What's it like on the inside? The impact of self-concept on the educational engagement and delinquency of young offenders in a custodial setting

Rana Abou-Sinna

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Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science

Faculty of Health, Arts and Design

Swinburne University of Technology

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ABSTRACT

With growing evidence that educational engagement and academic success are important in reducing the likelihood of reoffending by young people (Blomberg et al., 2010; Brookmeyer, Fanti & Henrich, 2006; Chapman et al., 2011; Li et al., 2011), youth detention centres are increasingly searching for ways of engaging young offenders in education and providing positive learning experiences. Previous research has elucidated the important role self-concept can play in the educational engagement of young people. However, to date, little research has specifically examined the relationship between self-concept and educational engagement in young incarcerated offenders. This study aimed to address this gap using both quantitative and qualitative research methods. Self-concept was assessed in 70 young adolescent males aged between 14 to 19 years (M = 16.53, SD = 1.00) who were incarcerated in a youth custodial facility. In addition to a measure specifically examining self-concept, participants also completed measures assessing related constructs including personality, self-esteem, self-efficacy and early maladaptive schema. The narratives of 15 young offenders were also examined using narrative inquiry. The results of the quantitative and qualitative analyses indicated that young offenders' self-concepts along with their temperament and character predicted both educational engagement and previous delinquency, suggesting that the self-concept may be a key variable linked to the overall adjustment of a young person and not just their educational outcomes. The self-concept may therefore be particularly relevant to rehabilitative efforts in young offenders. The results also provide insight into how young offenders' life experiences, particularly their childhood experiences, contribute to the development of negative self-beliefs, which impact on their engagement in education.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my mother. You will always be my inspiration
for everything that I do.

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The journey through the doctorate has been long and challenging but also very rewarding and I have a number of people to thank.

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DECLARATION

This thesis titled "What's it like on the inside? The impact of self-concept on the educational engagement and delinquency of young incarcerated offenders", by Rana Abou-Sinna contains no material that has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other institution, except where due reference is made in the text of the examinable outcome. I also affirm that to the best of my knowledge the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

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    Rana Abou-Sinna   Date

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THESIS OUTLINE

This thesis reports on a mixed methods study exploring self-concept and its relationship with educational engagement and delinquency in young Australian incarcerated offenders. The integration of quantitative and qualitative research findings provides a comprehensive and nuanced account of self-concept, revealing valuable insights into a neglected but critical construct and how it may help explain disengagement from education and antisocial conduct. The thesis proposes strategies that may be useful to re-engage young offenders as part of a rehabilitation programme.

This thesis contains five chapters. Chapter one provides a review of the literature pertaining to self-concept and the associated methodological issues. This chapter also includes a review of the risk and protective factors related to youth offending. This is then followed by a review of the literature relating to self-concept and its relation to educational engagement and delinquency.

Chapter two describes the study methodology. It begins by defining mixed methods research and the strengths and limitations associated with its use. This is followed by the rationale for a mixed methods research design and a description of the particular mixed methods design used in this study. This methodology chapter then details the study procedures, describing how both the qualitative and quantitative data were collected, and provides a summary of the assessment measures and qualitative approach. A description of the sample and the setting from which the sample were derived is also included. The chapter concludes with details of the qualitative and quantitative analyses undertaken.

Chapter three reports the quantitative findings and is divided into three parts. The first section includes descriptive statistics for each of the measures used. The

second section explores the relationships between self-concept, the additional self-concept related variables, including personality, self-esteem, self-efficacy, early maladaptive schema, and educational engagement and delinquency. The final section explores whether self-concept and self-concept related constructs predict educational engagement and delinquency.

Chapter four reports the qualitative findings. The chapter is organised according to six broad themes, which emerged from the narratives (life stories) of 15 young offenders. These themes include unstable childhoods, negative school experiences, delinquency, incarceration, and hope for change.

Chapter five discusses the integrated findings, it is organised in three sections, beginning with a discussion of the qualitative and quantitative findings separately and then followed by the integrative discussion, implications, limitations and future directions.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0. Introduction

Many young offenders experience significant disruptions to their schooling, with high rates of truancy, regular suspensions, expulsions, academic failure, and early school leaving prior to their involvement in the criminal justice system (Prichard & Payne, 2005). As a result, young people involved in the criminal justice system often present to youth justice services with educational needs. The available research suggests that many factors contribute to a young person's disengagement from education (Fredericks, Blumenfield & Paris, 2004). Some of this research suggests that self-concept, which can be defined as the "cognitive appraisals, expressed in terms of expectations, descriptions and prescriptions, which one attributes to the self" (Hattie, 2014, p.37), is an important factor that is related to a range of educational outcomes for young people (Buhs, 2005; Raufelder et al., 2015). However, to date, there is limited research that has examined the relationship between self-concept and educational engagement in young offenders. The aim of this study was to address this important limitation in existing knowledge by exploring self-concept in young offenders and examining the relationship between self-concept and educational engagement.

To give context to this study, this chapter presents a summary of the literature pertaining to the relationship between self-concept, education and youth offending. It will begin with a brief review of patterns of youth offending in both Australia and internationally, and consideration of the research on the risk and protective factors related to youth offending.

1.1. Youth Offending in Australia

This section provides an overview of youth offending in Australia. It includes a review of data pertaining to police arrests, court proceedings and rates of youth detention and recidivism in Australia. To begin however, it is first important to define "young offender", according to Victorian legislation where the study was located. In the state of Victoria, Australia, under s.3 of the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*, a young offender is defined as a child "…. who is alleged to have committed an offence, a person who at the time of the alleged commission of the offence was under the age of 18 years but of or above the age of 10 years but does not include any person who is of or above the age of 19 years when a proceeding for the offence is commenced in the Court".

In Australia, young offenders comprised just over a fifth (21%) of the total offender population in 2014-15, while representing only 14% of the total Australian Estimated Resident Population (ERP) (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2015). This high prevalence of offending in Australian adolescents is consistent with international jurisdictions. The observed peak in crime during adolescence is commonly known as the age-crime curve (Moffit, 1993; Tittle, Ward, & Grasmick, 2003) and refers to the elevated offending often seen during adolescence, particularly during the ages of 12-14, peaking between 17 and 19 years, and declining in adulthood as young offenders mature out of offending (Moffit, 1993; Tittle, Ward, & Grasmick, 2003).

Although young people are over-represented in the Australian criminal justice system, there has been an overall decline in the number of young offenders (3% decrease or a decrease of 2,223 offenders) proceeded against by the police in the last few years (2013-14 and 2014-15) in Australia (ABS, 2015). In particular, there has been a decrease in the number of offenders who were proceeded against by police for

offences including acts intended to cause injury (8% decrease), unlawful entry with intent (12% decrease) and public order offences (15% decrease). There was however, an increase in the number of offenders who committed illicit drug offences (8% increase) and theft offences (7% increase) over this time. In Australia, the youth offender rate for males is three to four times higher than youth offender rates for females. The most prevalent principal offence for those aged 10 to 17 years was also theft, while for those aged 18 to 19 years it was illicit drug offences.

With respect to rates of detention, according to the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW; 2015), in the June quarter of 2015, 885 young people were in youth detention on an average night, the vast majority of whom were male (90%). Furthermore, 81% of the young people in detention were aged 10-17. This equates to about 3.2 young people aged 10-17 per 10,000 in the Australian population, or about 1 in every 3,150 in that age group. Moreover, over a one-year period, from the June quarter 2014 to June quarter 2015, the AIHW reported that the number of young people in detention was relatively stable (between 848 and 922 on an average night each quarter).

Over a four-year period however, from the June quarter 2010 to the June quarter 2015, there was an overall decrease in the national youth detention population, from 1,027 to 885 young people in detention on an average night (or from 3.6 per 10,000 to 3.2 per 10,000 for offenders aged 10 to 17 years). While the rate of young people aged 10-17 in unsentenced detention (i.e., on remand) remained relatively stable, the rate of sentenced detention decreased over the four-year period (from 1.5 to 1.2 per 10,000). Moreover, with respect to states and territories, over the four-year period, the rate of young people aged 10-17 in detention on an average night increased in Queensland, and decreased in New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia, Tasmania and the

Australian Capital Territory. Victoria consistently had the lowest rate of detention on an average night throughout the four-year period. Conversely, Northern Territory and Western Australia had the highest rates of detention.

While the rate of non-Indigenous detention has decreased, Indigenous young people are becoming increasingly over-represented in youth custodial centres in Australia. More than half (54%) of the young people in detention in Australia were Indigenous or Torre Strait Islander on an average night in the June quarter 2015 (AIHW; 2015). Over the four-year period, the level of Indigenous over-representation increased from 19 to 26 times the rate of non-Indigenous young people (AIHW; 2015). However, this increase occurred mainly as a result of a reduction in the rate of non-Indigenous young people in detention and no change in detention rates for Indigenous young people during this period. A range of social, cultural and environmental factors are proposed to explain these high rates of Indigenous offending in Australia (see Broadhurst, 1997; Tyler, 1998).

Similar patterns of youth offending have also been noted in Victoria. More, specifically, the total number of young offenders processed by Victoria Police in 2013/2014 dropped by 3% from 29,214 to 28,350 but increased among all other age groups (Victoria Police, 2014). There was also a decrease in the number of recorded offences for crimes against person (3.9 % decrease) and crimes against property (7.2 % decrease) and an increase in drug offences (1.7 % increase) and other crimes (15.2 %) including possession of weapons, behaviour in public, harassment, public order, going equipped to steal.

Furthermore, data obtained from the Children's Court in Victoria (Sentencing Advisory Council, 2012) for the ten-year period from 2000 to 2009, indicated that the most frequent offences committed by young people in Victoria were property offences

(e.g. theft, burglary, trespass, property damage) which accounted for 32.1% of convictions, followed by transit ticketing offences (e.g., failing to display ticket on public transport) which accounted for 31.1 % of all offences and offences against the person (e.g., assaults including threats, minor physical contact, and inflicting serious injury and causing injury) which accounted for 17% of all offences. Offences were broadly similar for males and females. For males, the most common offences were property offences (35.1%), followed by transit offences (27%) and offences against person (18.3%), and for females, the most common offence types were transit offences (54.8%), followed by property offences (23.3%) and offences against the person (13.3%). However, males greatly outnumbered females in the total cases finalised. The most common age of young offenders sentenced in the Children's Court over this period was 16 years for both males and females, followed by 15 years and then 17 years (Sentencing Advisory Council, 2012). Offences against the person were the most frequent infractions dealt with by the court. Over the last 10 years, there has also been an increase in the rate of violent offences sentenced in the Children's Court and a decrease in the rate of sentenced property offences (Sentencing Advisory Council, 2012).

Moreover, most custodial sentences handed down by the Children's Court in Victoria between 2000-2009 were to young people who had committed offences against the person (49.9%) and property offences (41%) as the principal proven offence. Custodial sentences were rarely used for other offence categories. A higher percentage of males were sentenced to serve custodial orders for property offences compared to females who were more likely than males to be sentenced for offences against the person. Between 2000-09, young people who committed offences against the person were the most likely to receive a custodial sentence. Young offenders who commit

violent offences therefore make up the largest population of people incarcerated in youth detention centres in Victoria.

It is worth noting here that youth justice legislation in Australia operates on the principle of detention as a last resort, in accordance with United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990). A young person, therefore, is only sentenced to detention once all other options to divert them from the criminal justice system have been exhausted. A range of policing measures including cautioning, conducting meetings between an offender and their victim (restorative justice conferencing), and convening specialty courts (such as youth drug and alcohol courts) have also been introduced to divert offenders away from the criminal justice system. It also important to note that while the maximum age for criminal responsibility for treatment as a child in most jurisdictions in Australia is 17 years (except in Queensland where the maximum age is 16 years), Victoria's unique dual track system allows adult courts to sentence young offenders aged up to 21 years to serve custodial sentences in youth detention instead of adult prison. This is intended to prevent vulnerable young people from entering the adult prison system at an early age. Young people who are detained in youth detention centres therefore tend to be the more complex, serious, and recidivist offenders.

Many studies have also attempted to understand youth recidivism in Australia. One particular study by Lynch, Buckman and Krenske (2003) examined recidivism rates amongst 1503 offenders between the ages of 10 to 17 serving youth justice orders between 1994 and 1995 in Queensland. They found that 79% of young offenders serving supervised orders during this period had progressed to the adult corrections system and 49% were subsequently imprisoned at least once. The rate was higher for male Indigenous young offenders who progressed to the adult corrections system (89%)

or served at least one subsequent prison term (71%). They also found that 91% of young people who had been subject to a care and protection order as well as a supervised justice order had progressed to the adult corrections system and 67% served at least one further term of imprisonment. The probability of young people on supervised orders who were subject to multiple risk factors (male, Indigenous status, presence of care and protection order) progressing to adult corrections approached 100%.

Chen and colleagues (2005) examined reoffending among 5,500 young offenders between the ages of 10 to 18 who appeared before the New South Wales (NSW) Children's Court for the first time in 1995 over an eight-year period. Their findings showed that 68% of young people appeared in a NSW Court at least once during the following eight years. Forty-three percent re-appeared at least once within a Children's Court and 57% reappeared at least once in an adult court within the next eight years. They reported that 13% of the young people who appeared in the Children's Court in 1995 ended up in an adult prison within eight years. Their findings showed that young people aged 10 to 14 at their first court appearance had significantly more court appearances over the eight years. Similar to Lynch and colleagues, males and Indigenous young people were also more likely to appear in an adult court over the same time period. This research also showed that the average number of court appearances across the sample over the eight-year period was 3.5. This average increased to 12 court appearances for Indigenous males who were between the ages of 10 to 14 at their first court appearance. Chen and colleagues concluded that efforts to reduce the risk of recidivism should not be postponed due to a belief that most young people whose first appearance is in the Children's Court will never reappear in court. This appears to be particularly important where the offender is Indigenous, male and/or relatively young.

More recent research conducted by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2015) found that 62% of young people who served a supervised sentence were re-sentenced for a subsequent offence only once before they turned 18 years of age. This rate was lower for young people whose first sentence was detention (47%) compared with those whose first supervised sentence was community-based (63%). It was also reported that almost one in six young people (15%) whose first supervised sentence was community-based had a total of five or more supervised sentences from the ages of 10 to 18. For those whose first supervised sentence was detention, more than 1 in 4 (29%) had five or more sentences. Furthermore, the AIHW reported that one-fifth (20%) of the 2,568 young people aged 10 to 16 who were released from community-based supervision in 2012-13 were sentenced to a further period of supervision within six months. The rate of return within 12 months was 44%. Half (50%) of 479 young people aged 10 to 16 who were released from sentenced detention in 2012-13 had returned to sentenced supervision within six months and 76% had returned within 12 months. Young people released from custody were also three times more likely to be sentenced to another period of detention within 12 months of release than those released from community-based supervision. Similar to previous studies (Chen et al., 2005; Lynch et al., 2003), they also found that Indigenous young people released from sentenced community-based supervision were more likely to be sentenced to a further period of supervision than their non-Indigenous counterparts, irrespective of gender. In contrast, males released from sentenced detention were more likely than females to return to sentenced supervision within 12 months, irrespective of Indigenous status.

In terms of age, their findings showed that two-thirds (67%) of those aged 10 to 12 when released from sentenced community-based supervision had returned to sentenced supervision within 12 months. This rate was almost twice that of those aged

16 (37%). In contrast, the rate of return within 12 months for those released from sentenced detention was high for all age groups, with the highest rate for those aged 13 at release (93%), followed by 83% for those aged 10 to 12 (all of whom returned within six months).

For both young people released from sentenced community-based supervision and those released from sentenced detention, returning to sentenced supervision was slightly more likely for those who had one or more previous supervised sentences, but only for returns within 12 months. More specifically, 46% of people sentenced to community supervision, who returned within 12 months had at least one previous supervised sentence. For young people sentenced to detention, more than three-quarters (76%) who returned within 12 month had at least one previous sentence. For returns within six months, young people with no previous supervised sentences were slightly more likely to return than those with one or more previous supervised sentences.

Some research has also compared the recidivism rates of adult and young offenders. More specifically, Payne (2007) compared adult and youth data from the Drug Use Careers Of Offenders (DUCO) study. In this study 55% of young offenders and 59% of adult offenders reported at least three prior incarceration episodes over their lifetime. Payne argued that these findings suggested that there was a more "prolific offending profile among young offenders that would lead to a speedier return to custody" (p. 73). He argued that this could be partly confirmed by the finding that young offenders were more likely to report returning to prison much earlier than adults (14 months compared to 55 months, respectively). Another study conducted by Holmes (2012), which examined data from the NSW reoffending database, showed that from 1994 to 2009 young offenders continued to have higher re-offending rates than adult

offenders over a 15-year period (80% compared to 58%, respectively) (Holmes, 2012).

