findings of the current study to the wider adolescent population of gang members, one could say with a certain degree of probability that they were representative of the youth in their setting. The findings of the current study could therefore be used as hypotheses about coloured youth (adolescents) in semi-urban areas in the broader South Africa.

8.1 REMARKS ON METHODOLOGY

This study explored how these five participants constructed meaning out of their membership to a youth gang. These constructions were then explained through theory. The events that these gang members experienced and the decisions they made, were conceptualized in a social psychological framework. The rationale behind this was not to inform the participants in social psychological terminology but rather the researcher coming from the stance that they (the participants) are the experts in the research arena of gang membership. The researcher wishes to inform social psychologists and other social scientists about the research arena and in order to do this he used social psychological terminology and theory in communicating his conclusions. The researcher was committed to stay true to the data as presented by the participants. Thus the researcher played the role of translator rather than being the interpreter of the gang culture or phenomenon. The only interpretations came from the participants themselves.

8.2 THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

8.2.1 Implications on the definition of youth in South Africa

Cross' s (1993) definition of youth as a *political categorisation* does not find application in the current study. The findings of the current study suggest that the youth are not defining themselves relative to their political beliefs. On the contrary it seems as if the notion of a politically estranged youth population holds true. Codrington's (1998) definition of *generation X* provides a sound philosophical base on which youth in the current setting could be defined. Also striking in this study of high school pupils is the fact that the school had held no attraction to these individuals. The school authorities only succeeded marginally in deterring the gang members from turning the school grounds into an all-out gang war zone. This is consistent with Codrington's description of generation X as youth that distrust institutions and organisations. Gang members in the present study did not identify themselves by their skin colour or culture. They are deviating from mainstream culture (society) and following the gang culture that follows after prison gang code. The adolescents from this type of settings are drawn to the gang because membership facilitates the process of breaking free from society's rules and obligations.

8.2.2 Operationalising the definition of gangs

The cultural arena of gangs needs to be researched even further. The present study falls short in this area because aspects of the particular gangs to whom the participants belonged, were not described. The present research does suggest that the typology of gangs as described by Pinnock (1982) is not applicable any more. The traces of the origin of the gangs are still evident, but the boundaries of activities that distinguish these are no longer tight. A good example is the difference between syndicates and other street gangs in the present study. Operationalising these definitions is difficult because the syndicates become more involved with gang war against street gangs, and the street gangs challenged the syndicates' rule over illegal sales of goods in the neighbourhood. Thus the difference between syndicates and street gangs

seems to be clear in theory only, while their functions are becoming increasingly similar. An alternative classification of gangs would be according to dominant trait - that is, as *social gangs*, *violent gangs* or *delinquent gangs.*

8.2.3 Social construction of gang membership

Participants in the current setting constructed their understanding and experience of gang membership around the four central themes of (1) exposure to gang members, (2) support, (3) conflict and (4) gang culture. Exposure to the gang was the biggest contributor to the participants' decision to become gang members and this process is adequately explained at the hand of Bandura's (1973) social learning theory. The perception of the gang as supportive explained the reason for the participants retaining membership despite being dissatisfied with certain aspects of gang life (such as the violence). If one could use these case studies as an indicator, 75% of the gang's activities involved conflict and violence. Another important feature of the social construction of gang membership was the group processes that eminated from the gang culture. The strict code of brotherhood and loyalty resulted in gang membership experience being in both friendship and fear. Brown's (1988) description of group dynamics provides good explanations for prevalence of the gang culture.

8.3 CONTRIBUTION TO CURRENT KNOWLEDGE ON GANGS

- A surprising finding is that the present study did not support the common assumption that gang membership is linked to relative deprivation. Although this might have been an underlying reason, it was not actively acknowledged. Thus the politicising of the gangsterism issue may be propaganda used by activists who blame apartheid rules for the current gang problem on the Cape Flats. Though factors like the relocation of families from District Six may have played a big role in the spreading of gangs on the Cape Flats, the present study clearly indicates that this did not consciously influence the individual member's decision to become a member. The members were mostly too young to be influenced in a direct way.

- In social science literature much were published about the role of parents in the decision of adolescents to become gang members. The influence of parents found little evidence in the current study. The current study does not explicitly support the assumption that lack of social control led to the adolescents becoming gang members. Cooke and McEvoy's (1997) statement was confirmed that what happened outside of the home was as important as what happened in the home. A setting such as the local neighbourhood that was dominated by the gangs, was the most dominant factor to the participants' becoming gang members.

- Other theories that are offered to motivate gang membership were not explicitly confirmed in the present study. This would not suggest that they are invalid to the present study. The researcher remains open to the fact that these propositions might be confirmed in studying the culture of the broader community and looking at the profiles of the participants in particular.

8.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

A few questions are still left unanswered by the present study, which encourages further investigation.

- No explanation is provided why some adolescents from the same setting decided against becoming gang members. A comparative study of gang and non-gang youths would provide valuable contribution to the understanding of gangs. This study focused on high school pupils who are gang members. The current South African context suggests that teenagers join gangs from primary school level already. This arena is still unexplored by social psychological literature in South Africa.

- The current study sought to put the spotlight on current issues. Heavy emphasis was placed on the present situation, to the point of almost disregarding the past history. The researcher did not present full profiles on the participants. The researcher focused the study on the present reality as experienced by the participants.

- Another critical question that has yet to be answered is the one of why street gangs are so prominent in so-called coloured neighbourhoods as opposed to white or black residential areas.

8.5 PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE GANG INTERVENTIONS

Gang interventions should focus on the key issue of gangsterism: *the gang member.* The group dynamics of the gang is the greatest drawing force for adolescents at risk. Interventions should seek to counter the drafting of new members into the gang. An effective program will focus on developing alternative drawing forces that would draw adolescents into other groups. This means establishing groups that provide adolescents with those things that the gang provides and thus compete with the gang for the resource pool. Johnstone (1983) stated that the future of every organisation depends on its ability to attract new members. Drying up the pool of potential gang recruits will cause street gangs to disintegrate. Programs should be developed that provide the adolescent with support. The type of support should be determined by assessing the needs of the adolescents in that specific setting. These types of initiatives should ideally be supported (financially and emotionally) by adults from the community, but driven by older youth (from late adolescence). The adults should also be involved in providing security. This support should be visible without being dominating, with the goal of empowering the youth.

Further studies that take the form of action research should be initiated to determine the effectiveness of current interventions. These studies should be dynamic. That is, the program should evaluate and develop itself as it is implemented. To ensure efficiency these programs should have a strong academic focus along with the practical application, as Kinnes (1995b) stated that a *concerted effort* has to be made by all communities to fight gangsterism. From grassroots to government, from campuses to companies all have to work together to resolve the gang issue.

S.O.S. (SAVE OUR STREETS)

The researcher was motivated to do this research to counter the stereotypes that were attributed to gang members and adolescents from so called coloured communities. The cause of the study made the researcher realise that these gang members that are typically being called *"gangsters"* and made out as criminals, are just adolescents. They are the children of the community. They must be distinguished from the syndicates that merchandise in alcohol, drugs and guns. The street gangs are caught between the syndicates and the adult community. The adults and the syndicates represent the people with the experience to lead troubled youth to safer adulthood. Rejection by the adult community means that they are easy victims of the syndicates. This is what is happening among defense gangs and street kids on the Cape Flats.

The communities need to rise up and claim back their children. The fight is against gangsterism, not against the gang members. These gang members are our children and our pupils. They are adolescents seeking to enjoy life with friends and acceptance, yet with their eye on progressing to the next phase of development - adulthood. Their peers are their sojourners; but adults are their forerunners. They will identify with whomever that will lead them. This research is a call to the communities to embrace the gang members as the **next generation** and make them the **now generation**.