Developmental research suggests that during adolescence, a period characterised by increased risk taking, reliance on the peer group, individuation and identity development, anti-social behaviour is known to increase, particularly during the ages of 12-14 and then peaks between 17 to 19 years of age (Moffit, 1993). The majority of adolescents however, mature out of these behaviours by the time they reach adulthood, with only a small proportion of males persisting through to adulthood.

In summary, whilst young offenders are over-represented in the criminal justice system, the number of young offenders proceeded against by police has decreased by 3% in Australia over the last year. There has however, been an increase in the number of young offenders proceeded against for theft and illicit drug offences. Detention rates in Australia have also remained relatively stable over the last year, decreasing slightly over the past four years. Research indicates that a substantial number of young offenders sentenced to supervision return to supervision within 12 months and that a significant proportion reappear before the adult courts and continue to offend into adulthood. Substantially higher rates of recidivism however, have been reported among youth sentenced to detention. Young people released from detention are also more likely to receive a subsequent sentence of detention than young offenders released from community-based supervision. Furthermore, compared to adults, young offenders have higher rates of recidivism, have more frequent involvement with the criminal justice system and reoffend faster. This points to the need to better understand youth recidivism and develop more effective interventions to reduce reoffending among young Australian offenders.

1.2. International Research on Youth Offending

This section explored similarities and differences with Australian youth offending with research derived from samples from New Zealand (NZ), United Kingdom (UK) and United States of America (USA) young offenders. These countries were selected as they more closely resembled the legal and judicial system in Australia. Youth offending patterns for each country will first be discussed separately and this will be followed by a discussion of similarities and differences. It must be noted however, that as each country differs in the reporting of crime statistics (e.g., measure of recidivism used, period of follow up, type of crime statistics reported), in some cases direct comparisons could not be made across countries.

1.2.1. New Zealand (NZ).

According to the NZ Ministry of Justice (2012), which reported on trends for children and young people involved in the NZ Justice System over a 10-year period from 2002 to 2011, the number of police apprehensions (i.e., a count of alleged offences) decreased by 23% (from 43,225 to 33,481 apprehensions). In 2011, 68% of apprehensions of children and young people were resolved through alternative action by Police Youth Aid (a court diversion programme) or a warning or caution. Around 45% of charges laid against children and young people in 2011 were for unlawful entry with intent/burglary, break and enter, theft and related offences or property damage and environmental pollution. Over half (54%) of all proven cases processed in the NZ Youth Courts were for property offences, 16% were for imprisonable traffic offences, and 23% were for violent offences. The most common sentences for children and young people in NZ are fines and reparations (45% of all sentences received in 2011). Nearly all of the young people had been convicted of a traffic offence. Just under one-third of

convicted young people received some form of community-based sentence (e.g., home detention, community detention, intensive supervision, supervision and community work). However, the number of convicted young people sentenced to imprisonment has decreased in NZ from 76 in 2002 to 33 in 2011.

Although there has been an overall decrease in the number of young people appearing in court in NZ, young Māoris are overrepresented, comprising 54% of all children and young people appearing before the courts in 2011, despite making up only 20% of the youth population in New Zealand. The rate of young Māori appearing in court is more than double the rate for all young people appearing in court. The Māori youth apprehension rate is more than three times that of Pacific Islander (who are also an overrepresented group) or NZ European children.

With regard to recidivism, Nadesu (2009), examined recidivism in 4945 offenders released from prison in NZ in 2002-2003. Four hundred and sixty-three of these offenders were under the age of 20 at the time of release; 71% were re-imprisoned within a five-year period. Twenty-three percent of young offenders returned to prison within three months, 45% returned within 12 months and 59.2% within 24 months; 136 offenders (29.4 %) were not re-imprisoned for a new offence during follow-up. However, of these offenders, 80 were re-convicted and commenced a community sentence over the same period; this left only 56 offenders of the original 463 who were not convicted for a new offence. The study also reported that young offenders aged under 20 years were twice as likely to return to prison compared to adult offenders aged over 40 years.

1.2.2. United Kingdom (UK).

According to the Ministry of Justice (2016) for England and Wales, over 12 months in 2012/13 11.8% of all arrests were of 10-17 year olds, whilst representing only 10.5% of the total population of England and Wales who were of offending age (those 10 years or older). The number of arrests of young people fell by 24% between 2011/12 and 2012/13. Over this time, there was also an overall decline in the number of proven offences committed by young people. In particular, there was a decline in the percentage of public order offences (60% decline), breach of statutory order offences (55% decline) and motoring offences (54% decline). The main offence types for which young people were convicted in 2013/14 were; violence against the person (22%), theft and handling (18%) and criminal damage (11%). Sexual offences accounted for 2% of all offences, with a total of 1,653 convictions recorded. The majority (78%) of proven offences were committed by young people aged 15 and over, with 31% aged 17 or older. Only one in five (22%) of the proven offences were committed by young people aged 10-14 years.

The average population of young people in custody in 2013/14 was 1,318, this represented a reduction by 23% over the prior year. Over half (57 %) of the average population of young people (under 18) in custody in 2013/14 were serving a Detention and Training Order (a determinate custodial sentence which can last from four months to 24 months in length). A further 21% were held on remand. The remaining 22% were serving long-term sentences, (a custodial sentence of 14 years or more for which an adult of 21 years or over could receive). Most of the young people (under 18) held in custody were male (95%) and aged 15-17 years (96%). Most young people held in custody in 2013/14 were held for serious offences, including: 32% for robbery offences:

25% for violence against the person offences, and 17% for burglary (domestic and non-domestic) offences.

With respect to recidivism, according to the Ministry of Justice (2016) the overall re-offending rate for young people was 38% in the year 2013/2014, representing an increase of 1.9% from the previous 12 months. Those that re-offended committed an average of three further offences. The highest re-offending rate by age group was 38.9% for offenders aged 10-14 years. The second highest re-offending rate (37.8%) was for offenders aged 15 to 17 years of age. The re-offending rate for young offenders released from custody was substantially higher, reaching 67.1% in the same year. This was a decrease of 0.8% compared to the previous 12 months. Young people with the highest rate of re-offending were those who committed an index offence of "Miscellaneous crimes against society", which includes handling stolen goods, threats to commit criminal damage, and perverting the course of justice. The young people with the lowest reoffending rate (12.1%) were those who committed a sexual offence.

1.2.3. United States of America (USA).

According to the Juvenile Offenders and Victims 2014 National Report (Sickmund & Puzzanchera, 2014) in the US, young people aged 16 to 17 constitute 26% of the youth population aged 10 to 17 but account for more than 50% of the arrests of young people under the age of 18, more than 40% of all delinquency court cases and more than 50% of all young offenders in residential placement. Furthermore, in 2010, 11% of all male arrests and 14% of all female arrests involved a person younger than the age of 18. Young offenders were involved in about 1 in 10 arrests for murder, 1 in 4 arrests for robbery, burglary and disorderly conduct and about 1 in 5 arrests for theft and motor vehicle theft. Youth arrest rates have declined over the 10-year period 2001

and 2010 in the US. While male arrests declined by 24% over the same 10-year period, female arrests declined 10%. Young people aged 16–17 years accounted for nearly three quarters of all youth arrests for violent crimes (e.g., murder, manslaughter, forcible rape, aggravated assault) and property crimes (e.g., burglary, theft, motor vehicle theft, arson, vandalism, trespassing) in 2010 (73% and 72%, respectively). Property crimes accounted for the largest proportion (37%) of delinquency crimes in 2010, followed by public order offences (e.g., disorderly conduct, obstruction of justice) which accounted for 26% of all offences, and offences against the person and drug offences, which accounted for 25% and 12% of all delinquency cases. The main offence types for which young people were convicted in 2010 were assault (17%) theft, obstruction of justice (12%) and drug offences (12%). Compared with males, there was a greater proportion of female delinquency cases heard for simple assault (i.e., any assault or attempted assault that is not of an aggravated nature and does not result in serious injury to the victim) (22%), theft (28%), disorderly conduct (9%), and a smaller proportion of robbery (1%), burglary (2%), vandalism (3%) and drug cases (8%).

With respect to recidivism, currently there are no national statistics on youth recidivism in the US (Sickmund & Puzzanchera, 2014). Recidivism rates are only reported at the state level. A further complication is that each state also differs in how they define, measure and report recidivism rates. This makes it difficult to aggregate state recidivism statistics in order to obtain a national average and difficult to compare recidivism statistics across states. At the state level however, one study (Kailist & Lee, 2009) analysed data from 1997 to 2005 with approximately 190,000 young offenders in Pennsylvania with a prior conviction and reported on rates of re-conviction at one, two and three years follow up. They reported that 11% of young offenders who had been convicted of a first offence were reconvicted within one year. Twenty percent of young

offenders were reconvicted within two years and 28% were reconvicted within three years. Differences in recidivism rates were found for young offenders living in urban versus rural areas. In particular, lower recidivism rates were found in rural counties compared to urban counties.

Another study by McElfresh, Yan and Anne Janku (2009) measured recidivism rates of 15,910 young offenders in Missouri. They reported that 26% of offenders re-offended with a new law violation within one year of their initial disposition date. Nearly a third (29%) of male offenders re-offended within 12 months, compared with 19% of females. Twenty-nine percent of offenders aged 13-15 re-offended within 12 months, compared with 22% of offenders aged 10-12 and 22% of offenders aged 16-17. The highest rate of recidivism was reported among African American young people, followed by American Indian offenders. Some studies have also shown that youth who are incarcerated have a greater likelihood of reoffending post-release. In particular, Field (1999) reported that in Washington, 59% of incarcerated youth re-offended within one year and 68% within two years.

1.3. A Comparison of Trends in Youth Offending Across USA, UK, NZ and Australia

In general, there appear to be a number of similarities in the trends pertaining to youth offending across UK, USA, NZ and Australia. In particular, there has been an overall decline in the number of young people apprehended by police and processed in the courts, where they are most frequently charged for property offences. However, while the most common offences proved in court in both NZ and Australia were property offences, the majority of proven offences in the USA and UK were violent offences. Furthermore, across these international jurisdictions, the most common age of

young offenders apprehended by police and processed in the court is 15-17. With regard to imprisonment, in the UK there has been a decrease in detention rates reported for the year 2012/2013. Similarly, in Australia, over a four-year period from the June quarter 2010 to the June quarter 2015, detention rates have declined; they have also declined in New Zealand over the last 10 years.

There also appears to be an over-representation of minority groups in the criminal justice system across the USA, Australia and NZ. In particular, there is an overrepresentation of Indigenous young people in Australia, Maori young people in New Zealand and African American and American Indian young people in the USA.

Regarding recidivism rates, studies in the UK and USA have reported 12-month reconviction rates ranging from 26% to 38%. However, across all countries, higher rates of recidivism have been reported among young offenders released from a custodial sentence, with such rates ranging between 59 and 68%. Studies in the UK, NZ and Australia also suggest that young offenders have higher recidivism rates compared to adult offenders.

These findings highlight the importance of understanding recidivism in young offender populations and signal the importance of targeting services and interventions to young people in an effort to reduce recidivism. A precondition for the development of effective rehabilitation programmes is an understanding of the factors that contribute to offending. This literature is reviewed in the following sections.

1.4. Risk and Protective Factors

A vast array of risk factors has been found to be associated with youth offending. There is no one risk factor that can be considered the cause of youth offending (Shader, 2003). Most research suggests that the predictive power of risk

factors tends to be cumulative in nature (Durrant, 2013, p. 55). In other words, the more risk factors an individual possesses, the greater the likelihood they will offend. From a criminological perspective, risk factors can be referred to as the stable correlates that predict crime and represent an increase in the risk of offending (King & Wincup, 2008). According to Andrews and Bonta (2010), there are two kinds of risk factors: static and dynamic. Static risk factors are stable aspects of the offender's past that are predictive of recidivism (e.g. criminal history, age, gender). Dynamic risk factors, which are also commonly termed criminogenic needs, refer to risk attributes of an offender and their circumstances that, when changed, are associated with changes in recidivism (e.g., substance use, employment, education) (Campbell, French & Grendeur, 2009; Andrews & Bonta, 2010). They are sensitive to the changes that might occur with time and the influence of social, psychological, biological or contextual factors (Douglas & Skeem, 2005).

Whilst the presence of risk factors may increase the probability of offending, they do not allow one to predict offending with certainty. Although the presence of multiple risk factors increases the probability that a young person will engage in crime compared to individuals with fewer risk factors, some young people will present with multiple risk factors and not engage in crime (Durrant, 2013). The reason why these individuals do not set out on an antisocial pathway or why they may leave it may be due to the presence and role of protective factors.

Protective factors can be defined as any characteristic of a person, which reduces the risk of future problem behaviour and adverse outcomes (De Vogel, De Ruiter, Bouman, & De Vries Robbé, 2009; 2012). Like risk factors, there are two types of protective factors: direct protective factors and buffering protective factors. According to Losel and Farrington (2012), direct protective factors predict a low probability of

future problem behaviour without taking other factors into account. They describe

buffering protective factors on the other hand, as variables that predict a low probability

of a negative outcome in the presence of risk factors. Protective factors are not always

different from risk factors in the sense that the same variable may operate as both a

protective and a risk factor. For example, whilst high academic achievement is an

important protective factor, poor academic achievement is a risk factor that increases an

individual's risk of offending. In this sense, the exact meaning of a risk or protective

factor may not necessarily refer to the particular variable but to the different poles or

different degrees of a continuous variable (Losel & Farrington, 2012).

Both international and Australian research reveal a range of risk factors,

including the characteristics of the young people themselves, their peers, families,

school experiences and neighbourhoods. It is important to note that the same risk factors

have been identified among youth in Australia and internationally (see Makkai &

Payne, 2003; Prichard & Payne, 2005; Smart et al., 2003, 2004). These risk factors will

be briefly described in the following sections and will be organised into four separate

domains: community, family, peer/individual and school. A summary of the risk and

protective factors reviewed below is also included in Table 1.4.4.

1.4.1. Community domain factors.

Various community and neighbourhood factors have been linked to youth

offending. In particular, within this domain, laws and norms that are favourable to drug

use and the availability of drugs show the strongest associations with substance use and

delinquency (Arthur et al., 2002). The availability of drugs and firearms in the

community has also been shown to predict youth violence (Parker et al., 2011).

Moreover, McVie and Norris (2006) showed that young people who were living in

economically deprived neighbourhoods at age 12 were also more likely to offend. In addition, community disorganisation, which includes the presence of crime, drug selling and poor housing, has also been shown to be a stronger predictor of crime compared to low neighbourhood attachment (or a low level of bonding to the neighbourhood) (Hawkins et al., 2000).

Although various studies have elucidated important community determinants of crime, Andrews and Bonta (2010) argue the impact that the neighbourhood has on crime is "…minimal compared to the more immediate personal, interpersonal and familial risk/need factors" (p.269). This is consistent with more recent research which has shown that, compared to individual and familial factors, such as disruptions in parenting processes, poor school performance and early childhood aggression, neighbourhood explains only a very small proportion (1%) of the variance in anti-social behaviour (McGee et al., 2011). These findings however, do not suggest that the neighbourhood has no effect on crime but that indeed there may be a more complex relationship that exists between them. It may be that community factors, like socio-economic disadvantage, indirectly relate to anti-social behaviour through the impact that they have on family processes, participation in school and the acquisition of individual risk factors (e.g., exposure to violence may encourage attitudes that are supportive of violent behaviour). Community factors may also have more of an influence on individuals who are already at risk (Andrew & Bonta, 2010; McGee et al., 2011).

Neighbourhood factors also show both direct and buffering protective effects on youth offending. In particular, Arthur and colleagues (2002) found that youths who perceived more opportunities for pro-social activities and perceived greater rewards for involvement in pro-social activities in the community were less likely to engage in problem behaviours such as drug taking and delinquency. Furthermore, whilst moving

to a better neighbourhood or improved housing quality has been shown to have direct and buffering protective effects on youth offending (Sampson, 2008), these effects may be dependent on the individual and familial characteristics of the person. Losel and Farrington (2012) argue that it may not be a single neighbourhood characteristic but the accumulation of desirable compared to undesirable factors (e.g., community, family, individual) relating to the child that are primarily relevant to their resilience against youth offending.

1.4.2. Family domain risk and protective factors.

With respect to family domain factors, the most recent meta-analytic reviews have found significant links between poor attachment and delinquency in both male and female youth (Hoeve et al., 2009; Hoeve et al., 2012). Combined, attachment and parental control, including supervision, rules setting and strictness, were found to have more impact on a child's behaviour than the child-parent attachment relationship alone. In addition, the findings showed that whilst the attachment-delinquency link became weaker at older ages, the parental control-delinquency link was not moderated by age. The authors concluded that whilst disturbed attachment is linked to delinquency, parental control and discipline is at least or even more important for predicting delinquent behavior than parental attachment.

Longitudinal studies have also found poor emotional relationships within the family and inconsistent monitoring and disciplining of children by parents to be predictive of antisocial behaviour (Gershoff, 2002; Leschied et al., 2008; Loeber et al., 2005). Research has also demonstrated links between parental criminality, frequent disruption in the parental bond, placement in out-of home care (Ryan & Testa, 2005; Alltucker et al., 2006), adverse family environments (including child abuse and neglect)

(Grogan-Kaylor & Otis, 2003; Leschied et al., 2008) and delinquency. There is also research that suggests that exposure to violence in the home increases a child's risk of involvement in crime (Nofziger & Kurtz, 2005). Children of incarcerated parents are also more likely to be arrested and are more likely to engage in delinquent behaviour (Eddy & Heid, 2003; Myers et al., 1999).

Regarding protective factors, a positive parent-child relationship is a direct protective and buffering factor for delinquency and a range of other behavioural problems. A positive parent-child relationship has been found to promote non-violence and protects against the aggravation of problems in adolescence. Parenting behaviour, including intensive supervision, high persistence of discipline, low physical punishment and strong involvement of the child in the family activities also has direct protective effects (Losel & Farrington, 2012). Strong parental involvement can also function as a protective factor against later violence (Gonzales et al. 2011). Family cohesion has also been found to be related to a reduced likelihood of delinquent involvement and can protect children from the influence of deviant peers (Church, Wharton & Taylor, 2009; Kopak & Hawley, 2012). Other protective factors include perceived rewards for pro-social involvement in prosocial activities within the family and family attachment (young people who feel stronger bonds with their families) (Arthur et al., 2002).

According to Losel and Farrington (2012) characteristics of the parent-child relationship, parenting behaviour, parent attitudes and overall family climate are interrelated. They argue that protective functions in one of these areas may therefore be mediated by factors in the others.

1.4.3. Peer/individual domain risk and protective factors.

Characteristics of the young people themselves and their peers have also been linked to youth offending. These peer and individual factors include: hyperactivity and concentration problems, sensation seeking, early initiation of violent and other antisocial behaviour, beliefs and attitudes favourable to deviant and anti-social behaviour, delinquent siblings, delinquent peers and gang membership. With respect to individual factors, Bor, McGee and Fagan (2004) found that problems of attention and restlessness at age 5 doubled the child's risk of delinquency at age 14. Research also shows that deficits in children's capacity to regulate arousal are associated with early aggressive behaviour (Lengua, 2002; Wasserman et al., 2003). This early aggression in children has been shown to be associated with the continuity of anti-social behaviour and violent crime in adolescence (Bor, Najman, O'Callaghan, Williams & Anstey, 2001), and early onset of violence is a strong predictor of more serious and chronic offending (Berg & Delisi, 2005; Piquero et al., 2004). Moreover, involvement in other antisocial behaviours, such as drug selling, early sexual intercourse, and drug taking were also associated with a greater risk of violence (Hawkins et al., 2000). Furthermore, young people who express favourable attitudes towards delinquency and violence are also at higher risk for involvement in those antisocial behaviours (Arthur et al., 2002). Other individual factors such as verbal and non-verbal IQ measured at age 8-10 have also been shown to predict later youth and adult convictions (Farrington & Welsh, 2007). Some researchers argue however, that the relationship between IQ and offending is mediated by other factors such as poor academic achievement. Individuals with low IQ are likely to end up with low levels of educational attainment, which can in turn increase the likelihood of offending.

With regard to peer risk factors, research has consistently ranked anti-social associates as one of the strongest correlates of criminal behaviour (Bernat et al., 2012; Andrews & Bonta, 2010). In particular, a longitudinal study by Bernat and colleagues (2012) found that high levels of peer delinquency more than doubled the odds of violence among respondents in young adulthood. Research by Gordon and colleagues (2004) revealed that gang membership also significantly increased levels of delinquency. They also found that young people who entered gangs were more delinquent prior to entering the gang than those who did not join gangs. Young aggressive children who are rejected by peers have also been shown to be at significantly greater risk for chronic offending than children who are not rejected (Coie et al., 1995; Loeber, Farrington & Petechuk, 2003). Rejected aggressive children are also more likely to be members of deviant peer groups (Bagwell et al., 2000). Research has also shown that social isolation in conjunction with problematic peer encounters at school significantly increased delinquency and delinquent peer associations (Kreager, 2004).

However, having strong emotional bonds with peers who engage in pro-social activities has a direct protective effect against youth violence and delinquency. Children who have few antisocial tendencies and who are actively monitored or supervised by their parents are also less likely to be members of delinquent peer groups (Ingram et al., 2007; Warr, 2005). Young people who report frequent involvement in religious activities are also less likely to engage in anti-social behaviour. Involvement in religious groups can also have a buffering protective effect against violence in the presence of risks (Losel & Farrington, 2012). Other protective factors include beliefs in moral order (strong moral beliefs), resilient temperament (in youth who are able recover quickly from emotionally upsetting incidents) and sociability (Arthur et al., 2002).

1.4.4. School domain factors.

Education has been shown to have a significant positive impact on the social, psychological and intellectual development of young people. However, not all young people have positive experiences in school and as such, a proportion struggle to engage in and benefit from education. Poor engagement in education has been shown to be associated with academic failure, truancy and early school leaving, all of which increase a young person's risk of a range of problem behaviours and outcomes including offending (Makkai & Payne, 2003).

A considerable amount of research has shown that academic failure consistently predicts delinquency (Christle, Jolivette & Nelson, 2005; Doefe, Farrington & Loeber, 2012; Maguin & Loeber, 1996; Yun, Cheong & Walsh, 2014). A meta-analysis of more than 100 studies, which examined the relationship between academic performance and delinquency, found that poor performance was related to the prevalence, onset, frequency and seriousness of delinquency (Maguin & Loeber, 1996). However, Gasper, Deluca and Estacion (2010) showed that young people who frequently moved schools also had higher levels of delinquency compared to those who did not move. In addition, schools with high levels of delinquency have all been found to be associated with youth offending (Agnew, 2009). Low commitment to school and low academic aspirations measured at ages 10-12 years also predicted violence at age 15-18 years (Herrenkol, Lee & Hawkins, 2012).

Factors such as school bonding or attachment, opportunities for involvement in prosocial activities in school and the perceived rewards and recognition for this involvement are protective factors which influence young people to not engage in problem behaviours (Arthur et al., 2002). School achievement has both direct and buffering protective effects against offending (Herrenkohl et al., 2005; Loeber et al.,

2008). For example, Bernat and colleagues (2012) found direct protective effects for high educational aspirations. Other protective factors include positive relationships with teachers and experiences of academic success at school (Howell, 2003). These findings will be reviewed in more detail in section 1.5 (p. 28).

Table 1.4.4. Risk and Protective Factors for Delinquency

Community Domain Factors	
Risk Factors	**Protective factors**
Community disorganisation	Opportunities for pro-social involvement
Low neighbourhood attachment	Rewards for pro-social involvement
Perceived availability of drugs and weapons	
Attitudes and norms favourable toward drug use	
Low socioeconomic neighbourhood	
Exposure to violence	
Family Domain Factors	
Risk Factors	**Protective Factors**
Family history of anti-social behaviour	Family attachment
Family conflict	Opportunities for pro-social involvement
Parental attitudes toward anti-social behaviour and substance use	Rewards for pro-social involvement
Poor parenting practices	
Low socioeconomic status	
Childhood maltreatment	
Exposure to violence in the home	
Parent-child separation	
Poor family bonding, parental attachment	
Low levels of parental involvement	
Delinquent siblings	
School Domain Factors	
Risk Factors	**Protective Factors**
Academic failure	Educational engagement
Truancy and school dropout	Academic achievement
Educational disengagement	High educational aspirations
Grade retention	
Low academic aspirations	
Grade retention	
Peer-Individual Factors	
Risk Factors	**Protective Factors**
Anti-social attitudes, beliefs	Religiosity
Early initiation of anti-social behaviour	Social skills
Sensation seeking	Belief in moral order /pro-social orientation
Aggression	High intelligence
Restlessness	Pro-social peers
Emotion regulation difficulties	Low risk-taking
Problems with attention, concentration and hyperactivity	Absence of history of anti-social behaviour
Substance use	
Involvement with anti-social peers	
Gang involvement	
Rewards for anti-social behaviour	
Low intelligence	

1.5. The Relationship between Education and Delinquency

As noted above, there is a substantial body of research that has explored the factors that increase risk for delinquency. Much of this research has focussed on the concept of the 'school to prison pipeline', the purported phenomenon that describes students who gradually become disengaged from school while simultaneously becoming involved in crime and delinquency (Christle, Jolivette & Nelson, 2005). Some of this literature has specifically focussed on poor academic achievement whilst other studies have focussed on the relationship that early school leaving or school dropout has with delinquency. This section will specifically focus on the research investigating associations between academic achievement, school drop-out, educational engagement and delinquency.

1.5.1. Academic achievement, school dropout and educational engagement.

A significant proportion of the young people who become involved with the criminal justice system experience a range of academic problems and significant disruptions to schooling. In Australia, approximately three quarters of young offenders have dropped out of school prior to detention, usually before the age of 15 and most have only completed Year 8 (Makkai & Payne, 2003; Putnins, 1999; Snow & Powell, 2008). One in ten young offenders will not continue their education past Grade Six (Prichard & Payne, 2005). Furthermore, between 72-90% of young offenders report regular truancy (compared with 20.5% of non-offenders) and approximately half report regular suspension and expulsion from school (compared with 11% of the 15-16-year-old non-offenders) (Makkai & Payne, 2003, Putnins, 1999; Snow & Powell, 2008; Snow, Woodward, Mathis, & Powell, 2015). Young offenders also demonstrate poorer

literacy, numeracy and nonverbal reasoning skills compared to non-offending peers (Putnins, 1999) and over 50% present with significant deficits on measures of figurative/abstract language, sentence repetition and narrative language (story telling) skills (Snow & Powell, 2008). International research has reported similar patterns. Brown and colleagues (2008) explored the school functioning and academic achievement of 157 youth who had brief contact with a state department of juvenile justice in Baltimore. They found that more than half (62.4%) of the sample had problems in school functioning and poor academic performance. Their average achievement scores were lower than those found in non-offender populations (Starfield et al., 2000) and similar to those observed among incarcerated populations (Baltodano et al., 2005).

There is also a considerable amount of research suggesting that young people who struggle academically in school, drop out, are regularly suspended and/or expelled from school are at increased risk of engaging in crime (Christle, Jolivette & Nelson, 2005; Doefe, Farrington & Loeber, 2012; Katsiyannis & Archwamety, 1999; Maguin & Loeber, 1996; Yun, Cheong & Walsh, 2014). In their meta-analysis of 100 studies involving youth delinquency, Maguin and Loeber (1996) found that poor academic performance was related to the onset, frequency, persistence, and seriousness of delinquent offending in both boys and girls. More recent research, most of which has been conducted in the United States, has also demonstrated a positive relationship between delinquency and academic failure (Christle, Jolivette & Nelson, 2005; Doefe, Farrington & Loeber, 2012; Yun, Cheong & Walsh, 2014). In addition, a prospective longitudinal study by Doefe, Farrington and Loeber (2012), which examined causal links between hyperactivity, low academic achievement, depression, low socioeconomic status and delinquency, found that low academic achievement had the most direct

influence on delinquency. Hyperactivity and low socioeconomic status had indirect influences on delinquency, which were mediated by low achievement. Using data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health), a longitudinal and nationally representative sample of American youth (Udry, 2003), Yun, Cheong and Walsh (2014) found that even in the presence of self-control and verbal intelligence, academic performance uniquely predicted police arrest.

Other studies have also found links between poor academic performance and recidivism. In particular, Katsiyannis and Archwamety (1999) found that scores in reading, writing, and math skills differentiated recidivists from non-recidivists. More specifically, the authors found that improvement in academic achievement from pre- to post-test, as measured by a standardised scale over a six-year period (i.e., 1990–1996) differentiated recidivists from non-recidivists. A more recent study by Blomberg and colleagues (2011), which specifically examined associations between educational achievement, post-release schooling, and re-arrest in a cohort of 4,147 incarcerated youths in Florida two years post-release, reported similar results. Specifically, their findings revealed an association between educational achievement and young offenders return to school following release and between post release schooling and the likelihood of re-arrest. They found that youths who returned to and attended school regularly following release were less likely to be rearrested within both 12 and 24 months. Youths who were rearrested following release but also returned to and attended school regularly were arrested for significantly less serious crimes than youths who did not return to school, or who did not attend school regularly.

Young people with lower levels of academic achievement are also more likely to drop out of school (Jimerson et al., 2000; Rumberger & Lim, 2008; Hawkins, Jaccard & Needle, 2013), and some research has shown that those who drop out of school are more

likely to become delinquent (Battin-Pearson et al., 2000;. Bradshaw, O'Brennan, & McNeely, 2008; Lochner & Moretti, 2004; Prevatt & Kelly, 2003). Most research however, has demonstrated that it is a young person's involvement in delinquency and contact with the youth justice system that increases their likelihood of dropping out of school. In particular, a recent systematic review on school dropout by Freeman and Simonsen (2015) identified 19 studies that examined the relationship between delinquency and school dropout. Eleven of these studies found that delinquent youth were more likely than non-delinquent youth to drop out of school. Three of the four studies that examined involvement in the justice system found that being arrested had a separate and generally larger effect on dropping out of school than involvement in delinquent behaviour (which does not always involve police arrest or involvement with the court) (Bernburg & Krohn, 2003; Hannon, 2003; Sweeten, 2006). In particular, Hirschfield (2009) using a quasi-experimental design, compared students who were first arrested in Grade 9 to students who were first arrested a year later in Grade 10. To ensure that the models would estimate the effect of arrest on dropout, rather than vice versa, arrested youths who had already left school were excluded. The findings of the study showed that even in models that controlled for many relevant covariates (e.g., sex, race, family instability, academic achievement and expectations, frequency of delinquency, school misconduct, neighbourhood disadvantage, school level factors, contact with police), early arrest increased the odds of early school dropout by a factor of 2.60. In another longitudinal study by Sweeten (2006) however, involvement in court after being arrested was found to be a much stronger predictor of dropout than simply being arrested without court involvement, increasing the odds of dropout by a factor of 5.3. Together, these findings suggest that court referrals or juvenile justice system contact, net of the deviant behaviours and minor brushes with the law that precede

them, have negative consequences for youth foreclosing educational opportunity and hindering educational attainment.

Sweeten and colleagues (2009) found no evidence of a statistically significant causal effect of dropout on the prevalence and variety of delinquency (i.e., the number of different delinquent acts that were committed during a given time period). Their findings did indicate however, that long periods of trouble, characterised by long histories of school difficulties and a history of anti-social behaviour and disengagement from school largely accounted for the observed differences in offending between dropouts and non-dropouts. This is consistent with South, Haynie and Bose (2007) who found that behaviourally engaged students, who are attached to school and who participate in learning activities, are less likely to drop out of school. Arachambault and colleagues (2009) also found that beyond the contribution of family and individual factors, global student disengagement was associated with school dropout.

Together this research suggests that young people who perform poorly in school are at an increased risk of becoming delinquent and subsequently dropping out of school. School dropout is not generally a spontaneous decision but rather a cumulative process that is influenced by increasing levels of school disengagement, which is reciprocally related to delinquency. School engagement may therefore be a key target for interventions that strive to not only improve academic outcomes for young offenders and thus reduce their likelihood of re-offending but also to prevent offending among at-risk youth. A detailed review of the research investigating the link between educational engagement and youth offending will be presented in the following section. This will be followed by a review of the research on the efficacy of academic interventions designed to reduce recidivism.

1.5.2. The link between educational engagement and youth offending.

Educational engagement has been defined as a psychological process, specifically, the attention, interest, investment and effort that students expend in the work of learning (Marks, 2000). However, scholars have used various terms, including school connectedness, school bonding, school belonging, and school attachment to refer to educational engagement. Across these studies, several papers (Fredericks, Blumenfield & Paris, 2004; Libbey, 2004) have identified three central components underlying the construct of engagement. These include cognitive engagement, behavioural engagement and emotional engagement.