REFERENCES

Ackroyd, A., & Hughes, J.A. (1992). <u>Data collection in context</u> (2nd ed.). London: Longman.

<u>African National Congress</u>. (1996). Retrieved June 3, 2000, from the World Wide Web: http://www.anc.org.za/youth.html

Allie, S. (1996). Gangsterism in our schools. <u>Eraser, 3</u>, 30-32.

Allport, F.H. (1924). <u>Social psychology</u>. New York: Houghton Mifflin.

Appelgryn, A. (1991). Social comparison and relative deprivation: perceived justice and intergroup attitudes. In D. Foster & J. Louw-Potgieter (Eds.), <u>Social psychology in South Africa</u> (pp. 237-270). Johannesburg: Lexicon Publishers.

Bandura, A. (1973). <u>Aggression: A social learning analysis</u>. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Bandura, A. (1986). <u>Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory</u>. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Baron, R.A., & Byrne, D. (2000). <u>Social psychology</u> (9th edition). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Bloch, H.A., & Niederhoffer, A. (1958). <u>The gang: A study in adolescent behaviour</u>. New York:Philosophical Library.

Brown, R. (1988). <u>Group processes: Dynamics within and between groups</u>. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Burke, J. (1991). Teenagers, clothes and gang violence. Educational Leadership, 49(1), 11-13.

Calabrese, R.L., & Noboa, J. (1995). The choice for gang membership by Mexican-American adolescents. High School Journal, April/May, 226-234.

Campbell, C. (1994). Township families and youth identity. Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council.

Cantrell, R.P., & Cantrell, M.L. (1993). Countering gang violence in American schools. Principal, 73(2), 6-9.

Clark, C.M. (1993). Deviant adolescent subcultures: Assessment strategies and clinical interventions. Adolescence, 27(106), 301-312.

Codrington, G. (1998). Generation X: Who, What, Why and Where to? Retrieved June 19, 1999, from the World Wide Web: http://home.pix.za/gc/gc12/genx/thesis/intro.htm.

Cohen, A.K. (1955). Delinquent boys: The culture of the gang. New York: Free Press.

Conquergood, D. (1994). Homeboys and hoods: Gang communication and cultural space. Group Communication in Context: Studies of Natural Groups, 81, 23-25.

Constitution of The Republic of South Africa, Act 200 of 1993. Retrieved June 20, 1999, from the World Wide Web: http://www.polity.org.za/govtdocs/legislation/1993/constit1.html

Cooke, G., & McEvoy, A. (1997). Mothers of gang members give voice. The High School Magazine, March/April, 46 –55.

Crabtree, B.F., & Miller, W.L. (1991). A qualitative approach to primary care research: The long interview. <u>Family Medicine</u>, <u>23</u>(2), 145 - 151.

Cross, M. (1993). Youths, culture and politics in South African education: The past, present and future. <u>Youth and Society</u>, <u>24</u>(4), 377-398.

De la Rey, C. (1991). Intergroup relations: Theories and positions. In D. Foster & J. Louw-Potgieter (Eds.), <u>Social psychology in South Africa</u> (pp.27-53). Johannesburg: Lexicon Publishers.

Denzin, N.K. (1994). The art and politics of interpretation. In N.K. Denzin & Y.G. Lincoln (Eds.), <u>Handbook of qualitative research</u> (pp.500-515). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc.

Deschamps, J. & Devos, T. (1998). Regarding the relationship between social identity and personal identity. In S. Worchel, J.F. Morales, D. Paez & J. Deschamps (Eds.), <u>Social identity: International perspectives</u> (pp.1-12). London: Sage Publications Inc.

Deyhle, D. (1998). From break dancing to heavy metal – Navajo youth, resistance and identity. <u>Youth and Society</u>, <u>30</u>(1), 16-19.

Dissel, A. (1998). <u>Youth street gangs and violence in South Africa</u>. Braamfontein: Centre for the Study of Violence and reconciliation.

Douglas-Hamilton, D. (1995). <u>Warriors of the ghetto: Ganging as a rite of pasSage Publications Inc</u>. B.Soc.Sc(Hons) Dissertation, Cape Town: University of Cape Town.

Dukes, R.L., Martinez, R.O., & Stein, J.A. (1997). Precursors and consequences of membership in youth gangs. Youth and Society, 29(2), 113-116.

Erikson, E.H. (1950). Childhood and society. New York: Norton.

Evans, J.P., & Taylor, J. (1995). Understanding violence in contemporary and earlier gangs. Journal of Black Psychology, 21(1), 71-81.

Fitz-Gibbon, C.T. & Morris, L.L. (1978). How to design a program evaluation. California : Sage Publications Inc.

Foster, D. (1991). Introduction. In D. Foster & J. Louw-Potgieter (Eds.), Social psychology in South Africa (pp. 3-23). Johannesburg: Lexicon Publishers.

Freeman, M. (1993). Seeking identity - Township youth and social development. South African Journal of Psychology, 23(4), 157-166.

Gastrow, P. (1998). Organised crime in South Africa: An assessment of its nature and origins. Braamfontein: Institute for Security Studies.

Gill, O. (1977). Luke Street - Housing policy, conflict and the creation of the delinquent area. London: MacMillan Press Ltd.

Giorgi, A. (1985). Phenomenology and psychological research. Pittsburgh: Duquesne Press.

Glaser, B.G., & Strauss, A.L. (1967). The discovery of grounded theory. Chicago: Aldine.

Haefele, B.W. (1998). Gangsterism in the Western Cape: Who are the role players? Crime and Conflict, 14, 19-22.

Hammersley, M. (1990). Reading ethnographic research: A critical guide. London: Longman. 305.80072 HAM

Hammersley, M. (1992). What's wrong with ethnography? London: Routledge. 305.80072 HAM

Hammersley, M., & Atkinson, P. (1994). Ethnography: Principle in practice. (2nd ed.). London: Routledge. 305.8 HAM

Healy, S. (2000). Finding social control in the Western Cape: The role of gangs in the current context. Retrieved July 15, 2000, from the World Wide Web: http://www.uct.ac.za/depts/sjrp/finding.htm.

Hinkle, S., Taylor, L.A., Fox-Chardamone, L., & Ely, P.G. (1998). Social identity and aspects of social creativity: Shifting to new dimensions of intergroup comparison. In S. Worchel, J.F. Morales, D. Paez & J. Deschamps (Eds.), Social identity: International perspectives (pp. 166-179). London: Sage Publications Inc.

Hochhaus, C., & Sousa, F. (1988). Why children belong to gangs: A comparison of expectations and reality. The High School Journal, 71(2), 74-77.

Huberman, A.M., & Miles, M.B. (1994). Data management and analysis methods. In N.K. Denzin & Y.G. Lincoln (Eds.), Handbook of qualitative research (pp. 428-444). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc.

Hudelson, P.M. (1996). Qualitative research for health programmes. Geneva: Division of Mental Health and Prevention of Substance Abuse, World Health Organization.

Hudson, J. (1995). Kids or crooks? Crime and Conflict, 3, 27 – 29.

Hurrelmann, K., & Engel, U. (1991). Delinquency as a symptom of adolescents' orientation toward status and success. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 21(1), 119-136.

Jacob, B.A. (1995). Defining culture in a multicultural environment: An ethnography of Heritage High School. American Journal of Education, 103, 339 – 375.

Johnstone, J.W.C. (1983). Recruiting to a youth gang. Youth and Society, 14(3), 281-300.