Fredericks and colleagues (2004) conceptualised behavioural engagement as involvement in academic activities (e.g., doing school work) and participation in school based and extra-curricular activities. According to Finn and colleagues, behavioural engagement involves following school rules and adhering to classroom norms as well as the absence of disruptive behaviours, such as skipping school and getting in trouble (Finn, Pannozzo & Voelkl, 1995; Finn & Rock, 1997). It also involves behaviours such as effort, persistence, and concentration, attention, asking questions and contributing to class discussion. Emotional engagement however, refers to the student's positive or negative reactions to school, academics, teachers and classmates (Fredericks et al., 2004). It includes affective responses in the classroom such as interest, boredom, happiness, sadness and anxiety and feelings of like or dislike for school, the teacher or the work (Epstein & McPartland, 1976; Yamamoto et al., 1969). Emotional engagement has also been conceptualised as identification with school, which involves a sense of belonging, or feeling important to the school and value or appreciation of success in school related outcomes (Finn, 1989). Cognitive engagement on the other hand, refers

to the motivation, effort and psychological investment a student puts into their learning and in mastering knowledge and skills (Connel & Wellborn, 1991; Fredericks et al., 2004; Newmann et al., 1992). Students who are cognitively engaged have a desire to go beyond the minimum requirements, show a preference for challenge (Newmann et al., 1992) and use meta-cognitive strategies to plan, monitor and evaluate their cognition when accomplishing tasks (Zimmerman, 1990). They manage and control their effort on tasks, by persisting or by supressing distractions to sustain their cognitive engagement (Fredericks et al., 2004).

Fredericks and colleagues (2004) argued that because there has been considerable research examining how students behave, feel and think, attempts to conceptualise and examine portions of the literature under the label 'engagement' is problematic. They argue that it can "result in the proliferation of constructs, definitions and measures of concepts that differ slightly, thereby doing little to improve conceptual clarity" (p.60). Fredericks and colleagues argue that instead, multiple dimensions of educational engagement need to be studied. Such broad analyses permit examination of the antecedents and consequences of behaviour, emotion and cognition and the analysis of potential additive and interactive effects. Engagement as multidimensional construct is also presumed to be malleable as it results from an interaction of the individual with the context and is responsive to variation in environments and therefore, provides a more comprehensive understanding of the complexity of the child's school experiences. Understanding engagement from a multidimensional perspective also provides more specific prescriptions for both prevention and intervention strategies.

As noted previously, disengagement in school is likely to lead to a number of negative academic outcomes such as school dropout and academic failure. There is also a considerable amount of research that has linked educational disengagement with youth

crime (Brookmeyer, Fanti & Henrich, 2006; Chapman et al., 2011; Hirschfield & Gasper, 2011; Li et al., 2011; Wang & Fredricks, 2014). Some of this research has specifically looked at the relationship that educational disengagement has with violence. Longitudinal research by Brookmeyer, Fanti and Henrich (2006) for example, showed that young people who committed more types of violence (e.g. physical fight, group fight, shot or stabbed someone, used a weapon in a fight, used a weapon to make threat, carried a weapon to school) during a one-year follow up period, described feeling less connected with their school. Chapman and colleagues (2011) obtained similar results, demonstrating a relationship between educational engagement, violence risk-taking behaviours and transport and motor vehicle risk-taking behaviours. They also found that people with higher levels of educational engagement were less likely to engage in anti-social behaviours.

Hirschfield and Gasper (2011) found that behavioural engagement significantly and independently predicted both general delinquency and school misconduct. Their findings also indicated that emotional engagement had modest effects on delinquency; however, its effects disappeared when other peer-related and parental variables were considered. Contrary to their hypotheses, the authors found that cognitive engagement was positively associated with delinquency. They argued that higher cognitive engagement, which involves a degree of psychological investment, may result in frustration and lead to delinquency if the individual's performance does not match their level of investment.

Hirschfield and Gasper (2011) also examined the bi-directionality of the relationship between school engagement and delinquency. They found that delinquency only decreased cognitive engagement but had no effect on behavioural and emotional dimensions of engagement. The authors claimed that this finding may have been due to

the similarity in the conceptualisation of behavioural and cognitive engagement or the contribution of other latent factors (e.g., impulsivity), which may explain the relationship between cognitive engagement and delinquency.

Wang and Fredricks (2014) investigated whether changes in behavioural, emotional and cognitive school engagement were related to changes in problem behaviours from 12 to 17 years of age. They also investigated whether there was a reciprocal association between school engagement and youth problem behaviour. Their results indicated that adolescents who showed declines in behavioural and emotional engagement with school tended to engage in increased delinquency and substance use over time. The rate of change in adolescent cognitive engagement in school however was not related to the rate of change in problem behaviours. They argued that their operational definition of cognitive engagement, which involved the planning, monitoring, and evaluating of one's cognition may be more strongly related to academic outcomes than to problem behaviour. Another explanation for this finding was that the influence of cognitive engagement on delinquency was mediated by behavioural engagement. Consistent with previous findings (Archambault et al., 2009) the authors argued that manifestations of behavioural disengagement may be more proximal to problem behaviour and may be a consequence of cognitive disengagement. Findings also showed a reciprocal relationship between behavioural and emotional engagement in school and youth problem behaviours over time. More specifically, changes in young peoples' delinquency and substance use were predicted by early behavioural and emotional engagement in school. In turn, changes in their behavioural and emotional engagement in school were predicted by early delinquency and substance use.

Other research by Li and colleagues (2011) examining the impact of emotional and behavioural school engagement on risky behaviour in adolescence indicated that

both emotional and behavioural school engagement were inversely associated with the timing and initiation of substance use and delinquency among adolescents. Their research also indicated that students who entered adolescence with higher levels of behavioural and emotional engagement tended to be less likely to initiate substance use and engage in delinquent behaviour. Their research supports the idea that adolescents are more likely to refrain from problematic behaviours when they attend classes regularly, come prepared with necessary materials, care about school, and feel attached to school personnel.

These findings not only reveal the nature of educational disengagement as a risk factor but also highlight the protective function of educational engagement. That is, whilst poor educational engagement functions as a risk factor for offending, strong educational engagement can also serve as a protective factor. Indeed, students who feel attached to school are more likely to achieve at higher levels, and those who are successful academically are less likely to drop out (Barber & Olsen, 1997; Battin-Pearson et al., 2000). Similarly, research by Klem and Connell (2004) found that students who had what were considered to be optimal levels of engagement were 44% more likely to do well academically, particularly when they felt like teachers in school were supporting them. Dornbusch and colleagues (2001) also showed that higher levels of school connectedness among adolescents were related to delayed initiation of deviant behaviour. Furthermore, Blomberg and colleagues (2011) found that incarcerated youth with higher levels of educational achievement were more likely to return to school after release, whereas those who returned to and attended school regularly were less likely to be rearrested within 12 and 24 months.

As such, some research has shifted focus to the early warning signs that may identify young people who have started to disengage and are at risk for dropping out of

high school and engaging in delinquency (Heppen & Therriault 2008; Neild et al. 2007). Risk indicators include course failure (i.e., failing a school subject), poor attendance, low grade point average, low achievement on standardized test scores, and school suspensions. In particular, Henry, Knight and Thornberry (2012) used a school disengagement early warning index to investigate whether it predicted school dropout and delinquency in middle adolescence, late adolescence and early adulthood with a sample of American youth. Their early warning index included official school records from each student's 8th and 9th school year (from the age of 13 to 15 years) and consisted of five risk indicators including standardised test scores, school attendance, suspension, failing a school subject and grade retention. A test of the validity of this school disengagement warning index revealed robust prediction of high school dropout and problem behaviours across three developmental stages. Their findings also showed that school dropout mediated the effect that earlier school disengagement had on serious violent crime, official arrest, problem alcohol use and drug use in early adulthood. In summary, the results of this study reveal the significant impact that earlier school disengagement has on young adult problem behaviours and portrays the long-term effects of school disengagement on subsequent problem behaviours.

A number of qualitative studies conducted in Australia (Bower, Carrol & Ashman, 2012; Moore & McArthur, 2014) and New Zealand (Sutherland, 2011) have also provided insight into young offenders' school experiences and the process of school disengagement. In particular, Bower, Carroll and Ashman's (2012) study explored types of risk and protective factors pertaining to young people's schooling experiences in 89 males and 14 females across 10 high schools and one detention centre in South East Queensland. They characterised participants as non-offenders, early-onset offenders (who began offending before the age of 12) or late onset offenders (who

began offending at or after 12 years) and compared groups across risk and protective factors in three domains, self, school and peers, and leisure. Similar to previous research on the risk factors associated with youth offending, they found a high proportion of risk factors and relatively few protective factors present in areas of school and peers for early onset offenders across these life domains. Late onset offenders had high risk factors and few protective factors within the domain of self. Non-offenders, whilst presenting with some risk factors, had many protective factors across all domains. The risk factors present across the three domains that contributed to disengagement and offending trajectories will be reviewed in more detail in section 1.9.4.1 (p.73). Importantly, their research highlighted that disengagement from school, either self-determined or through suspension or expulsion, led to embarrassment, fear, boredom, powerlessness and feelings of inadequacy, which in turn led to anger, defensiveness, and connection with anti-social peers and ultimately an offending trajectory.

In summary, various studies have provided insight into the negative impact that educational disengagement has on the development of anti-social behaviour. Some studies however, have revealed a reciprocal relationship between engagement and delinquency. This highlights the need for schools to address issues of engagement early, since engagement with school has been shown to protect young people from a range of negative influences and outcomes like poor academic achievement, school dropout and youth offending.

1.6. Factors Contributing to School Disengagement

A range of community, cultural, family, peer, individual and school factors have been shown to have an influence (usually a cumulative effect) on a young person's level of engagement and overall school experience. Some research has implicated the role of

the school in the disengagement process. Factors such as the size of the school, socio-economic level of the school and the quality of the teacher-student relationships have all been shown to be risk factors for disengagement (Gemici & Lu, 2014; Persaud, 1999; Wright, 1991). Additionally, peer factors such as peer acceptance or rejection have been shown to influence engagement and disengagement (Buhs, 2005; Hymel et al., 1996; Sage & Kindermann, 1999; Wentzel, 1999; Juvonen, 2007). Specifically, peer acceptance has been shown to be positively associated with increased behavioural engagement while peer rejection has been found to be associated with decreased emotional and behavioural engagement. A number of family factors have also been found to be associated with school engagement. Willims (2003) reported that being from a low socio-economic status family is one of the most important risk factors for student disaffection and low school participation. Willims (2003) showed that students with low socio-economic status backgrounds were more than 50% more likely than their peers with average socio-economic status backgrounds to have a low sense of belonging. They also found that students in single-parent families were significantly more likely to have low levels of school engagement. Parents who value school and parental school completion have also been found to positively influence a young person's school engagement. Parental attachment has also been shown to have an impact on a young person's engagement in school (Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Shochet, Smyth & Homel, 2007) and the teacher-student relationship (Lynch & Cicchetti, 1997; Murray, 2009; Ryan, Stiller, & Lynch, 1994), which is also associated with engagement. Disruptions to the attachment relationship also lead to problems with emotion regulation (Gillion et al., 2002), which heightened young person's risk of negative relationships with teachers and peers (Eisenberg et al. 1995, 1997; McDowell et al. 2000; Murray, 2005).

Moore and McArthur (2014) investigated youth perspectives on factors influencing early school leaving and criminality. Young people identified a number of family factors including family violence, alcohol and drug use, child protection involvement, homelessness and poverty. They also reported becoming disconnected from positive peers and instead associating with other peers who skipped school and engaged in crime. Their study identified other risk factors including a lack of leisure and involvement in prosocial activities. The school factors identified included poor connection to school, poor relationships with teachers and peers, and lack of support and intervention for young people who are poorly engaged in school. School responses to challenging behaviour through use of suspensions was also identified as a risk factor, which further exacerbated young people's isolation and non-engagement in school.

In summary and as with youth offending, the risk factors associated with educational disengagement cross multiple domains, including community, school, peer, family and individual factors. Efforts to re-engage disengaged young people in education arguably therefore require whole-of school interventions which aim to address a range factors across multiple domains. The following section includes a review of interventions that have demonstrated effectiveness in improving educational engagement and academic interventions which have been shown to contribute to reducing recidivism.

1.7. Youth Justice Programs and Interventions

Meta-analytic reviews (MacKenzie, Wilson & Kider, 2001; Petrosino, Turpin-Petrosino, & Buehler, 2003; Landenberger & Lipsey, 2005; Latimer, 2001; Littell, Popa & Forsythe) have provided evidence for the efficacy of a broad range of interventions for reducing recidivism among young offenders. The majority of these reviews have

focussed on evaluating the efficacy of one particular intervention type or program (e.g. cognitive behavioural therapy, family therapy). Although these reviews are informative with respect to the efficacy of their respective interventions, they are limited in scope. They do not allow for an integrated analysis of the comparative effectiveness of different programs (Lipsey, 2009). However, over the years, perhaps the most comprehensive meta-analyses of the research on interventions for offenders have been those conducted by Andrews Bonta, and Hodge (1990) and Lipsey and Wilson (1998). Today, the work of Andrews and colleagues (2010), based on more contemporary research, has come to form one of the most influential and empirically supported theoretical frameworks of criminal behavior, commonly referred to as the Psychology of Criminal Conduct (PCC) or the Risk-Need-Responsivity Model (RNR). This model considers both the central causes of persistent criminal behaviour, and three broad principles for reducing engagement in crime: the risk, need and responsivity principles.

The risk principle suggests that the most intensive services should be targeted at those who are at the most risk of re-offending. That is, high-risk offenders should be given intensive treatment and low risk offenders should receive minimal intervention (Andrew & Bonta, 2010, p.48). According to the need principle, in order to reduce recidivism one must target the risk factors associated with re-offending (i.e., criminogenic needs or dynamic risk factors). Andrews and Bonta's (2010, p. 65) have identified eight key risk factors, the 'Central Eight', to be the most predictive of criminal recidivism (e.g., history of antisocial behaviour, anti-social personality pattern, anti-social associates and peer groups, family and/or relationships circumstances, school and/or work functioning, lack of leisure and/or recreation pursuits and substance abuse). They argue that interventions targeting these criminogenic needs are more likely to lead to reductions in recidivism than are interventions addressing noncriminogenic needs.

(i.e., needs that are also dynamic but are more weakly related to recidivism), unless these non-criminogenic needs indirectly affect criminogenic needs.

The responsivity principle refers to programme delivery and in particular the need to match the content of programmes to individual learning styles and characteristics (Andrews & Bonta, 2010). There are two parts to the responsivity principle: *general* and *specific* responsivity. General responsivity refers to delivering treatment programs in a style and mode that is consistent with the ability and learning style of the offender. The most powerful strategies available are cognitive behavioural and cognitive social learning strategies (Akers, 2009). Specific responsivity implies that because offenders differ on individual characteristics such as interpersonal sensitivity, anxiety, verbal intelligence and cognitive maturity, each may require different modes and styles of treatment. Although this aspect of the RNR model is the most underdeveloped, it operates on an accepted assumption that treatment should be adapted to the individual.

Meta-analyses conducted by Andrews and Bonta (2010) have demonstrated that studies on interventions conforming to the RNR principles had larger effect sizes than those that did not. Intervention programs that conformed to the RNR principles achieved effect sizes of phi = .26, equivalent to a reduction in recidivism of around 50% (Andrews & Bonta, 2006, 2010). Andrews & Bonta (2010, p.48) also provided a comprehensive review illustrating that reductions in recidivism for high-risk offenders were found only when intensive levels of services were provided. When intensive services were provided to low-risk offenders, there seemed to be a negative effect (an increase in reoffending). Lowenkamp, Latessa and Holsinger (2006) also found that providing intensive services to higher-risk offenders was associated with an 18%

reduction in recidivism for offenders in residential programs and a 9% reduction in recidivism for offenders in non-residential programs.