Kinnes, I. (1995a). Crime on the Cape Flats. Western Cape Anti-crime conference. Cape Town: Western Cape Anti-Crime Forum.

Kinnes, I. (1995b). Reclaiming the Cape Flats: A community challenge to crime and gangsterism. Crime and Conflict, (2), 5-8.

Kinnes, I. (1995c). Drugs, youth and syndicates. In M. Lochrenberg & S. Stanton (Eds.), Confronting crime: Innovating for safety (pp.23 –28). Cape Town: Western Cape Anti-Crime Forum.

Kruger, D. (1985). An introduction to Phenomenological psychology. Cape Town: Wetton.

Kvale, S. (1996). Interviews. London:Sage Publications Inc.

Lasley, J.R. (1992). Age, social context, and street gang membership: Are 'youth' gangs becoming 'adult' gangs? Youth and Society, 23, 434-451.

Mail & Guardian (1998, February 25). Gang wars start in the classroom. Retrieved June 3, 2000, from the World Wide Web: http://www.mg/news/98feb-gangs.html

Malan, C. (1997). South Africa's youth: Facing the challenges. Retrieved June 20, 1999, from the World Wide Web: http://www.sub.su.se/sam/nyri/nyrin/19972/safrica.html

McConnell, E.H. (1994). High school students: An assessment of their knowledge of gangs. Youth and Society, 26 (2), 256 – 275.

Miles, M.B., & Huberman, A.M. (1994). Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc.

National Youth Commission. (1998). Green Paper on National Youth Service. Retrieved June 18, 1999, from the World Wide Web: http://www.nyc.gov.za/nyc_green_paper.html

Newman, B.M., & Newman, P.R. (1987). Development through life: A psychosocial approach. Chicago: The Dorsey Press.

Nott, L., Shapiro, R., & Theron, R. (1990). Gangs: The search for self respect. Cape Town: National Institute for Crime Prevention and Rehabilitation of Offenders and Social Justice Resource Project.

Oxford University Press (1993). New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary. Oxford: Oxford University.

Olson, J.M., Roese, N.J., Meen, J., & Robertson, D.J. (1995). The preconditions and consequences of relative deprivation: Two field studies. Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 25(11), 944-964.

Palmer, C.T., & Tilley, C.F. (1995). Sexual access to females as a motivation for joining gangs: An evolutionary approach. The Journal of Sex Research, 32(3), 213-217.

Palumbo, D.J., & Ferguson, J.L. (1995). Evaluating gang resistance education and training (GREAT). Evaluation Review, 19(6), 597 – 619.

Peacock, R., & Theron, A. (1992). Die verband tussen swart straatkinders se biologiese en emosionele behoeftes en die tipe misdaad wat deur hulle gepleeg word. South African Journal of Sociology, 23(1), 26-30.

Pinnock, D. (1980). The Brotherhoods -street gangs and state control in Cape Town. Cape Town: Maskew Miller.

Pinnock, D. (1982). Cape Town and its streetgangs. Institute of Criminology, University of Cape Town.

Pinnock, D. (1985). Breaking the web: Gangs and family structure in Cape Town. Cape Town: University of Cape Town press.

Pinnock, D. (1990). Rituals, rites and punishment: Rethinking youth programmes in South Africa. Institute of Criminology, University of Cape Town.

Pinnock, D. (1998). Rites of pasSage Publications Inc: Creating alternative rituals for gang members. Institute of Criminology, University of Cape Town.

Reyes, O., & Jason, L.A. (1993). Pilot study examining factors associated with academic success for Hispanic High school students. Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 22(1), 57-71.

Richardson, L. (1994). Writing: A method of inquiry. In N.K. Denzin & Y.G. Lincoln (Eds.), Handbook of qualitative research (pp. 516-529). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc.

Roper, C. (1996). Blood brothers: The gangsters speak out. Student Life Magazine, 3, 36-38.

Ross, L., & Nisbett, R.E. (1991). The person and the situation: Perspectives of social psychology. Philadelphia:Temple University Press.

Rubin, H.J., & Rubin, I.S. (1995). Qualitative interviewing. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications Inc.

Schärf, W. (1990). Resurgence of urban street gangs: Community responses. In D. Hansson & D. Van Zyl Smit (Eds.), Towards justice: Crime and state control in South Africa (pp.). Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Schmid, J. (1995). Targets of public anger. Crime and Conflict, (3), 30-32.

Schurink, E. & Schurink, W. (1994). Addressing crime amongst South Africa's marginalised youth. Social Update, 2, 47-54.

Siegel, L.J., & Senna, J.J. (1981). Juvenile delinquency: Theory, practice, and law. Minnesota: West Publishing Co.

Soal, S. (1988). Engaging street gangs : A contextual study exploring student and teacher perceptions of gang activity and the relationship between

gangs and political organisation in the high schools of Mitchell's Plain, directed at generating guidelines for engaging with gangs. B.Soc.Sc(Hons) Dissertation, Cape Town: University of Cape Town.

Spradley, J.P. (1979). The ethnographic interview. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston. 306 S SPR

Strauss, A.L., & Corbin, J. (1990). Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques. Newbury Park, CA : Sage Publications Inc.

Tajfel, H. (1982). Social identity and intergroup relations. Cambridge: Camridge University Press.

Takata, S.R., & Zevitz, R.G. (1990). Divergent perceptions of group delinquency in a Midwestern community. Youth and Society, 21(3), 282-305.

Taylor, S.E., Peplau, L.A., & Sears, D.O. (2000). Social psychology (10th edition). New Jersey : Prentice Hall.

Tesch, R. (1990). Qualitative research. New York: Hamer Press.

Thrasher, F.M. (1936). The gang: A study of 1313 gangs in Chicago. Illinois: University of Chicago Press.

Van Breda, Y., & Vernon, K. (1996, August 11). The Cape of fear. Sunday Times, pp.10-11.

Van Niekerk, L., & Meier, C. (1995). The origin of sub- and counter-cultures among black youth: A historical-educational analysis. Educare, 24(1), 68-70.

Van Wyk, B.E., & Links, A.G. (1995). Gangsterism: A comparison between initial expectations and realities. Unpublished report, Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch.

Van der Walt, H.M. (1998). Nurses and their work in Tuberculosis control in the Western Cape: Too close for comfort. Ph.D. Dissertation, Cape Town: University of Cape Town.

Vigil, J.D. (1983). Chicano gangs: One response to Mexican urban adaption in the Los Angeles area. Urban Anthropology, 12(1), 45-75.

Vigil, J.D. (1988). Group processes and street identity: Adolescent Chicano gang members. Ethos, 16(4), 421-445.

Wang, A.Y. (1994). Pride and prejudice in high school gang members. Adolescence, 29(114), 279-291.

Whyte, W.F. (1943). Street corner society: The social structure of an Italian slum. Illinois: University of Chicago Press.
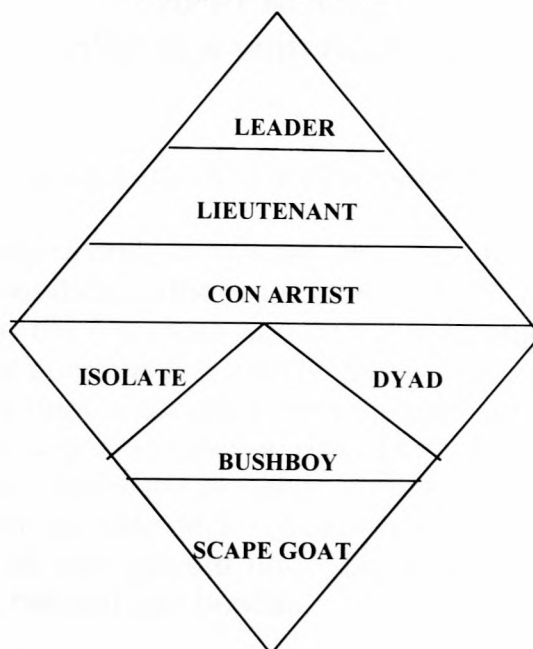
Winfree, L.T., Bäckstrom, T.V., & Mays, G.L. (1994). Delinquency and youth gangs : A new twist on a general theory of crime and delinquency. Youth and Society, 26(2), 147-177.