In addition, Lipsey's (2009) meta-analytic review explored both the general principles and intervention types associated with the greatest reductions in youth recidivism. Interventions included surveillance (e.g., close monitoring, supervision), deterrence (e.g., scared straight type programs), discipline (e.g., boot camps), restorative programs (reconciliation between victim and offender through mediation, restitution), counselling (e.g., individual counselling, family counselling), skill-building programs (e.g., cognitive behavioural programs, academic and vocational programs) and multiple coordinated services (e.g., case management). With the exception of deterrence and discipline, which had negative effects on recidivism, most of the intervention types were found to have similar positive effects on recidivism - equivalent to reductions of 20% or more. There were no statistically significant differences in these effects and the effects did not change after risk characteristics were controlled for. Interventions were also equally effective for younger and older offenders, females and males and were not context dependent (i.e., were effective across institutional and community settings). Consistent with the risk principle, Lipsey (2009) found that interventions with young offenders with higher levels of delinquency risk were more effective. The findings' alignment with the need and responsivity principles however, was not clear. Lipsey argued that it may be that the interventions derived their effectiveness by targeting criminogenic needs (e.g. academic programs targetted educational risk factors and family counselling programs targeted familial risk factors). More importantly, Lipsey's findings point to the efficacy of a range of youth justice programs, including academic interventions, in reducing recidivism. His research also fills an important gap in the research literature as most of the meta-analytic reviews have focussed solely on

reviewing the efficacy of academic interventions in correctional settings with adult offenders (Aos, Miller & Drake, 2006; Lois et al., 2013; MacKenzie, 2006; Wilson, Gallagher and MacKenzie, 2000), all of which have provided support for the effectiveness of educational programs in reducing recidivism.

With the growing research demonstrating that educational engagement is a protective factor associated with reduced risk-taking behaviour, several programs have been developed to improve young people's school connectedness. A systematic review conducted by Chapman and colleagues (2013) described seven of these school connectedness programs evaluated across multiple studies, the majority of which were developed in the USA and one in Australia (The Gatehouse Project; Bond et al., 2004). The programs involved moving from a focus on individual-level risk and protective factors to contextual factors involving ongoing school and classroom related strategies. All studies emphasised the importance of positive relationships in school and connectedness to school in improving behavioural outcomes. Each intervention also aimed to reduce student risk-taking behaviours such as drug and alcohol use, violence and general delinquency. The majority of the interventions focussed on whole-of-school system change incorporating intervention components at the classroom, curriculum, and school level and within the broader social environment incorporating family and parent involvement. Only one program, the Information and Psychosocial Competence Protection program (Wenzel et al., 2009), used a curriculum-based approach which involved a one-day facilitator training program for teachers, focusing on the development of relationships between students and teachers. However, several of the other programs also incorporated curriculum-based components (e.g. classes offered to students that often involved skill building) as a part of their whole-of-school approach. Most of these programs however, were targeted at the elementary school level. Only

one program was targeted at middle school (Raising Health Children program; Catalano et al., 2003, 2004; Brown et al., 2005) and another at the high school (Gatehouse Project; Bond et al., 2004).

There were mixed findings across these interventions relating to both school connectedness and risky behaviour change, with four of the seven programs demonstrating improvements in school engagement. These programs were the Child Developmental Project (CDP; Battistich et al., 1997, 2000, 2004), Seattle Social Development Project (SSDP; Catalano et al., 2004; Hawkins et al., 1992, 1999, 2001, 2005), Raising Healthy Children program (RCH; Catalano et al., 2003, 2004; Brown et al., 2005), and the Information and Psychosocial Competence Protection program (IPSY; Wenzel et al., 2009). Some programs also demonstrated positive effects on alcohol use (e.g., CDP, SSDP, RCH, IPSY and Gatehouse Project), drug use (e.g., CDP, SSDP and RCH) and violent behaviour (e.g., CDP, SSDP and Positive Action program). The SSDP also demonstrated long-term effects on engagement and a significant relationship between school connectedness and less school misbehaviour and risk-taking at 18 years of age. Young people who participated in the CDP in elementary school also engaged in fewer delinquent acts in middle school.

The Going Places Program (Simons-Morton et al., 2005) did not have any significant effect on risk taking behaviour or school engagement. Its ineffectiveness in reducing risk-taking behaviour may however have been due to its inability to alter school engagement. The study was also limited by its small sample size. On the other hand, the Gatehouse Project (Bond et al., 2004) showed changes in alcohol use but did not demonstrate improvements in engagement. As a result, it was unclear as to which program features led to these changes in alcohol use. However, most studies evaluating these programs did not conduct mediation analyses to determine whether changes in

risk behaviour resulting from the program were in fact due to improvements in school connectedness. Given that many programs involved multiple components, including parent, teacher and curriculum-based elements, more detailed analyses are still required to determine the impact of different program elements on school connectedness and participation in risk-taking behaviour. Despite this, Chapman and colleagues' research revealed that interventions targeting school engagement can be effective in reducing adolescent risk taking behaviour. There were however, inconsistent findings regarding the effectiveness of these interventions in improving school connectedness and reducing risk-taking behaviour. This does not suggest that school connectedness interventions do not work. Rather, the findings signal the need for future research to better understand the elements of comprehensive programs that have been shown to be effective.

In summary, whilst research has demonstrated the positive impact that academic and school connectedness programs have on the reduction of recidivism and delinquent behaviour, Andrews and Bonta (2010) argue that programs focussing solely on education are unlikely to be effective if they do not adhere to the RNR principles and address the range of criminogenic needs contributing to offending behaviour. Whilst Lipsey's (2009) review suggested that most interventions tend to work to some extent and lead to reductions in recidivism, programs which follow the principles of RNR tend to have the largest effects. Both authors' findings suggest however, that education is an important treatment target and that academic interventions may be effective in reducing recidivism. However, there is still some way to go in identifying which academic and school-based programs work best, and why.

1.8. Summary

Although some interventions have been shown to reduce re-offending in high risk groups, many young offenders who enter the criminal justice system recidivate and return to the juvenile and adult correctional systems, highlighting the need for research to better understand youth offending and design improved interventions for young offenders.

Educational engagement is a key risk factor for offending and is an important focus of intervention efforts that aim to reduce re-offending. It is critical then that the factors which contribute to the educational engagement of young offenders are elucidated. The self-concept is considered to be a key construct within the educational literature because of its links with achievement, confidence and psychological wellbeing (Marsh & Craven, 2006; Marsh, 2007; Marsh, Parada & Ayotte). To date however, little research has investigated the relationship between self-concept and educational engagement in young offenders. Understanding the relationship between self-concept and educational engagement may help further our understanding of why young offenders disengage from education and may also help to better inform interventions which aim to improve academic outcomes for young offenders.

1.9. The Relationship between Self-Concept, Educational Engagement and Delinquency

There is considerable research highlighting educational engagement as an important protective factor that protects against the development of offending and which helps prevent re-offending (Brookmeyer, Fanti & Henrich, 2006; Chapman et al., 2011; Hirschfield & Gasper, 2011; Li et al., 2011; Wang & Fredricks, 2014). Some research suggests that self-concept is related to a range of educational outcomes for young people

(Broidy, Nagin, Trembaly & Bates, 2003; Buhs, 2005; Lopez, Cruz & Rutherford, 2002; Marsh, 2007). There is limited research however, that has examined the relationship between self-concept and educational engagement with young offenders. This section aims to review the research that has investigated the relationship between self-concept and educational engagement. It will begin with a review of the self-concept literature and will include a review of research that has investigated the relationship between self-concept and delinquency.

1.9.1. Defining self-concept.

Defining the self-concept is a difficult task. Over the last 2,000 years philosophers and more recently, researchers and psychologists have attempted to define and understand the self-concept. Whilst there is still no universally accepted definition of self-concept, it is considered a cognitive construct arising from an individual's thoughts or cognitions (Hattie, 2014). In his book, titled "Self-concept", which is based on decades of research, Hattie (2014) puts forward a detailed descriptions of the construct. As such, as a useful working definition, self-concept will be defined according to Hattie as the "cognitive appraisals, expressed in terms of expectations, descriptions and prescriptions, which one attributes to the self" (p.37). Hattie describes these appraisals as value statements (which are not necessarily facts or are accurate), which can be good or bad, rational or irrational, frustrating or non-frustrating, adaptive or maladaptive, appropriate or inappropriate, reasonable or unreasonable, justified or unjustified, and can also refer to the way in which a person construes the significance of a particular encounter to the self. He also argues that conceptions of self include the descriptions (i.e., an individual's descriptions of the self) prescriptions (i.e., the

standards of correctness a person possesses) and expectations (i.e., an individual's expectations of the self in a certain life domain) that an individual attributes to the self.

Self-concept, whilst once thought of as unidimensional, is now best understood as a multi-dimensional and hierarchically structured construct that involves self-perceptions across specific life domains (e.g., peers, sport, and school) (Marsh & O'Neil, 1984; Shavelson, Hubner & Stanton, 1976). While a young person may have a negative self-concept in the academic domain because he or she is not performing well in school, he or she may have a positive self-concept in the athletic domain because he or she excels in sport. His or her self-perceptions are therefore specific to particular life-domains. However, this does not suggest that one does not possess a general view of oneself or that self-evaluations in different domains do not influence each other. Rather, it suggests that individuals have self-conceptions that can differ across different domains of functioning and that it is these domain-specific self-views that are most likely to guide and inform behaviour in those areas. Furthermore, the self-concept also has a hierarchical structure, with the general self-concept at the apex of the hierarchy, which can be divided into multiple self-concept domains (e.g., academic, social, emotional, physical) that can be further divided into more specific facets. For example, the academic self-concept can be further divided into subjects such as maths and English and the social self-concept can be further divided into peers and significant others.

There is considerable research that suggests the self-concept is also stable over time. The work of Swann and colleagues (Swann, 1985; Swann & Hill, 1982; Swann & Read, 1981) provides the dominant theoretical framework for the stability of the self-concept. Their self-verification studies (as cited in Markus & Kunda, 1986. p. 858)

revealed that "perceivers will go to great lengths to verify their self-conceptions by attending most closely to information that fits their view of the self and by trying to arrange their environments so as to acquire further self-confirming evidence" and actively resist any information that challenges this view. Swann, Rentfrow and Gunn (2003) argue that the self-concept provides a lens through which individuals perceive the world, lending meaning to all life experience, such that when their self-concept is threatened, they face losing their secure basis for understanding and responding to the world and therefore, would

Although there are a number of longitudinal studies that have supported the notion that the self-concept is stable over time (Brownfain, 1952; Engel, 1959; Shavelson et al., 1976; Wylie, 1979), they have been criticized for using single, global measures of self-concept, masking domain-specific differences, and date back to when self-concept was thought to be a unidimensional construct. Some more recent studies, which have looked into the stability of specific self-concept domains, report mixed results with peaks and troughs in different domains but stability in others, and showing that fluctuations only occur at particular times during adolescence, mostly during school transitions (Cantin & Biovin, 2004; Wigfield et al., 1997; Young & Mroczek, 2003). In particular, Wigfield and colleagues (1997) found that maths and reading self-concept decreased between the ages 6 and 9 years, but remained relatively stable between the ages of 9 and 12 years. Young and Mroczek (2003) only found changes in the self-concept domains of job competence, romantic appeal, and physical appearance over a two-year period, but concluded that their study period was not sufficient enough to make conclusions about the stability of self-concept.

Subsequent studies have demonstrated that the self-concept is increasingly stable, and that it only fluctuates during times of change, such as the transition between

elementary (primary) school and junior high (middle school) and between junior high and high school (Cole, et al., 2001; Harter, 2006; Scott & Santos de Barona, 2011). Green and colleagues (2006) conducted a six-year longitudinal study on 3,450 Australian students from the age of 13 to 18. Their findings revealed that self-concept constructs across both males and females and across year levels were not substantially different. Scott and Santos de Barona (2011), in a longitudinal US study, also found that from elementary to junior high school, students' self-concepts remained stable. They found that general self-concept, as well as the specific domains related to self-image, academic, and social self-concept were stable across a two year period for each grade level across both gender and ethnic groups.

To account for inconsistent findings across different time points in adolescence, researchers have also looked at patterns of self-concept change across domains (Cole et al, 2001; Marsh, Debus & Bornholt, 2005; Shapka & Keating 2005). Findings from these studies revealed that changes in self-concepts during adolescence reflect a u-shaped curve, whereby some domains of self-concept drop during pre-adolescence and early adolescence, level out in middle adolescence and then increase in late adolescence and early adulthood. This was thought to reflect the fact that developmentally, adolescents' sense of self becomes more integrated and consistent over time, with age.

Baumeister's (1997) view on the 'spontaneous self-concept' helps shed some light on these findings. His argument was that the self-concept is stable and that changes in the self-concept, which are experienced from time to time, are explained by what he referred to as the 'spontaneous self-concept'. That is, whilst the entire self-concept was stable and enduring, it is the case that different parts are activated in different situations and therefore, it seems that the self-concept fluctuates. Typically, the aforementioned studies, which have found declines in self-concept pertaining to physical appearance,

romantic appeal and job competence, are all areas on which adolescents tend to focus and regard with more importance at this stage of their development.

In summary, although some findings have found changes in self-concept domains, more robust studies suggest self-concept is in fact a stable construct. It is worth noting here though, that these studies reflect the stability of self-concept among people who have not actively attempted to change their self-concept. Research suggests that the self-concept can be enhanced through intervention (Hattie, 2014). More specifically, cognitive programs have been shown to be effective in enhancing self-concept, with average effect sizes equal to .47 (Hattie, 2014), suggesting that there can be change among those individuals who undertake these interventions.

1.9.2. The relationship between self-esteem, self-efficacy and self-concept.

Although occasionally used synonymously, self-concept is distinct from terms such as self-esteem and self-efficacy. According to Huitt (2011) self-esteem reflects a person's overall evaluation of his or her own worth, how he or she values or feels about him or herself, whereas the self-concept is an individual's belief about themself, including attributes about who and what the self is. In other words, self-esteem is the evaluative or affective component of the self, whereas the self-concept is the cognitive component of the self (Baumeister, 1997). While self-esteem asks the question "How good am I?" self-concept asks the question "What kind of person am I?" (Baumeister, 1997). Similar to Hattie, Baumeister refers to self-concept as a cognitive construct, while providing a simple and accessible illustration of how the construct differs from self-esteem.

Self-efficacy is also differentiated from self-concept in that self-efficacy involves a context-specific assessment of competence, in that it requires a task-specific judgment of one's capabilities to execute specific behaviours in specific situations (e.g., I can solve this maths equation) (Bandura, 1977, 1986). Although self-concept evaluations can be subject-specific evaluations of perceived competence (for example, Maths, English, Science), they are not task-specific; rather, they are more global and less context dependent (Bryne, 1996). Put simply, self-concept represents general perceptions of the self in given domains whilst self-efficacy represents the expectations and convictions that an individual can accomplish in a given situation (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003). Bandura (1997) regarded self-efficacy as an individual's beliefs in their own capabilities to organise and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments. Self-efficacy is influenced by the successes and failures individuals experience in life (mastery experiences), which closely tie into our self-perceptions and relationships with others (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003). Although these terms label different phenomena, they are also strongly related. Rogers (1961, 1980) regarded self-esteem as one of the primary functions of the self. Self-efficacy, like self-concept, is also presumed to explain and predict one's thoughts, emotions and actions (Bong & Skaalvik, 2003). Furthermore, Baumeister (1997) argues that a person who has a confused self-concept will often have low self-esteem, and the successes and failures people experience in life, which come to shape self-efficacy, are closely related to the way people have come to see themselves (Pajares, 2006).

In short, whilst some distinction should be made between self-esteem, self-efficacy and self-concept, it is worth noting that these constructs also relate and interact with one another. The available research also suggests that constructs such as personality, schema, and narrative identity, which are reviewed below, also relate to

self-concept. Studying these constructs alongside self-concept may therefore help to provide a more nuanced understanding of self-concept and clarify whether there are particular self-beliefs that are related to educational engagement and crime in young people. This research will be reviewed below.

1.9.3. The relationship between personality, schema, narrative identity and self-concept.

In addition to self-esteem and self-efficacy, research also suggests that constructs such as personality, schema, and narrative identity also influence how an individual perceives himself or herself (Fish, 2014; Judge et al., 2002; Klein, 1995; Marsh et al., 2006; McAdams, 2008; Robins et al., 2001). However, very little research has examined how measures of personality, schema, self-esteem, self-efficacy and narrative identity alongside measures of self-concept may provide a more nuanced understanding of an individual's self-concept. For example, an individual high on the personality dimension 'Extraversion' who has the tendency to be more outgoing or sociable may perceive him or herself to be competent in social situations and have a positive peer self-concept. An individual with a high level of self-esteem may also feel more confident interacting with his or her peers and have more opportunity to build the social skills associated with social competence and success in the social context. Examining these other components of the self may therefore provide a more in depth understanding of an individual's self-concept. It may also provide further insight into how self-concept may interact with other self-beliefs to influence outcomes such as offending, academic achievement and engagement as well as better inform interventions which aim to target these behaviours or outcomes.

The research regarding the relationship between self-concept, personality, schema and narrative identity will be reviewed below.

1.9.3.1. Personality.

Personality refers to an "individual's characteristic pattern of thought, emotion, and behaviour, together with the psychological mechanisms - hidden or not- behind those patterns" (Funder, 1997, p.1–2). Although there are many theories of personality, the five-factor model (FFM; Costa & McCrae, 1994; Goldberg, 1993; John & Srivastava, 1999) has gained much scientific credibility and widespread acceptance. This model is organised into five factor-analytically-derived categories, most commonly labelled as Extraversion, Neuroticism, Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, and Openness to Experience.

More recently, McCrae and Costa (2008) expanded their theory of personality to incorporate a number of additional components including basic tendencies, characteristic adaptations and self-concept as the core components of their model. McCrae and Costa refer to basic tendencies as the specific traits that comprise each of the Big Five personality factors and to characteristic adaptations as the expression or concrete manifestations of these traits (e.g., habits, attitudes, roles, skills, relationships). According to McCrae and Costa, basic dimensions of temperament influence people's self-conceptions, but self-conceptions do not influence basic traits. They argue that information is selectively represented in the self-concept in ways that are consistent with personality traits and give a sense of coherence to the individual (or consistent with their ongoing life narrative) (discussed in detail in section 1.9.3.3).

Marsh and colleagues (2006) shed some light on the relationship between self-concept and personality. They set out to map these relationships using multi-

dimensional measures of self-concept (SDQ-II; Marsh, 1992) and personality (NEO-PI-R, Costa & McCrae, 1992) and found that logically related self-concept and personality factors were significantly correlated. More specifically, they found that Neuroticism, an individual's tendency to be in a negative emotional state, was strongly related to emotional stability self-concept. Their findings also showed that Extraversion, or the extent to which a person is sociable and talkative, lively and excitable was related to how an individual perceives their relationships with peers (or peer self-concepts) and perceptions of their emotional stability. Agreeableness, which reflects, the extent to which a person is agreeable, helpful and cooperative also had an influence on how individuals perceive themselves with peers and was also correlated with honesty and trustworthiness, emotional stability and parent self-concepts. Conscientiousness, which refers to a person's tendency to be organised, disciplined and responsible, was positively associated with honesty and trustworthiness, parent relations, emotional stability, problem solving and maths self-concepts, and negatively associated with artistic self-concept. It was not associated with opposite sex and same sex peer self-concepts however, as these scales had more to do with popularity and acceptance with peers than with social responsibility and appropriate social behaviour, which are more related to trustworthiness and parent self-concepts. Openness, which is thought to reflect a person's tendency to be creative and imaginative was positively correlated with artistic self-concept, verbal self-concept and creative problem-solving self-concepts and negatively correlated with technical math and computer self-concepts. Consistent with McCrae and Costa's FFM, their findings suggest that individuals tend to adopt self-concepts that are consistent with their personality traits.

Marsh and colleagues also examined the unique contributions of self-esteem and the specific self-concept factors in predicting the FFM personality factors. They found

that even though self-esteem was substantially related to several personality factors, self-concept components predicted substantial variance in personality beyond what could be predicted by self-esteem. Self-esteem predicted almost no variance that could not already be explained by self-concept.

Research by Garaigordobil and Bernaras (2009) also investigated the relationship between self-concept and the FFM personality dimensions. However, in this study self-concept was measured as a global construct. They found associations between self-concept and specific personality domains. In particular, Garaigordobil and Bernaras found a negative relationship between global self-concept and Neuroticism and a positive relationship with Extraversion. Furthermore, low Psychoticism and high Extraversion were also identified as predictors of high self-concept. Their results suggest that individuals with low self-concept have the propensity to be more emotionally unstable, and more likely to experience negative emotional states, whereas those who have more positive self-concepts tend to be more sociable, active, energetic, warm, submissive, empathetic and gregarious.

In the childhood and adolescent mental health literature attention has been directed towards the role of temperament in personality formation. Temperament is defined as an inborn predisposition to reacting to the environment which influences the way in which children perceive or experience negative stimuli (Jesinoski, 2010). Cloninger's (1999) biopsychosocial model of personality holds temperament as the emotional core of personality. In his model, four temperament and three character dimensions account for variations in personality. The four temperament dimensions describe aspects of personality that are hereditarily influenced, are automatic, unconsciously influence the learning processes, and can be observed early in childhood. The three character dimensions refer to dimensions that involve individual differences

in higher cognitive processes and influence personal and social effectiveness, as well as the acquisition of conscious self-perception. Similar to McCrae and Costa, Cloninger described the character dimensions of his model as important parts of an individual's self-concept. He argued that self-concepts varied according to the extent to which a person identified the self as (1) an autonomous individual, (2) an integral part of humanity, and (3) an integral part of the universe as a whole and represented each of these aspects of self-concept in one of the three character dimensions (self-directedness, cooperativeness, and self-transcendence, respectively).

De Fruyt, Van Wiele and Van Heeringen (2000) examined the relationship between Clonginger's model (as measured by the Temperament and Character Inventory or TCI) and the FFM (as measured by NEO-PI-R). They found considerable overlap with the FFM dimensions each TCI factor. All Temperament and Character dimensions were either moderately or highly correlated with at least one of the NEO-PI-R domains. In particular, Harm Avoidance was strongly positively correlated with Neuroticism and negatively related to Extraversion, Openness and Conscientiousness. Novelty seeking was related to Extraversion and Openness and negatively correlated to Conscientiousness. Persistence was also highly correlated with Conscientiousness, and Reward Dependence was related to Extraversion and Openness. Moreover, Self-directedness showed an inverse relationship with Neuroticism and a positive association with Conscientiousness and Extraversion. While Cooperativeness was associated with Agreeableness, it was only weakly associated with Extraversion and Openness. Finally, Self-Transcendence was associated with both Openness and Extraversion. De Fruyt and colleagues also found that the inclusion of these character dimensions in Cloninger's model helped account for more variance in the FFM. In particular, all TCI dimensions

were correlated with at least one NEO-PI-R domain scale, showing considerable overlap between the two models.

To date, little research has examined how each of these temperament and character dimensions relate to different components of self-concept. One study by Klein (1995) investigated the relationship between self-concept, using Harter's Self-Perception Profile (Harter, 1988), and temperament during late adolescence with American college students. Findings showed that temperaments characterised by an approaching style, flexibility, and positive mood had the strongest correlations with academic self-concept subscales including Creativity, Intellectual Ability, and Scholastic Competence. These same temperaments, an approaching style, flexibility and positive mood, were also related to the clearly social/interpersonal sub-scales of self-perception (Romantic relationships, Social Acceptance, Close Friendships, and Parental Relationships). Klein suggested that these temperaments are more compatible with contextual features and performance demands of the educational system and that those whose temperaments facilitate meeting such demands, are likely to have had considerable experience with positive feedback and a history of academic success. They are also likely to have been given positive feedback in social interactions throughout their development.

Much more research has examined the relationship between personality and self-esteem (le; Judge, Erez, Thoresen, & Bono, 2002; Watson, Suls, & Haig, 2002). Robins and colleagues (2001) found a strong negative correlation between self-esteem and Neuroticism ($r=-.50$), and weaker but positive associations with Extraversion ($r=.38$), Conscientiousness ($r=.24$), Openness to Experience ($r=.17$), and Agreeableness ($r=.13$). In a sample of adolescents, Graziano and colleagues (1997) found moderately strong

positive correlation between Harter's global self-worth scale and the FFM personality dimensions with correlations ranging from .28 (Extraversion) to .39 (Neuroticism).

Research investigating the relationship between temperament and self-esteem is much more limited. Robins and colleagues (2001) examined the relationship between temperament dimensions Negative Affectivity and Effortful Control and self-esteem in an adolescent sample. They found significant associations between Effortful Control and self-esteem but not between self-esteem and Negative Affectivity. In particular, Robins and colleagues reported that young adolescents with high self-esteem showed higher levels of Effortful Control but they did not differ from low self-esteem adolescents in Negative Affectivity. Their findings suggest that young adolescents with high self-esteem can be described in terms of a particular set of temperament traits and that levels of self-esteem may have biological and genetic influences. Robinson and colleagues were however unable to determine the causal direction of the relationship between self-esteem and temperament.

Another study by Judge and colleagues (2002) examined relationships between self-esteem, generalised self-efficacy, Neuroticism and locus of control. The strongest correlation was found between self-efficacy and self-esteem, followed by self-esteem and Neuroticism and self-efficacy and Neuroticism. However, similar to previous studies, self-esteem and self-efficacy were also related to all other FFM personality dimensions. Results also demonstrated that a single factor explained the relationships among measures of the four constructs. Judge and colleagues argued that measures purporting to assess self-esteem, locus of control, Neuroticism, and generalized self-efficacy may be markers of the same higher order concept.

In summary, both theory and research suggest that personality has a significant influence on how individuals perceive themselves and there is significant overlap

between different self-concept domains and personality dimensions. Understanding an individual's personality is therefore likely to provide additional information about an individual's self-concept.

1.9.3.2. Early maladaptive schemas.

Temperament is central to Young, Klosko and Weishaar's (2003) Schema Theory, whereby negative childhood experiences in conjunction with temperament and the parenting style experienced, form the foundation for early maladaptive schema, self-defeating emotional and cognitive patterns that begin early in development and repeat throughout life (Young et al., 2003). Early maladaptive schemas are "broad pervasive themes or patterns, comprised of memories, emotions, cognitions and bodily sensations, regarding oneself and one's relationships with others, developed during childhood or adolescence, which are elaborated throughout one's lifetime and remain dysfunctional to some degree" (Young et al., 2003, p.7). These schemas develop as a result of negative childhood experiences that interrupt the fulfilment of a child's core emotional needs. Young and colleagues identified several core needs: (a) secure attachments to others; (b) autonomy, competence, and a sense of identity; (c) freedom to express valid needs and emotions, (d) spontaneity and play; and (e) realistic limits and self-control (Young et al., p. 10).

The dysfunctional nature of early maladaptive schema becomes apparent later in life, as these schema dominate relationships with others. Although the early maladaptive schemas were once adaptive and helped in the family of origin to understand and manage dysfunctional environments, they become maladaptive outside of the family context e.g., in adult relationships (Oei & Baranoff, 2007) where they continue to operate in the absence of dysfunction.

Early maladaptive schemas differ in severity and pervasiveness. A more severe schema will become activated more often. For example, if an individual's experiences of criticism come early and frequently, are extreme, and are given by both parents, then that individual's contact with any person is likely to trigger the Defectiveness schema. Furthermore, the more severe a schema, the more intense the negative effect of the schema and the longer it will last (Young et al., 2003).

Early maladaptive schemas are also viewed as the core of the self-concept. Because early maladaptive schemas are enduring patterns of thought that define the way individuals think about themselves and which individuals use to interpret experience, they have been thought to form part of the individual's self-conceptions. Individuals therefore behave and interpret situations in ways that confirm the early maladaptive schema and that are consistent with their self-concept. More specifically, individuals respond to activated early maladaptive schemas with a characteristic coping style, by surrendering (give in), avoiding (avoid the activation of the schema), or overcompensating (acting as if the opposite of the schema were true) (Rafaeli et al., 2011).

Early maladaptive schemas are grouped into five broad domains: Impaired Autonomy/Performance, Disconnection/Rejection, Unrelenting Standards, Other-Directedness, and Impaired limits. Schemas in the Disconnection and Rejection domain, which include Abandonment/Instability, Mistrust/Abuse, Emotional Deprivation, Defectiveness/Shame and Social Isolation/Alienation, are characterized by the inability to form secure, satisfying attachments to others. Families of origin tend to be unstable, abusive cold, rejecting and isolated. Individuals who endorse schemas in the Impaired Autonomy and Performance domain are often unable to separate themselves from their parents and are unable to function independently. Their families of origin were often

overprotective or neglectful and often undermined their child's confidence, failing to reinforce competence outside the home, and thus impairing their development of self-confidence and self-sufficiency (Young et al., 2003). Schemas in this domain include Dependence/Incompetence, Vulnerability to Harm or Illness Enmeshment/Undeveloped Self and Failure.

The Impaired Limits domain includes those schemas related to non-existent or underdeveloped internal limits and/or self-discipline. These schemas are Entitlement/Grandiosity and Insufficient Self-Control/Self-Discipline. Individuals endorsing these schemas often have difficulty respecting the rights of others, cooperating, keeping commitments and meeting long-term goals. As children, they were not likely have been required to follow the rules, consider others or develop self-control. Their families of origin often included overindulgent or permissive caregivers. Individuals who endorse schemas in the Other-Directedness domain (including Subjugation, Self-Sacrifice and Approval-Seeking/Recognition-Seeking) are overly concerned with meeting the needs of others to the detriment of their own needs. Families of origin tend to be based on conditional acceptance. The value of parental feelings was also often put above the value of the needs of the child (Young et al., 2003).

The Overvigilance and Inhibition domain is characterized by the suppression of feelings and impulses. Schemas in this domain include which include Negativity/Pessimism, Emotional Inhibition, Unrelenting Standards/Hypercriticalness and Puntiveness. Individuals endorsing these schemas often strive to meet rigid internalised rules about performance at the expense of their happiness, health and relationships. They have typically grown up in families that were hypervigilant about

negative life events and viewed life negatively. As such, individuals in this domain often present as pessimistic and anxious (Young et al., 2003).

Although early maladaptive schemas are often thought to be tied to self-concept, little research has specifically examined this relationship empirically. Extant research suggests relationships have been found between early maladaptive schemas, personality, temperament and character as well as between early maladaptive schema and self-esteem. Kirsch (2009) explored relationships between early maladaptive schemas, depression, anxiety, and self-esteem amongst young adults with substance use disorders, finding that early maladaptive schemas accounted for 41.8 % of the variance in self-esteem. Their findings suggest that individuals who hold more maladaptive beliefs tend to have lower self-esteem.

To date, only three studies have examined the relationship between early maladaptive schema and temperament and character and these studies have been conducted with adult rather than youth samples. The relationship between early maladaptive schema and temperament has yet to be investigated among youth. One study by Halvorsen and colleagues (2009) assessed the relationship between temperament and character and early maladaptive schemas in 100 clinically depressed adults and found considerable overlap between the three constructs. In particular, Harm Avoidance was positively related to several early maladaptive schemas, particularly with the Impaired Autonomy domain. This finding indicates that the development of early maladaptive schemas in early adverse relationship patterns, particularly those related to a belief that one is unable to function independently, interact with the temperamental tendency of being anxious, pessimistic and shy. Halvorsen and colleagues also found that the character dimension Self-Directedness was negatively related to most of the early maladaptive schemas. They argued that their findings

supported Young et al.'s (2003) schema theory, suggesting that the development of early maladaptive schemas are influenced by the individual's temperament and that early maladaptive schemas may also reflect underlying self-conceptions.

Consistent with Halvorsen and colleagues' findings, Atalay and colleagues (2013) found that harm avoidance had a positive relationship with several early maladaptive schemas, including Emotional Deprivation, Defectiveness, Dependence, Failure, Subjugation, and Self-Sacrifice and negative correlations between Self-Directedness and almost all of the early maladaptive schemas (with the exception of Subjugation). However, there was no correlation between early maladaptive schemas and the temperament Novelty Seeking and the character traits Cooperativeness and Self-Transcendence. Drawing on Young and colleagues' schema theory, Atalay and colleagues argued that while temperament may have an influence on the development of early maladaptive schemas, a vulnerable temperament may not necessarily have an impact on the formation of early maladaptive schemas, if the child's early environment is optimal.

Fish (2014) recently examined the relationship between temperament and early maladaptive schema with a sample of incarcerated men at a community correctional facility. She found that schemas in the Disconnection and Rejection domain were related to aspects of temperament that involved being less adaptable to change, engaging less with new people, places, or situations, and being more distractible. Temperamental characteristics of offenders with schemas in the Impaired Autonomy and Performance domain included being less physically active, less adaptable to change, less likely to engage in new situations, less likely to persist in completing tasks, more easily distractible, and having less predictable routines and bodily functions. Schema in the Impaired Limits domain related to temperamental characteristics such as being less

likely to engage in new situations, having less predictable routines and bodily functions, and having greater degrees of distractibility and emotional responsiveness. A tendency toward distractibility and being more emotionally responsive may predispose individuals to difficulties with self-control and emotional self-regulation; problems closely related to the schemas in this domain. Temperament appeared to play a less significant role in the development of schemas in the Other Directedness domain. Only aspects of temperament that were characterised by the propensity to be distractible and unpredictable in ones routines and bodily functions were related to Subjugation, Self-Sacrifice, and Approval-Seeking. Offenders who endorsed schemas in the Overvigilence and Inhibition schema domain on the other hand, showed a propensity to be less adaptable to change, more distractible, and less likely to engage in new situations. Additionally, they endorsed less predictable routines and bodily functions and a higher degree of emotional responsiveness. These aspects of temperament may contribute to the development of schemas in the Overvigilance and Inhibition domain as they are likely to interfere with an individual's ability to be spontaneous and playful.