Winfree, L.T., Esbensen, F., & Osgood, D.W. (1996). Evaluating a school-based gang-prevention program: A theoretical perspective. Evaluation Review, 20(2), 181-203.

Yablonsky, L. (1962). The violent gang. London: MacMillan.

APPENDIX A
Polsky's diamond[1]

LEADER – "tough guy" or "Bully".

Usually the biggest and strongest and/or the smallest boy in the group. Sometimes he is the silent leader. He models the normative behavior of the group.

LIEUTENANT – Leader's right man/men;

Usually verbal and very supportive of the leader. Sometimes does the leader's dirty work.

CON ARTIST – usually a small boy who survive in the group by "conning'. Always making deals… he has the protection of the power.

ISOLATE – a loner.

Keeps to himself as a defense against attack by stronger kids.

DYAD – sub-group of weak kids who support and protect each other. When not together they are isolates.

BUSHBOY – Small boy… will give up his seat, cigarettes, etc. in exchange for being left alone.

SCAPE GOAT – Weakest member of the group … every one picks on him.

---

[1] Author unknown – Report obtained from B.Arendse, director of Bonnytoun Home for juvenile dilinquents awaiting trial, on June 12, 1996.

APPENDIX B
Interview with Richardo

B: So kan jy met net 'n bietjie vertel hoe jy dit ervaar om 'n gangster te wees.

R: Ons was net 'n klomp vriende bymekaar. Nou, hoe kan ek dit nou vir jou stel. Soos jy mos weet hier daar is drie groot gangs - A's, Vietnam R's en ons - ons Tee's. Nou ja sien jy die A's. Hulle wou ons straat oorgevat het sien jy. Eintlik hulle wil die hele Dal oorgevat het, sien jy. Maar ons ons hou mos nie daarvan nie sien jy. Toe net daar waar die stryery gekom het. Wat ons met mekaar baklei het sien jy. Nou ons en die R's, ons staan saam, sien jy. Die A's hulle bots met die R's ook. Daai kan ook seker 'n rede wees hoekom hulle met ons ook bots. Dis hoekom die hele ding... hoekom ons vir hulle baklei het.
Nou die ding hoe ek een geword het... Dit is omdat al my vriende, al my vriende wat ek ken, behoort aan bendes.

B: So jy sê die Tee's het like begin omdat hulle hulself moes defend het teen die A's, aangesien die A's die hele plek wou oorvat. Toe begin julle nou die Tee's.

R: Dit is waar dit begin het met bendes.

B: So voor dit wat het julle toe gedoen?

R: Almal het daar gelewe in vrede...Sê maar nou ons is almal lekker getou Daar is klomp daarso: Beat boys, Tee's, Straatvalke, ons was ook feitlik van daai groepe Maar nou die A's: hulle het ons gedryf dat ons moet baklei. Ons moet baklei. Ons wil nou nie eintlik baklei nie sien jy. Die gemeenskap en so vat dit so: ons is gangsters. Ons wil nie eintlik nie. Baie aande hou ons vergaderings en sulke goed. Maar die gemeenskap wil ons nie verstaan nie, sien jy.

B: Die vergaderings wat julle hou is dit nou onder julle self ?

R: Onder ons self. Sê maar nou ek is 'n Tee en jy is 'n Tee, nou ons twee is broers van mekaar. Sê ek kry nie baklei, maar jy kry baklei. En ons is saam. En hulle pak jou aan, dan moet ek uitsteek, want ek is 'n broer. Dit is amper soos 'n familie, groot familie nou, sien jy.

B: Okay soos nou julle as Tee's nou; as die een baklei kry, dan staan julle saam. Support julle mekaar.

R: As die een miskien nie geld het vir 'n dans nie, dan sal almal 'n rand bygooi tot die geld vol is, sodat daai ou kan ingaan.

B: So is daai nou kwaai van Tee wees?

R: Daai's kwaai vir my van Tee wees. Jy moet nou nie lag nie, dit mag dalk simpel klink. As almal miskien nou 'n party gooi. Dan is dit lekker, alles is daar. Kos is daar. Ek is mos nie 'n gebruiker van drank nie of van ander goete nie. Maar dis olraait, daar is mos paar van my vriende wat nie drinkers is nie. Dan is ons eenkant miskien met 'n drink met ons kos, en miskien met 'n **skink effort**. Daai's ook lekker vir my.

B: So jy like nou van julle Tee's - hulle supply vir julle wat nou nie gebruikers is nie.

R: Ouens wat nou werk, vir die wat nou skool gaan.

B: Wat is nog iets wat nice is van Tee wees?

R: Jag. Ek wil weg trek van sulke dinge. Daar is te veel mense wat doodgaan. Ek try. Dis hoekom ek wil wegtrek van die goede. Ek wil skool gaan. Ek wil die goed los. Maar sulke goed vat mos tyd man, sien jy.

B: Jy nou gesê wat lekker is van 'n Tee, is om 'n A te jag.

R: Kyk hier nè. Ons straat is mos Pinestraat. As hulle vir my gaan kry, wat 'n Tee is in Primrosestraat, gaan hulle my doodmaak. In die nag, hulle gaan my doodmaak. So wat moet ons maak? Ons kan mos nie vir hulle toelaat om in ons straat te kom moeilikheid maak nie. Kyk daar: mense word seergemaak, mense word gerob. Dit gebeur aanmekaar: die gemeenskap kom net na ons toe. "Dit is ons." Die gemeenskap dink net dit is ons. Dit is hoekom ek sê die mense hou nie van ons nie. Elke ding wat gebeur -dit is net ons. Ons moet die skuld dra daarvoor.

B: So die gemeenskap blame net die Tee's as daar iets gebeur. Dan is dit nie die Tee's nie; dis die A's.

R: Laat ek vir jou iets vertel. Soos in twee weke gelede, nè. Bly jy in die Dal?

B: Naai.

R: Toe kom die buurtwag, sien jy. Net A's nè. Toe kom hulle - hulle kom skiet op ons. Is daai nou reg? Hulle kom eerste daarmee, dan moet ons niks maak nie. Ons dink toe watter tipe man staan in sy huis. Toe moet ons mos jag om uit te vra wat maak hulle dan daar. Sien jy? Toe is daar 'n hele geskietery. Toe moet ons ... ons kan mos nie uitgejaag word uit ons eie straat nie. Ons moet mos *terugveg*. Van daar af die buurtwag is net meeste A's. Hulle sit eers op 'n yard, nè. Drink hulle dronk. Dan kom hulle af. Dan wil hulle die mense wat laat

in die straat in loop, wil hulle staan en klap. ... Dan soek die police'e net vir ons. Sien jy?

B: Okay. So die police'e was hulle ook daar?

R: Ja! Toe ons so baklei het teen mekaar. Toe kom die police'e, toe skiet hulle rubber bullets. Die een van ons vriende het in die hospitaal gelê - honderd-en-twee, die ander het voor sy bors, die ander het agtergebly; die ander een in sy gesig, amper in sy oog. Gelukkig ek was nou nie saam met die skietery nie hier ander kant.