Most of these studies however have been conducted with adult research samples. A thorough review of research databases, using appropriate search terms failed to identify any research that has investigated relationships between early maladaptive schema and temperament in young offenders or the relationship these constructs have with self-concept in young (non-offending and offending) populations.

1.9.3.3. Narrative identity.

According to McAdams' (1988, 1993) life story theory of identity, the coherent often-complex narrative that we create about our life experiences is the most fundamental way in which we come to know ourselves and to a large extent how we

come to be known by others. The key idea underpinning McAdams' theory is that narratives become a form of identity (known as narrative identity) in which the things someone chooses to include and the way she or he tells the story can both reflect and shape identity. McAdams (2008) defined narrative identity as the internalised evolving story of the self that a person constructs to make sense and meaning out of life. It incorporates the reconstructed past and the anticipation of the imagined future that serves to explain the self and others, how the person came to be and where his or her life may be going. People begin working on their narratives during adolescence and emerging adult years, and continue to make sense of their lives and the lives of others, through narrative, for much of the rest of the adult life-course.

According to McAdams (2008) there are six general principles regarding narrative identity. The first of these is that the self is a story that involves both the reconstructed past and imagined future. These stories often involve highly specific and strategic recollections of the past, which the persons uses either to create or express some kind of personal meaning or to serve personal goals.

The second principle involves the integrative function of stories. The basic premise is that stories help people to integrate their lives into a more or less coherent whole, in order to gain unity, meaning and purpose in their lives. McAdams argued that "peoples' stories bring together different self-ascribed tendencies, roles, goals and remembered events into a synchronic pattern that expresses how the individual person who seems to encompass so many different things in a complex social world, is at the same time, one (complex and contradictory) thing as well" (p. 244). Some authors claim however, that contemporary selves rarely achieve unity and purpose with the complex and shifting demands of social life (Gergen, 1991; Giddens, 1991; Gregg, 2006; Hermans, 1996; Raggatt, 2006). They hold that narrative identity consists of a

multiplicity of stories evolving in a decentred psychological space that function to express disparate features of identity (McAdams, 2011). Whilst McAdams (2011) acknowledged that few human beings ever experience full integration and unity in their lives "people living in complex post-modern societies still feel the need to construct some modicum of unity, purpose and integration amidst the swirl and confusion" (p 102). He asserts that people ultimately aim to make some kind of narrative sense of their lives.

The third principle is that stories are told in a social context, and in accordance with societal expectations and norms. It is argued that any narrative expression of the self cannot be understood outside the context of its assumed listener or audience, with respect to which the story is designed to make a point or produce a desired effect (Pasupathi, 2001). Narrative storytellers anticipate what their audiences want to hear and this influences what they tell and how they tell it. The different conditions under which stories are told also influence how individuals feel about themselves and how they recall those stories later. People also narrate personal events in different ways for different listeners (e.g., parents, peers) and they may switch back and forth between different models of telling (e.g., dramatic versus reflective modes of storytelling).

Furthermore, according to the fourth principle, stories change over time. While people remember the gist of an important life event, they also misremember details, even more so as time passes (McAdams, 2008). The temporal instability of autobiographical memory, therefore contributes to change in the life story over time. However, changes in story also reflect changes in how the person comes to terms with the social world. People accumulate new experiences over time, some of which are significant enough to shape the person's narrative identity. As peoples' motivations,

goals and personal concerns change, their memories of important events in their lives and the meaning they attribute to them change.

According to the fifth principle, stories are also cultural texts, which live and grow in the context of cultural norms, rules and traditions that prevail in a given society. Rubin (2005) contends that much of what people remember is shared cultural knowledge about the life course. In line with this argument, there is research that has found strong differences between the autobiographical stories of North American and East Asian societies, where East Asians emphasised interdependent self-concepts and North Americans emphasised independent self-conceptions.

The last principle is that some stories can be evaluated as good or bad. These evaluations reflect the values and norms of the society within which a story is evaluated. This principle is based on research that has examined the extent to which particular features of narratives are associated with mental health, psychological maturity and marital satisfaction. Narrative therapists also work with clients who present with disrupted and disorganised life stories, and help clients reformulate or transform these stories.

Similar to Costa and McRae's (2008) FFM, McAdams and Pals (2006) also proposed an integrative model of personality, incorporating life narratives as one of five interrelated concepts. The other concepts in the model include evolution, traits, adaptations and culture. Beyond traits and characteristic adaptations, individuals are thought to differ with respect to the integrative life stories they construct to make meaning and form identity. According to McAdams, life stories draw from and are layered upon dispositional traits and character adaptations but cannot be reduced to traits or adaptations. McAdams holds that if dispositional traits sketch the outline, adaptations fill in the details and life stories give individuals their unique and culturally

anchored meanings. His position is that life stories speak directly to how people come to terms with their interpersonal worlds, with society, history, and culture. As such, life stories make up an important domain of personality structure and functioning that is separate, though related, to domains of dispositional traits and characteristic adaptations.

In this sense, the study of the self-concept, and even personality, through the use of standardised questionnaires may appear insufficient to understand how an individual comes to make sense of who they are. The study of narrative or the storied self, which requires an openness to multi-method forms of investigation, may enhance research into self-concept by providing a richer and more in-depth understanding of a person's self-conceptions. According to Gergin and Gergin (1983) through methods like surveys and questionnaires, the individual remains within a structure of self-descriptions (concepts, schemata, prototypes) that continues to be stable until it is subjected to the influences of the social surroundings. Gergin and Gergin (1983) argued that these methods tend to ignore the possibility that the individual has the capacity to shape the configuration of their self-conception and their capacity for the reflexive reconstruction of their self-understanding. Studying narratives however, using qualitative methods of investigation, provides another means through which researchers can understand the person and their sense of who they are. In fact, personality and narrative identity researchers are now incorporating both the self-concept and narrative identity into comprehensive models of personality, suggesting that along with personality traits, the self-concept and life narratives provide a more comprehensive or complete understanding of the individual (than that would be obtained solely through the study of personality traits). Narratives are therefore important sources of information for researchers who aim to understand an individual's sense of self.

1.9.3.4. Conclusion.

Although self-concept has proved difficult to define, it is generally thought of as a cognitive construct, entailing one's thoughts about one's self across multiple life domains. However, self-concept has been used interchangeably with terms like self-esteem and self-efficacy. Consequently, some research studies claim to have studied self-concept, when they have in fact evaluated self-esteem. Whilst it is important to draw distinctions between self-esteem, self-efficacy and self-concept, it is worth noting that self-esteem and self-concept do both relate to, and interact with, the self-concept. Theory and research suggest that self-esteem, self-efficacy, personality, schema and narrative identity all influence an individual's self-conceptions. However, less research has specifically investigated how all these concepts interrelate and how together they may contribute to a better understanding of the self-concept, particularly in young people.

There are a number of potential benefits to studying these constructs alongside self-concept. The first is that it can provide a more comprehensive and complete understanding of an individual's self-concept. Secondly, it can also help to understand how different self-beliefs may interact to produce certain positive and negative outcomes (e.g., academic achievement, offending) and may therefore better inform interventions targeting these outcomes.

Given that the self-concept is a complex construct that can be viewed from many different perspectives, it is worth noting that some researchers may argue for the value of other constructs in the understanding of the self-concept. The selection of these constructs is based on an extensive review of the literature, in which personality, narrative identity, schema, self-esteem and self-efficacy were identified as core

constructs or concepts discussed in theory and research regarding the self-concept. As such, in the next section of this review, along with self-concept, these constructs will also be discussed in the context of their relationship with educational engagement and delinquency.

1.9.4. Research linking Self-Concept, Educational Engagement and Delinquency

Research suggests that educational success and educational engagement are key protective factors which reduce the likelihood of offending by young people (Banyard & Quartey, 2006; Blomberg et al., 2011; Li et al., 2011; Resnick et al., 2004; Sprott et al. 2005) and that academic interventions for young offenders in youth justice and community settings are effective in reducing a young offender's risk of recidivism (Blomberg et al., 2011; Lipsey, 2009). It is therefore important for juvenile justice interventions to effectively target young offenders' educational needs and strengthen their educational protective factors as a means of improving their educational and offence-related outcomes post-release. Examining the factors that contribute to the educational disengagement of young offenders may therefore help to further inform these interventions.

There is a considerable amount of research that has explored factors that contribute to school disengagement (Buhs, 2005; Gemici & Lu, 2014; Fredericks et al., 2004; Juvonen, 2007; Moore & McArthur, 2014; Willims, 2003). Limited research however, has investigated the impact that self-concept has on the educational engagement of young offenders. Research is needed to investigate this relationship in order to better understand why young offenders disengage from education and the extent to which these outcomes relate to the self-concept. This section includes a review of the research investigating the relationship between self-concept and educational engagement. Given their relationship to self-concept, and their relevance to the understanding of self-concept in this study, this

section will also review research that has examined relationships between personality, self-esteem, self-efficacy, schema, narratives and educational engagement.

1.9.4.1. Research regarding the relationship between self-concept and educational engagement.

Children with low self-concept and problems with social relationships and acceptance are at increased risk of behavioural and academic problems, all of which are predictive of delinquency and school dropout (Broidy, Nagin, Trembaly & Bates, 2003; Lopez, Cruz & Rutherford, 2002). Research by Peixoto and Almeida (2010) has also shown that young people who experienced academic failure maintained their self-esteem through positive self-concepts in non-academic areas and devalued their school competencies in academic self-concept domains, which in turn may impact school engagement. In this sense, not only is a low self-concept associated with academic failure but academic failure can also result in low self-concept, disengagement and delinquency (Seigel & Welsh, 2011).

For this reason, much educational research has directed its attention towards self-concept and self-efficacy, suggesting their significant role in enhancing students' intrinsic motivation, positive emotion, and performance (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, & Pastorelli, 1996; Marsh, Walker & Debus, 1991). Indeed, people who develop positive self-concepts feel better about their abilities and as a result they perform better academically (Hamachek, 1995; Guay, Bivion & Marsh, 2003). Hamacheck's (1995) examined the relationship between self-concept and school achievement, revealing that students with high self-concepts are more intrinsically motivated to do well in school, prefer to work independently and require less supervision due to greater confidence in their abilities; they tend to be more persistent

with difficult tasks, are likely to attribute their success to ability, and failure to bad luck or lack of effort, and tend to work harder and take school work seriously, usually because they can see a clearer link between their effort and the reward that awaits them. Similarly, research has also identified a positive link between student self-efficacy, academic achievement, their use of meaningful learning strategies (Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2003; Lane & Lane, 2001) and how much effort they will direct towards completing an activity, including their level of persistence when facing personal obstacles or challenges (Hejazi, Shahraray, Farsinejad & Asgary, 2009; Leurs, Bessems, Schaalma & de Vries, 2007). Students with higher levels of self-efficacy are likely to have higher levels of behavioural engagement and cognitive engagement (Linnenbrik & Pintich, 2003). More specifically, students with higher levels of cognitive engagement are more likely to use various cognitive and self-regulatory or meta-cognitive learning strategies (Greene et al., 2004; Linnenbrik & Pintich, 2003).

Research by Buhs (2005) investigating associations that social relationships have with academic self-concept and engagement within fifth grade classrooms in the US, found that high levels of peer rejection were linked to classroom engagement. He also found that children who are rejected had higher levels of exclusion, which predicted both academic self-concept and classroom engagement. Academic self-concept was also correlated with engagement and achievement change and mediated the relationship between peer abuse and engagement. His findings suggested that rejected and victimised children were likely to interpret the peer treatment they receive as indicating that they are undesirable or incapable partners for cooperative tasks in the classroom and that they lack skills or capacity for academic success in that context. Symbolic interactionist theorists (Becker, 1934; Cooley, 1902; Mead, 1934) would argue that an individual's self-concept is a reflection of their perceptions about how

they appear to others. In this sense, there is a tendency for a young person to enter into and adopt, another's judgment of himself, particularly in the presence of those who are deemed to be of importance. Nevertheless, in summary, Buhs' research suggests that rejection, exclusion and victimisation negatively impact self-concept and engagement.

A more recent study by Raufelder and colleagues (2015) also investigated the social relationships that served as mediators in the relationship between school self-concept and school engagement, belonging to school and helplessness in school in 7th and 8th grade school in Germany. Their study found that students with positive school self-concepts had a better relationship with teachers; these students were more emotionally and behaviourally engaged in school, had a greater sense of belongingness to school and felt less helpless. In contrast to Buhs (2005), Raufelder and colleagues (2015) found no significant association between student-to-student relationships and academic self-concept, indicating that school self-concept may be more related to academic ability than peer validation. However, student-to-student relationships did predict emotional and behavioural engagement. The main finding of their study indicated that the association between school self-concept and behavioural and emotional engagement was partially mediated by the quality of the teacher-student relationship, suggesting that teacher-student relationships have an important influence on how young people engage in school. Both studies revealed a relationship between self-concept and educational engagement, and also demonstrate that social relationships mediate this relationship.

An Australian study by Green and colleagues (2012) indicated that motivation and self-concept not only shared variance but were also effective in explaining unique variance in educational engagement and academic performance. In another Australian study by Frydenberg, Care, Freeman and Chan, (2009) students' perceptions of school

connectedness were positively related to healthy self-esteem, optimism, and emotional well-being. A US study by Finn and Rock (1997) also found that students with higher levels of self-esteem were also more likely to persist with their schooling despite the potential setbacks of low grades and/or below average test scores. However, Sirin and Sirin (2004), who specifically investigated whether self-esteem was related to school engagement and academic performance in American youth, found that self-esteem was unrelated to academic performance but significantly related to school engagement.

There is however, limited research that has specifically investigated the relationship between educational engagement and other self-factors such as personality and early maladaptive schema. One Australian study by Heaven et al. (2002) investigated the relationship between the FFM personality dimensions, positive attitudes to school and academic performance. They found that students with low Psychoticism and high Conscientiousness were predictors of both attitudes to school and academic performance. In other words, students' high Conscientiousness, which involves traits such as persistence, being organised and reliable are more likely to have positive attitudes to school and higher self-ratings of academic performance. Furthermore, since past studies had indicated that high Psychoticism individuals tend to have behavioural problems, poor social skills and report being isolated from mainstream society (Eysenck, 1997; Furnham & Gunter, 1983; Gudjonsson, 1997), the authors suggested that the finding that low Psychoticism would enhance attitudes towards school and self-rated academic outcomes was unsurprising. Their study also showed that parental factors (parental autonomy/overprotection, parental care) were less successful at predicting outcomes as compared to personality variables.

Moreira and colleagues (2012) investigated the validity of several personality measures including the Temperament and Character Inventory, (Cloninger et al. 1999)

the NEO Personality Inventory-Revised (Costa & McCrae, 1992) and the 16 Personality Factor Inventory (Cattell & Eber, 1954; Cattell, Eber, & Tatsuoka, 1970; Cattell et al., 1993) in predicting academic performance with a sample of Portuguese adolescents. Their study did not include a measure of educational engagement. Interestingly, the findings indicated that Persistence, as measured by the Temperament Character Inventory, predicted school grades, regardless of age, as well as, or more than, intelligence (as measured by Cattell's Reasoning Scale). High Harm Avoidance, high Self-Transcendence and low Novelty Seeking were also significant predictors. They also found that the psychobiological model, proposed by Cloninger, performed as well or better than other measures of personality or intelligence in predicting academic achievement. Although this research highlights the influence that personality factors, particularly persistence, have on academic outcomes, there remains limited research investigating the relationship between personality and educational engagement.

Similarly, there is a lack of research investigating the influence that early maladaptive schemas have on educational engagement. Cecero, Beitel and Prout (2008) revealed that schema domains of Abandonment, Mistrust/Abuse, Defectiveness/Shame, Social Isolation and Emotional Deprivation were all significantly associated with four domains of college adjustment, including the students' academic, social, personal and emotional adjustment as well as their adjustment to the institution. These findings support Young and colleagues' (2003) assertion that early maladaptive schemas contribute to poor adjustment. In this study early maladaptive schemas, particularly those reflecting the inability to form secure, satisfying attachments to others, influenced how students adjusted to the demands placed on them in college.