B: So jy voel dat julle Tee's, die hele community ...

R: Is teen ons.

B: Is teen julle. En die buurtwag ook. Hulle is net 'n klompie A's daarin. En hulle is ook net saam.

R: Maar wat ons wil maak nè, ons het besluit: ons gaan ons eie buurtwag stig. Ons gaan regverdig wees. Ons gaan nie drink nie. Niks moeilikheid nie. Ons gaan regverdig wees. Ons gaan try om die bendes uit te kry uit die Dal uit. Soos hulle in die Vlei gemaak het, so gaan ons maak. Ons gaan saamstaan. Ons gaan miskien saam met die police'e praat; saam met die community chair. Sien jy?

B: So julle voel julle gaan nou jul eie buurtwag stig om vrede te bewaar.

R: Want almal wil weg beweeg van die goed af, sien jy. Maar die A's hulle gaan nou nie dit verstaan nie, sien jy. As hulle een van ons gaan kry, dan gaan dit weer 'n bakleiery. Sien jy? Dit is hoekom ons wil nou eers try om al die gangs uit te drywe.

B: So alhoewel julle wil vrede hê, elke keer kom die A's en val een van julle aan. Dan voel julle naai, ons kan mos nie dat hulle net so kan aangaan nie.

R: Kyk hier soos nou die dag by die skool nè. Elke pouse kom daar miskien van my vriende skool toe. Partykeer kom van die A's. Kyk nou soos eerste pouse, nè: toe was een van my vriende skool toe. Toe rob hy die kinders. Nou word daar net gesê: "dit is die Tee's." Alles is word net gesê "dis die Tee's." Hulle hou nie van ons nie. Meneer Lynons hou nie van ons nie; Dit is net ons. Hulle rob; eerste pouse toe kom hulle ook skool toe. Toe staan ons daar agter. In case hulle nou na ons toe kom, sien jy. Alles word net gedruk op ons jong. Daai's hoekom ons maar wil wegbly van die goed af, sien jy.

B: Ja. So julle wil weg kom van die goed, maar dit is half difficult vir julle om weg te kom.

R: Ja.

B: Omdat die community dan agter... net altyd wat die A's en ander gangs op julle af kom, dan moet julle net uitkom.

R: Ja.

B: So jy sê die A's kom net elke tyd, hulle instigate nou net die storie, steek nou net op die dinges en so. Elke keer as julle nou net voel julle wil die dinge los.

R: Hulle, soos hulle gesê het dit is vir die gemeenskap. Dit is vir almal bedoel. Maar as ons nou daar kom, en die A's is daar, dan begin daar 'n hele geskietery. Dis hoekom die mense is bang om na die dans toe te gaan. Ons wil ook mos vry wees; dans toe kan gaan. Ons wil lekker vry kan wees. Saans rond te kan loop. Dit is darem mos ons plek mos. So wil ons hê dit moet wees. Maar dis net die A's.

B: So basically julle problem is julle wil net elke rondbeweeg en so, maar die A's hulle wil net altyd bots met julle.

R: Hulle is al gang in die Dal wat ons teen baklei.

B: Nou hoe het dit dan gekom dat jy nou in die gang is?

R: Deur my pa.

B: Hoe dit dan gekom? Het jou pa jou gesê om aan 'n bende te behoort?

R: My pa was eintlik die leier van die Tee's gewees. Toe is hy doodgeskiet. Nege bullets. Dis toe hoe ek begin't het.

B: So was dit nou A's wat jou pa geskiet het?

R: Ja

B: So is dit dan al rede hoekom jy in die Tee's is?

R: Ja.

B: So jy't nou gesê dat julle is nou in die Tee's en so; en alhoewel julle baie bots, en daai dinge, jy's nog altyd lekker...

R: Party van ons maak sports. Elke sokkerseisoen het ons ons eie sokkerspan. en daar's krieket - ons speel krieket. Ons is eintlik net 'n klomp - hoe kan ek sê - 'n klomp tieners bymekaar.

B: *En jy likes net sports maak?*

R: Ja.

B: *So julle speel sports. Speel julle teen sportspanne, teen klubs?*

R: Elke yard, elke smokkelhuis het 'n span. EN nou elke bende het ook 'n span. Soos die A's het ook 'n span. En ons het ook 'n span en die ander yards het ook spanne.
Dan speel ons teen mekaar

B: *So dan gooi julle by en speel 'n tournament onder mekaar.*

B: *So like jy nou daai?*

R: Want nou kyk hier op die sportsveld ontmoet 'n mens baie meisiekinders.

B: *So jy voel lekker as jy vrinne maak as jy op die sportsveld is.*

R:

B: *Wat kan jy my meer vertel van Tee wees?*

R: Om 'n Tee te wees ... Jy kan jouself bewys. Sê maar jy's die beste in darts of so iets. Daar's nie nog 'n wet nie. As ons sien jy kan byhou by ons, dan kan jy kom aansluit. Ons jaag nie weg nie; ons nooi ook nie. Is net : dit hang van jou af. As jy een wil word, dis jou saak.

B: *Om aan te sluit by die Tee's, moet jy jouself bewys.*

R: Ja.

B: *En hoe jy jou bewys hang af van jou self.*
R: Al die groot ouens, hulle wil nou gangsters wees. Hulle vat Kyk hiersa ek sal vir jou nou sê: Ons bestaan uit twee groepe. Groot Tee's en ons kleintjies, ons kleiner Tee's. As hulle nou vir ons sê: Ons vroumense en so. Nou die grotes, hulle Jy kan basically nie vir ons gangsters noem nie. Maar hulle is gangsters. As hulle bakleiery kry, dan moet ons maar saam staan want ons is ook Tee's.
Ek het een op my linkerskouer.

B: *So hoe voel jy nou toe jy die merk wys nou, jy's 'n Tee?*

R: Ek voel nogal - hoe kan 'n mens nou sê in Afrikaans, proud, om'n Tee te wees. Ek weet as ek nou iets makeer, dan weet ek my vriende is daar om te support. As ek miskien in die moeilikheid is, miskien bakleiery het, my vriende is altyd daar om my te kan help. As iemand miskien klap, dan sal hulle sê "los dit" of "Doen so" of so.

B: *Okay, so dit is kwaai om die chappie van die Tee's te dra want hulle daar is vir jou en vir jou support en so aan.*

R: As ek miskien moeilikheid kry en jy is my broe en jy wil my nie bystaan nie, dan sit ons kring. Of ons jou gaan uitskop en of ons jou gaan hou.

B: *So as jy ... dan moet ek verduidelik...*

R: Die rede hoekom jy nie gehelp het nie.

B:

R: Ek voel maar net proud dat my vriende altyd daar is om my te help.

B:

R: As ek nie kan nie, dan kan ek nie.

B: *So, dit laat jou goed voel dat hulle ook so voel oor jou.*

B: *En wat is nog lekker van Tee wees?*

R: dan gaan ons miskien man-man... Ons het twee karre. Nou naweke. Miskien elke naweek dan gaan ons Daai's nou wat lekker opwindend is, sien jy. Ons like avontuurlustig wees. Dan gaan kamp ons uit daar in die berg. Partykeer gaan ons uit, gaan kuier miskien by goose'te. Dan gaan ons almal nou. Lekker kuier daar. Almal is almal is avontuurlustig.

B: *Jy like saam met die Tee's uitgaan want julle doen different goede elke keer.*

R: Baklei en so aangaan.

R: partykeer wil ons nie baklei nie, dan loop hulle rond. Dan kom hulle met A vlagte af in die straat. Sien jy, dan begin hulle eerste, met karre. Word teen die mense se huise gegooi. Toe sê ons vir hulle, ons wil nie saam met die man se eiendom baklei nie, ons wil saam met die man baklei. Maar hulle as hulle dronk is, wil hulle huise vensters stukkend gooi. Dit is ook nog'n rede hoekom ons vir hulle baklei. Hulle trap

B: So jy voel die dat hulle so heeltyd hull

R: Hulle wil almal rondklap soos hulle wil.

B: So jy sê dit is nou van julle ... Hulle likes rondloop en goede afbreek en so.

R: Ons sal daar sit. Die ouens wat drink hulle sal daar eenkant drink Maak grappe van mekaar. Niemand raak kwaad of so iets nie. Daarna gaan ons almal huis toe. Ons kyk eers dat almal by die huis kom. Die wat nie drink nie kyk dat die wat drink, wat dalk nou dronk is, dat hulle veilig by die huis kom. Dan gaan ons almal lekker slaap. Môre oggend vroeg, Miskien die Saterdag aand oggend, Almal is by die huis as Saterdagaand kom. Nou Sondagoggend dan kom dit uit, dan hoor jy
Dan weet'n man van niks af nie sien jy. Uit die klas uit kom

B: Dan maak hulle asof dit net julle is...

R: Onnodig.

B: So vir julle Tee's voel jy net dat julle wil uit die fightery kom. Julle try om nou al die gangs uit Die Dal uit te kry.

B: Is daar enigiets wat jy wil byvoeg, wil add?

R: Wat ek al experience het, ons almal nou - ons het lank probeer om te praat met die gemeenskap. Dan kan ons ons storie verduidelik.

B: Maar thanks dan.

APPENDIX C
Axial coding of interviews with Richardo

CODE	SCRIPT	REMARKS
	B: *So kan jy met net 'n bietjie vertel hoe jy dit ervaar om 'n gangster te wees.*	
MOT-FR/J	R: Ons was net 'n klomp vriende bymekaar. Nou, hoe kan ek dit nou vir jou stel. Soos jy mos weet hier daar is	
GANG-NM	drie groot gangs - Americans, Vietnam Rotte en ons - ons	
CONF-G	Homeboys. Nou ja sien jy die Americans. Ons het mos nie van hulle	
CONF-OR	draad gehou nie, sien jy. Hulle wou ons straat oorgevat het sien jy. Eintlik hulle wil die hele Dal oorgevat het, sien jy. Maar ons ons hou mos nie daarvan nie sien jy. Toe net daar waar die stryery gekom het. Wat ons met	
GANG-NM	mekaar baklei het sien jy. Nou ons en die Rotte, ons staan saam, sien jy. Die	
CONF-G	Americans hulle bots met die Rotte ook. Daai kan ook seker 'n rede wees hoekom hulle met ons ook bots. Dis hoekom die hele ding... hoekom ons vir hulle baklei het.	*"bots" means to be in conflict*
MOT-FR/J	Nou die ding hoe ek een geword het... Dit is omdat al my vriende, al my vriende wat ek ken, behoort aan bendes.	
	B: *So jy sê die Homeboys het like begin omdat hulle hulself moes defend het teen die Americans, aangesien die Americans die hele plek wou oorvat. Toe begin julle nou die Homeboys.*	
GANG-OR	R: Dit is waar ons begin het as bendes.	
	B: *So voor dit wat het julle toe gedoen?*	
ACT-SUB	R: Almal het daar gelewe in vrede...Sê	*"getou" means to be intoxicated with alcohol.*

GANG-NM CONF-G CONF-ATT CONF-COM	maar nou ons is almal lekker *getou*. Daar is klomp daarso: Beat boys, Homeboys, Straatvalke, ons was ook feitlik van daai groepe. Maar nou die Americans: hulle het ons gedryf dat ons moet baklei. Ons moet baklei. Ons wil nou nie eintlik baklei nie sien jy. Die gemeenskap vat dit so: ons is gangsters. Ons wil nie eintlik nie. Baie aande hou ons vergaderings en sulke goed. Maar die gemeenskap wil ons nie verstaan nie, sien jy.	*This meetings was with the police community forum.*
	B: *Die vergaderings wat julle hou is dit nou onder julle self?*	
MOT-COM/M	R: Onder ons self. Sê maar nou ek is 'n Homeboy en jy is 'n Homeboy, nou ons twee is broers van mekaar. Sê ek kry nie baklei, maar jy kry baklei. En ons is saam. En hulle pak jou aan, dan moet ek uitsteek, want ek is 'n broer. Dit is amper soos 'n familie, groot familie nou, sien jy.	*"uitsteek" means that he has to join in on the fighting.*
	B: *Okay soos nou julle as Homeboys nou; as die een baklei kry, dan staan julle saam. Support julle mekaar.*	
MOT-FR/M	R: As die een miskien nie geld het vir 'n dans nie, dan sal almal 'n rand bygooi tot die geld vol is, sodat daai ou kan ingaan.	
	B: *So is daai nou kwaai van Homeboy wees?*	
MOT-SOC/M ACT-SUB/D	R: Daai's kwaai vir my van Homeboy wees. Jy moet nou nie lag nie, dit mag dalk simpel klink. As almal miskien nou 'n party gooi. Dan is dit lekker, alles is daar. Kos is daar. Ek is mos nie 'n gebruiker van drank nie of van ander goete nie. Maar dis olraait, daar	

MOT-COM/M	is mos paar van my vriende wat nie drinkers is nie. Dan is ons eenkant miskien met 'n *drink* met ons kos, en miskien met 'n *"skud effort."* Daai's ook lekker vir my.	*"Skud effort" refers to an informal disco.*
	B: *So jy like nou van julle Homeboys – hulle is goed vir julle. Hulle supply vir julle wat nou nie gebruikers is nie.*	
MEM-EMP MEM-SC	R: Ouens wat nou werk, vir die wat nou skool gaan.	
	B: *Wat is nog iets wat nice is van Homeboy wees?*	
MOT-RET/J CONF-ATT ACT-V FAM-ATT MEM-TM	R: Wat lekker is van Homeboy wees is maar om die Americans te jag. Ek wil weg trek van sulke dinge. Daar is te veel mense wat doodgaan. Ek try. Ek was self ook in baie voorvalle. Hulle steek mekaar. Dis hoekom ek wil wegtrek van die goede. My ma het ook al gepraat al met my. Ek moet skool gaan. Ek moet die goed los. Maar sulke goed vat mos tyd man, sien jy.	
MOT-SET/M	B: *Jy't nou gesê wat lekker is van 'n Homeboy, is om 'n American te jag.*	
CONF-CON CONF-COM	R: Kyk hier nè. Ons straat is mos Pinestraat. As hulle vir my gaan kry, wat 'n Homeboy is in Primrosestraat, gaan hulle my doodmaak. In die nag, hulle gaan my doodmaak. So wat moet ons maak? Ons kan mos nie vir hulle toelaat om in ons straat te kom moeilikheid maak nie. Kyk daar: mense word seergemaak, mense word *gerob*. Dit gebeur aanmekaar. Die gemeenskap kom net na ons toe, "Dit is ons." Dit is hoekom ek sê die mense hou nie van ons nie. Elke ding wat	

	gebeur, dit is net ons. Ons moet die skuld daarvoor dra.	
	B: *So jy sê die gemeenskap blame net die Homeboys as daar iets gebeur. Dan is dit nie die Homeboys nie; dis die Americans.*	
	R: Laat ek vir jou iets vertel. Soos in twee weke gelede, nè. Bly jy in die Dal?	*The informant presumed that the interviewer stayed in Cloetesville (Die Dal).*
EVENT CONF-G	B: *Naai.*	
CONF-ATT ACT-V CONF-COM	R: Toe kom die buurtwag, sien jy. Net Americans nè. Toe kom hulle - hulle kom skiet op ons. Is daai nou reg? Hulle kom eerste daarmee, dan moet ons niks maak nie. Ons dink toe watter tipe man staan in sy huis. Toe moet ons mos jag om uit te vra wat maak hulle dan daar. Sien jy? Toe is daar 'n hele geskietery. Toe moet ons ... ons kan mos nie uitgejaag word uit ons eie straat nie. Ons moet mos *terugveg.* Van daar af die buurtwag is net meeste Americans. Hulle sit eers op 'n yard, nè. Drink hulle dronk. Dan kom hulle af. Dan wil hulle die mense wat laat in die straat in loop, wil hulle staan en klap. Asof die Dal aan hulle behoort. Wat dink hulle? Dan soek die police'e net vir ons. Sien jy?	*Yard refers to a shebeen where liquor and drugs are illegally sold.*
CONF-CON	B: *Okay. So die police'e was hulle ook daar?*	
	R: Ja! Toe ons so baklei het teen mekaar. Toe kom die police'e, toe skiet hulle rubber bullets. Die een van ons vriende het in die hospitaal gelê - honderd-en-twee; die ander het voor sy bors, die ander het agtergebly; die ander een in sy gesig, amper in sy oog. Gelukkig ek was nou nie saam nie. Ek	

	was hier ander kant.
CONF-COM	B: *So jy voel dat julle Homeboys, die hele community ...*
	R: Is teen ons.
CONF-RES	B: *Is teen julle. En die buurtwag ook. Hulle is net 'n klompie Americans daarin. En hulle is ook net saam.*
	R: Maar wat ons wil maak nè, ons het besluit: ons gaan ons eie buurtwag stig. Ons gaan regverdig wees. Ons gaan nie drink nie. Niks moeilikheid nie. Ons gaan regverdig wees. Ons gaan try om die bendes uit te kry uit die Dal uit. Soos hulle in die Vlei gemaak het, so gaan ons maak. Ons gaan saamstaan. Ons vat die community care. Ons gaan miskien saam met die police'e praat; saam met die community chair. Sien jy?
CONF-ATT	B: *So julle voel julle gaan nou jul eie buurtwag stig om vrede te bewaar.*
CONF-OR CONF-RES	R: Want almal wil weg beweeg van die goed af, sien jy. Maar die Americans hulle gaan nou nie dit verstaan nie, sien jy. As hulle een van ons gaan kry, dan gaan dit weer 'n bakleiery. Sien jy? Dit is hoekom ons wil nou eers try om al die gangs uit te drywe.
EVENT CONF-COM	B: *So alhoewel julle wil vrede hê, elke keer kom die Americans en val een van julle aan. Dan voel julle naai, ons kan mos nie dat hulle net so kan aangaan nie.*
	R: Kyk hier soos nou die dag by die skool nè. Elke pouse kom daar miskien van my vriende skool toe.

ACT-CR CONF-COM CONF-RES	Partykeer kom van die Americans. Kyk nou soos eerste pouse, nè: toe was een van my vriende skool toe. Toe *rob* hy die kinders. Nou word daar net gesê: "dit is die Homeboys." Alles is word net gesê "dis die Homeboys." Hulle hou nie van ons nie. Meneer Lynons hou nie van ons nie; Dit is net ons. Hulle *rob*; eerste pouse toe kom hulle ook skool toe. Toe staan ons daar agter. In case hulle nou na ons toe kom, sien jy. Alles word net gedruk op ons jong. Daai's hoekom ons maar wil wegbly van die goed af, sien jy.
	B: Ja. So julle wil weg kom van die goed, maar dit is half difficult vir julle om weg te kom.
	R: Ja.
	B: Omdat die community dan agter... net altyd wat die Americans en ander gangs op julle af kom. Dan moet julle net uitkom.
	R: Ja.
CONF-OR	*B: So jy sê die Americans kom net elke tyd, hulle instigate nou net die storie, steek nou net op die dinge en so. Elke keer as julle nou net voel julle wil die dinge los.*
ACT-V CONF-CON CONF-ATT	R: Hulle, soos hulle gesê het dit is vir die gemeenskap. Dit is vir almal bedoel. Maar as ons nou daar kom, en die Americans is daar, dan begin daar 'n hele geskietery. Dis hoekom die mense is bang om na die dans toe te gaan. Ons wil ook mos vry wees; dans toe kan gaan. Ons wil lekker vry kan wees. Saans rond te kan loop. Dit is

	darem mos ons plek mos. So wil ons hê dit moet wees. Maar dis net die Americans.	
CONF-G	*B: So basically julle problem is elke tyd wil julle net rondbeweeg en so, maar die Americans en die Homeboys - hulle wil net altyd bots met julle.* R: Hulle is al *gang* in die Dal wat ons teen baklei.	
MOT-FAM/J	*B: Nou hoe het dit dan gekom dat jy nou in die gang is?* R: Deur my pa.	
EVENT MOT-FAM/J	*B: Hoe dit dan gekom? Het jou pa jou gesê om aan 'n bende te behoort?*	
CONF-CON	R: My pa was eintlik die leier van die Homeboys gewees. Toe is hy doodgeskiet. Nege bullets. Dis toe hoe ek begin't het.	
CONF-G	*B: So was dit nou Americans wat jou pa geskiet het?* R: Ja.	
	B: So is dit dan al rede hoekom jy in die Homeboys is? R: Ja.	*Here was a long silence. The informant was overcome by deep emotion. The researcher decided to not explore this line further out of sensitivity for informant.*
ACT-SP	*B: So jy't nou gesê dat julle is nou in die Homeboys en so; en alhoewel julle baie bots, en daai dinge, jy's nog altyd lekker...*	
MEM-CHR	R: Party van ons maak sports. Elke sokkerseisoen het ons ons eie sokkerspan. En daar's krieket - ons speel krieket. Ons is eintlik net 'n klomp - hoe kan ek sê - 'n klomp	

	tieners bymekaar.	
	B: En jy likes net sports maak?	
	R: Ja.	
ACT-SP	*B: So julle speel sports. Speel julle teen sportspanne, teen klubs?*	
	R: Elke yard, elke smokkelhuis het 'n span, sien jy. En nou elke bende het ook 'n span. Soos die Americans het ook 'n span. Die Rotte het 'n span. En ons het ook 'n span. Die ander yards het ook spanne. Whitey het 'n span; Weltevrede het 'n span; ... het 'n span. Dan speel ons teen mekaar.	
	B: So dan gooi julle by en dan wen een ou nou die geld - soos in 'n poel effek.	
	R: Ja.	
	B: So like jy daai nou?	
	R: Ja.	
ACT-SP MOT-SOC/M	*B:Daai's nou die kwaai van Homeboy wees.*	
	R: Sports maak. Want nou kyk hier op die sportsveld ontmoet 'n mens baie meisies en so. Dan kan ons mos bymekaar kom. So ontmoet 'n man; so maak 'n mens vrinne, man, sien jy.	
	B: So jy voel lekker as jy vrinne maak as jy op die sportsveld is.	
	R: uhm.	
MEM-NT	*B: Wat kan jy my meer vertel van Homeboy wees?*	
	R: Om 'n Homeboy te wees ... dit werk	

GANG-RUL	nie so dat jy eers 'n American moet skiet om 'n Homeboy te kan wees nie. Jy kan jouself bewys. Sê maar jy's die beste in darts miskien nou of so iets. Dan moet ons jou eers in 'n battle vat. Daar's nie nog wette nie. As ons sien jy kan byhou by ons, dan kan jy kom aansluit. Ons jaag nie weg nie; ons nooi ook nie. Is net: dit hang van jou af. As jy een wil word, dis jou saak.
	B: Om aan te sluit by die Homeboys, moet jy jouself bewys.
	R: Ja.
GANG-STR	*B: En hoe jy jou bewys in die battle, hang af van jou self.*
ACT-LV	R: Al die groot ouens, hulle vat dit te ernstig op. Hulle wil gangsters wees. Hulle wil vir ons sê. Kyk hiersa ek sal vir jou nou sê: Ons bestaan uit twee
ACT-LV	groepe uit. Groot Homeboys en ons kleintjies, ons kleiner Homeboys. Ons is nou meer met dans te doen; sports, vroumense en so. Nou die grotes,
ACT-V	hulle is gangsters. Jy kan basically nie vir ons gangsters noem nie. Maar vir hulle, hulle is gangsters. Hulle vat dit
GANG-ID	so as hulle bakleiery kry, dan moet ons maar saam staan met hulle - want ons is ook Homeboys. Elkeen dra die merk van die Homeboys. Ek het een op my linkerskouer.
	B: Ja. Okay. So hoe voel jy nou toe jy die merk wys nou, jy's nou aangesluit by ...'n Homeboy? Dat jy saamstaan
GANG-ID	*saam met die Homeboys? En wat ever ook al kom, jy sal saam staan.*
	R: Ek voel nogal - hoe kan 'n mens nou
MOT-FR/M	sê in Afrikaans, *proud*, om 'n

ACT-V MOT-COM/M	Homeboy te wees. Ek weet as ek nou iets makeer - miskien in die hospitaal lê of so- dan weet ek my vriende is daar om te support. Hoe kan ek dit nou stel? As ek miskien in die moeilikheid is, miskien bakleiery het, dan is my vriende is altyd daar om my te kan help. As iemand miskien klap, is my vriende daar om te help, om dit uit te klaar. Dan sal hulle sê "los dit" of "doen so" of so, sien jy. So.
GANG-RUL	*B: Okay, so dit is kwaai om die chappie te dra van die Homeboys want hulle daar is vir jou en vir jou support en so aan.*
	R: As ek miskien moeilikheid kry en jy is nou miskien my broe, my Homeboy-broer en jy wil my nie bystaan nie, dan sit ons kring oor jou. Of ons jou gaan uitskop en of ons jou gaan hou. Sien jy.
	B: So as jy ... dan moet ek verduidelik...
	R: Die rede hoekom jy nie gehelp het nie.
MOT-COM/M	*B: Ja. So voel jy nou kwaai dat dit nou so is.*
	R: Ek voel maar net *proud* dat my vriende altyd daar is om my te help. Sien jy.
MOT-COM/M	*B: Okay. So jy voel ook proud dat jy sal ook help as jou vriende wat-wat.*
	R: As ek nie kan nie, dan kan ek nie.
	B: So, dit laat jou goed voel dat hulle ook so voel oor jou. Hulle gaan ook vir jou help as hulle kan.
MOT-SOC/M	*En wat is nog lekker van Homeboy*

	wees?	
MEM-CHR MOT-SOC/M MOT-FR/M MOT-SOC/M	R: Saterdae dan gaan ons miskien man-man... Ons het twee karre -'n kar en 'n bakkie. Hoe kan ek sê: Nie 'n bakkie nie, 'n stasiewa. Nou naweke dan gaan ons uit. Miskien elke naweek dan gaan ons ... toe. Daai's nou vir my wat opwindend is, sien jy. Ons is jeug, ons is avontuurlustig te wees. Partykeer dan gaan kamp ons uit daar in die berg, daar in Kylemoore. Partykeer gaan ons uit, gaan kuier ons. Miskien jy het 'n *auntie* wat ver bly, daar in Worcester. Dan gaan ons almal nou. Jy weet mos hoe dit is: jongspan. Lekker kuier daar. Ontmoet lekker nuwe mense. Almal is so- almal is avontuurlustig.	
ACT-V	B: *Daai is nou lekker van die Homeboys - julle doen different goete elke keer. Lekker exciting goed en so. Daai is nou wat lekker is . Wat is nie lekker van Homeboy wees?*	
CONF-G CONF-OR ACT-CR CONF-RES ACT-SUB ACT-CR CONF-OR	R: Baklei en so aangaan. Partykeer wil ons nie baklei nie, dan wil 'n man dit net los Maar partykeer kom die Americans af. Dan loop hulle in die rondte met die American vlag. Dan kom hulle af in die straat in. Sien jy, dan begin hulle eerste. Met karre – word stukkend gegooi. Word teen die mense se huise gegooi. Ons het al vir hulle gesê, ons was binne in hulle yard. Ons wil nie saam met die huis baklei, saam met die man se eiendom baklei nie; ons wil saam met die man baklei. Maar hulle vat dit nie so nie. As hulle dronk is, wil hulle huise vensters stukkend gooi, sien jy. Goetes beskadig. Dit is ook nog 'n rede hoekom ons vir hulle baklei. Hoe	

	kan ek sê hulle tart ons uit om te baklei.	
CONF-OR	*B: So jy voel die dat hulle so heeltyd - julle hele Homeboys wil uit die fightery uit kom en so.*	
	R: Hulle wil almal rondklap soos hulle wil.	
ACT-SUB MOT-SOC MOT-FR/M	*B: En daai's So jy sê dit is nou van julle ... Hulle likes rondloop en goede afbreek en so. Terwyl julle nie saam is met die ander gangsters. En as hulle dronk is, wil hulle sommer die goed.*	
MOT-COM/M CONF-COM ATT-CHU	R: Ons sal daar sit. Die ouens wat drink hulle sal daar eenkant drink. Lekker by die beach. Maak grappe van mekaar. Niemand raak kwaad of so iets nie. Daarna gaan ons almal huis toe. Ons kyk eers dat almal by die huis kom. Die wat nie drink nie kyk dat die wat drink- wat miskien lekker dronk is- dat hulle veilig by die huis kom. Dan gaan ons almal lekker slaap. Môre oggend vroeg, Miskien die Saterdag aand oggend, Almal is by die huis as Saterdagaand kom. Nou kom jy die Sondagoggend vroeg... dan kom dit uit, dan hoor jy : die Homeboys het die een vermoor, die Homeboys het daai een vermoor. Dan weet 'n man van niks af nie sien jy. Ek myself ek gaan kerk toe, ek gaan klas sien jy. Uit die klas uit kom, dan hoor 'n mens net die dinge. Dis hoekom ...	*"klas" is going to confirmation classes at church.*
	B: Dan maak hulle net asof dit julle is...	
	R: Onnodig daai.	
	B: So vir julle Homeboys voel jy net dat julle wil uit die fightery kom. Julle try	

CONF-RES	*om nou al die gangs uit Die Dal uit te kry. Sodat julle nou net lekker vrede kan hê; dat julle lekker kan rondbeweeg, die Dal 'n veiliger plek maak. Is daar enigiets wat jy wil byvoeg, wil add?* R: Wat ek al experience het, ons almal nou - ons het lank probeer om te praat met die gemeenskap. Dat hulle ook vir ons kan verstaan. Dan kan ons ons storie verduidelik. Sien jy. Dat ons nou die dinge kan laat staan. Sien jy. Al wat ek wil sê. B: *Maar thanks dan.*