However, there remains limited research investigating the link between self-concept and educational engagement with young offenders. Some qualitative research

has attempted to identify the factors that contribute to the educational disengagement and delinquency of young offenders (Bower, Carroll & Ashman, 2012; Moore & McArthur, 2014). Using a narrative approach, an Australian study by Bower, Carroll and Ashman (2012) identified a number of risk and protective factors in the domain of self across non-offenders, early-onset offenders and late-onset offenders. They found that early-onset offenders reported poor self-concepts, low levels of self-regulation and social competence. However, the authors also reported that some early-onset offenders viewed themselves as good people, but reported minimal pro-social goals, problems with managing anger and minimising responsibility. Late-onset offenders reported strong self-beliefs (but had poor academic self-concepts), expressing a desire to change but lacking confidence and strategies for change. They reported difficulties managing conflict and a positive sense of the future, which often involved unrealistic goals. Both groups expressed issues around conflict with authority. By comparison, non-offenders expressed positive self-concepts, were optimistic about their future, had higher levels of self-regulation, were more socially competent described a belief in their ability to achieve their goals (high self-efficacy), and tended to seek assistance to achieve set goals. In summary, these findings suggest that young people with longer offending trajectories tend to have poorer views of themselves as compared to late-onset offenders. However, both offending groups reported poor academic self-beliefs and low self-efficacy. Non-offenders on the other hand, reported positive self-concepts and self-efficacy beliefs. Whilst these findings suggest that offenders tend to have poorer self-concepts, particularly in academic domains, compared to non-offenders, they do not provide any clear insight into the relationship the self-concept (both general and specifically with regard to education) may have with educational engagement and delinquency.

Although the accumulated research suggests that an individual's self-concept, personality, self-esteem and self-efficacy all have an influence on academic success, little research has investigated the relationship these variables have with educational engagement with young offenders. Given that there are differences in the self-beliefs of non-offenders compared to offenders, and that a significantly larger proportion of young offenders compared to non-offenders disengage from education, it is important that more research is conducted to better understand why large numbers of young offenders have disengaged from school and to better inform interventions which seek to re-engage young offenders in education.

There is some research, whilst limited, which has also found that the self-concept, temperament, schema, self-esteem, self-efficacy, narrative identity are linked to offending and anti-social behaviour. Therefore, the self-concept may be a particularly relevant factor for educational re-engagement focussed interventions for young offenders. As such, the next section reviews the research investigating the relationship between self-concept and youth offending.

1.9.4.2. Relationship between self-concept and youth offending.

Although limited, extant research reveals an association between the self-concept, temperament, schema, self-esteem, self-efficacy, narrative identity and youth offending, suggesting that the self-concept may be a key variable linked to the overall adjustment of a young person (and not just educational outcomes). In particular, young offenders with anti-social peer groups and lower academic achievement, learning difficulties and behavioural problems at school reported negative self-concepts (Sutherland, 2011). Pisecco and colleagues (2001) also investigated the effect that self-concept had on anti-social behaviours in early adolescence. Their findings indicated that

the development of anti-social behaviour was directly influenced by children's perceptions of their academic abilities and the presence of anti-social behaviour in childhood. The authors make particular reference to the conclusions of previous research (Dweck & Leggett, 1988), which suggested that children faced with failure become focussed on avoiding perceptions of inadequacy and are therefore likely to experience a series of negative affective states, or adopt a defensive style, which involves the devaluing of the task and expression of contempt and defiance. Vermeiren and colleagues (2004) also found that low self-concept relating to family and scholastic competence and a high social self-concept were significantly related to delinquency in a sample of Belgian students. Moreover, Ybrandt (2008), who studied 277 Swedish adolescents, found that negative self-concept was positively related to internalising behaviours such as anxiety and depression, and these internalising behaviours predicted aggression and delinquency. Negative self-concept was also directly related to eternalising problems, such as aggression. Ybrandt also found that positive self-concept was the most important factor for protection against problem behaviour, and highlighted the importance of a positive self-concept in adolescence.

Similarly, an Australian study by Carroll and colleagues (2007), which investigated the relationship between self-concept and delinquent behaviour among 1,327 Australian high school students, also found that students highly involved in delinquent activities reported lower classroom, peer and confidence self-concepts. They argued that students with poor academic results are more likely to experience academic failure and poor academic self-concepts, which in turn lead to delinquent behaviour. In line with Reputation Enhancement Theory (Emler 1984; Emler & Reicher, 1995), the authors also argued that peer self-concepts may be enhanced by engaging in delinquent behaviour in order to gain group membership or status. More specifically, Reputation

Enhancement Theory (Emler 1984; Emler & Reicher, 1995), which posits that individuals select a particular self-image they want to promote in front of an audience of peers and this audience provides feedback so that the individual maintains this social identity overtime. As a result, in order to maintain a non-conforming reputation, a young person may reject tasks that are inconsistent with their non-conforming self-image.

Some studies have also examined the relationship between temperament and delinquency. Dolan and Lennox (2011) assessed the relationship between Cloninger's 7-factor psychobiological model of personality as measured by the TCI and scores on Psychopathy Checklist List-Youth Version in 122 young offenders in England. Their findings showed that low harm-avoidance, reward-dependence and cooperativeness and high novelty seeking scores on the TCI were associated with high psychopathy scores. Dolan and Lennox argued that, similar to adults with psychopathy traits, adolescent offenders have personality profiles characterised by thrill seeking, impulsivity, a proneness to anger and anti-social behaviour, recklessness, an insensitivity to punishment, social insensitivity and disinterest in others. Other studies have also found an association between uninhibited or impulsive sensation seeking and antisocial behaviour (Barnow, Lucht & Freyberger, 2005; Berkowitz, 2008; Glenn et al., 2007). Negative emotionality has also been found to be significantly higher in life-course persistent offenders compared to adolescent limited offenders (Moffit, 2003).

Although most schema research has provided evidence for the link between early maladaptive schema and adult psychological wellbeing, psychopathology and personality disorders (Anmuth, 2012; Carr & Francis, 2010; Wang et al., 2010; Lawrance et al., 2011), little research has specifically studied early maladaptive schema in young offenders. One exception is Richardson (2005) who assessed early

maladaptive schema with young sex offenders. Using early maladaptive schema scores, he differentiated participants into a clinical group (endorsed clinical levels on early maladaptive schema) and a non-clinical group. For the entire clinical group, salient maladaptive schemas included emotional inhibition, social isolation/alienation and mistrust/abuse. Schema domains also differentiated participants who offended against peer-aged or adults from those who offended against children. These included entitlement/self-centredness and insufficient self-control/self-discipline.

Another study by Diržyte, Patapas & Vrubliauskaite (2006) also explored EMS with a population of young offenders. They found that young offenders had less favourable beliefs (more EMS) across all schema domains compared to non-offenders. So, while sex-offenders may have a more specific profile of early maladaptive schemas, the findings suggest that young offenders tend to endorse maladaptive self-beliefs and endorse more maladaptive schemas compared to non-offenders. These findings are consistent with Bower, Caroll and Ashman (2012), who reported that offenders tended to report more negative self-concepts compared to non-offenders.

In addition to a low self-concept and the presence of early maladaptive schemas, there is some research that has linked low levels of self-esteem to criminal behaviour (Trzesniewski et al., 2006). Some researchers argue that violence occurs among people who hold very favourable and inflated views of themselves when they encounter someone who challenges their high self-esteem (Battencourt et al., 2006). Indeed, links have been found between narcissism and aggressive behaviour (Bushman et al., 2009; Ferriday, Vartanaian & Mandel, 2011; Stucke & Sporer, 2002). However, much of the research examining associations between self-esteem and offending indicates a link between self-esteem and offending; however, this is only a weak relationship (Andrews & Bonta, 2010; Pervan & Hunter, 2007; Oser, 2006).

Furthermore, a study by Chung and Maurice (1996) found a strong co-occurrence of various adolescent problem behaviours in the presence of low academic self-efficacy, low involvement in various non-academic activities and negative life events. Conversely, they also revealed that youths who were involved in substance use showed higher self-efficacy in their peer relations than did the adolescents in the low-risk group. Ludwig and Pittman (1999) also found that self-efficacy was linked to problematic and risk taking behaviours. In particular, they found that high scores on self-mastery and self-trustworthiness dimensions of self-efficacy were associated with lower levels of delinquent behaviour, risky sex, and drug use. More recent studies have focused on investigating the self-efficacy of offenders who desist from crime (McIvor, 2009; Sapouna, Bisset & Conlong, 2011). In particular, a review by Sapouna and colleagues (2011) found that offenders who desisted from crime had higher levels of self-efficacy and managed to acquire a sense of agency and control over their lives, whereas persistent offenders were characterised by low levels of self-efficacy and failure to recognise alternatives to crime. A stronger sense of self-efficacy may therefore be an important factor associated with desistance from crime.

Some researchers have also used narrative approaches to better understand young offenders and their desistence from crime. Maruna (1997) analysed the narratives of 20 ex-offenders and found evidence of a positive 'reform story' that integrated a person's past mistakes into a generative script for the future. The narratives of the offenders who desisted from crime attributed their delinquency to environmental factors beyond their control and attributed their desistence from crime to external factors, which were usually a person who was forgiving of them and their past mistakes. Conversely, Chaintraine (2009) conducted interviews with young incarcerated offenders in a French population and reported themes about prison being a 'dead end', as well as a

sense of inevitability or a personal destiny about their incarceration. He found that even when youth offenders were released from prison, although there was a desire for social integration, there was also fear and uncertainty about returning to prison, and a feeling that they may return. Maruna (1997) differentiated these two types of stories labelling them the "redemption" and "condemnation scripts", the former being associated with desistence from crime and the latter with persistence. Maruna argued that the identities that individuals constructed had an important influence over whether they desisted from crime. Ultimately, these findings highlight that the development of some change in the coherence of an individual's self-story (or shifts in their narrative identity) may contribute to the process of desistence from crime.

In summary, the self-concept is not only an important factor related to the educational engagement of young offenders, but is also related to delinquency. Although much research has investigated possible links between self-esteem and offending, less research that has specifically examined the relationship between the self-concept and delinquency. Most of the research that has examined the relationship between self-concept and engagement suggests a positive relationship exists. However, as most of these studies are cross sectional, casual inferences cannot be inferred. More research is needed to examine how both general and domain-specific self-concepts relate to delinquency in an incarcerated sample of young offenders and to examine how self-concept related constructs together with self-concept influence delinquency.

1.10. Critical Summary

Although self-concept is a difficult construct to define, it is generally thought of as a cognitive construct, entailing one's thoughts about one's self across multiple life domains. However, as self-concept has been used interchangeably with terms like self-

esteem and self-efficacy, some research studies claim to have studied self-concept, when they have in fact evaluated self-esteem, causing some confusion around the distinction between these constructs. Whilst it is important to draw distinctions between self-esteem, self-efficacy and self-concept, it is worth noting that the constructs also relate to, and interact with, the self-concept (as explained in Section 1.9.2., p.54). Theory and research also suggest that personality, schema and narrative identity all also influence an individual's self-conceptions. However, there is limited research that has specifically investigated how all these concepts interrelate and how together they may contribute to a better understanding of the self-concept, particularly in young people.

While the self-concept is considered to be an important construct within the educational literature, to date little research has investigated the relationship between self-concept and educational engagement with young offenders. Most of the research that has examined the relationship between self-concept and engagement however, suggests that a relationship exists. There is also research that has found a link between self-concept and offending and anti-social behaviour, suggesting that it may be linked to the overall adjustment of a young person and a factor which may be particularly relevant for interventions specifically designed for young incarcerated offenders. However, as this research is limited and most of these studies are cross sectional, casual inferences cannot be inferred and no definitive conclusions can be drawn. Therefore, this study is an exploratory research study and its purpose was to investigate whether self-concept has an impact on the educational engagement and delinquency of young incarcerated offenders, whilst also considering the influence of constructs such as personality, self-esteem, self-efficacy and early maladaptive schema. Project aims and hypotheses will be elaborated below.

1.11. The Present Study: Aims and Hypotheses

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether self-concept had an impact on the educational engagement and delinquency of young incarcerated offenders.

1.11.1. Aims.

The first aim of the study was to examine the relationships between self-concept and related constructs - personality, self-esteem, self-efficacy and early maladaptive schema. The second aim was to explore how the self-concept impacts the educational engagement and delinquency of young incarcerated offenders. The final aim was to explore how young offenders construct their narrative identities. The study also had quantitative research hypotheses and qualitative and mixed methods research questions.

1.11.2. Research questions and hypotheses.

Based on previous research findings the quantitative hypotheses are that: (1) there is an association between self-concept, temperament and character, self-esteem, general self-efficacy and early maladaptive schema (2) self-concept, academic self-concept, general self-efficacy and self-esteem are associated with educational engagement and delinquency (3) educational engagement is significantly associated with delinquency (4) self-concept predicts a significant amount of variance in both educational engagement and delinquency. The qualitative research question for this study was: How do young offenders construct their narrative identities? The mixed methods research question was: Will life stories help to provide a more comprehensive understanding of young offenders' self-concepts?

CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY

This study used a mixed methods research design to investigate whether aspects of self-concept were associated with educational engagement and delinquency. This chapter describes the methodology that was used to address the aforementioned research aims. More specifically, the chapter describes the research design, sample, measurement instruments, procedure, and data analytic plan.

2.1. Research Design and Paradigm

This study used a mixed methods research design, a design in which an investigator collects and analyses data, integrates findings and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches or methods in a single study (Teddie & Tashakkori, 2009). The central premise of mixed methods research is that the combined use of quantitative and qualitative approaches provides a more complete understanding of the research problem than when either approach is used by itself. Creswell and Clarke (2011) list several advantages to using mixed methods approaches. First, using one source of data to investigate a research problem may be insufficient to address the research question. Mixed methods research helps answer questions that cannot be answered solely through quantitative or qualitative approaches alone. Second, qualitative methods may help account for the weaknesses of a purely quantitative approach and quantitative research may account for some of the weaknesses of a purely qualitative approach. For example, although qualitative research allows for the study of a small number of individuals in great detail it may be limited in the generalizability of its findings. Quantitative research, on the other hand which involves the study of many individuals, may produce generalisable results but is limited in its understanding of any

one individual. Therefore, using a combination of both approaches, allows for the limitations of one approach to be offset by the strengths of the other. Third, as mixed methods research allows for the use of multiple methods to address a research problem, it does not restrict researchers to the use of certain types of data collection, exposing them to a broader array of data collection methods, which may provide a richer understanding of the research question and broader interpretation of the findings.

The student researcher chose a mixed methods design for this study to bring together a more comprehensive account of the area of inquiry, in this case the self-concept, which is a complex construct that may benefit from inquiry using varied approaches. Employing both approaches would seek to enhance the integrity of the findings and allow for further elaboration, enhancement and illustration of the results from one method with the results of the other method.

The pragmatist paradigm was used to inform the design of the current study (Creswell & Clarke, 2011; Lincoln & Gruba, 1994). This paradigm values the use of diverse approaches, using both objective and subjective knowledge to inform the problems under study, in which a strong emphasis is put on the research question as the primary focus rather than the method (Creswell & Clarke, 2011). Adopting this paradigm for the research, allowed for the use of multiple methods, with the primary focus on being addressing the research question.

This study also used a convergent mixed methods design in which the researcher used concurrent timing to implement both the quantitative and qualitative strands during the same phase of the research process. That is, both qualitative (interviews) and quantitative (questionnaires) research methods were implemented concurrently during one phase of data collection. Additionally, both qualitative and quantitative research methods were weighted equally, and strands of data kept independent during analysis

and mixed during the overall interpretation in line with recommendations by Creswell & Clarke (2011).

2.2. Setting

The Parkville Youth Justice Precinct (PYJP) is one of the two Youth Justice Custodial Precincts located in Victoria, Australia. It is located in the inner northern Melbourne suburb of Parkville, approximately 5 kilometres from the central business district. It comprises both the Melbourne Youth Justice Centre (Justice Centre) and the Youth Residential Centre (Residential Centre).

The Justice Centre accommodates males aged 15 to 18 years who have been sentenced by a Victorian Court to serve a Youth Justice Centre Order or are remanded in custody. The Justice Centre has six units; Admissions, Remand North, Remand South, Southbank, Easternhill and Westgate. The Residential Centre accommodates males aged 10 to 14 years of age and females under 21 years of age who have been sentenced by a Victorian court to a Youth Residential Centre Order or who are on remand. This centre has two units: Barnett and Cullity.

A Youth Justice Centre Order sentences young people aged between 15 to 20 years of age to a period of time in custody in the youth justice centre. The maximum sentence for a Youth Justice Centre Order is three years. A Youth Residential Centre Order sentences young people, aged between 10 and 14 years to a period of time in custody in the youth residential centre. Young people sentenced through the Children's Court of Victoria cannot be sentenced to serve longer than two years. However, if sentenced through the County or Supreme Courts the order can extend to a maximum of 3 years.

Young people detained in PYJP on a Youth Justice Centre Order or Youth Residential Centre Order have been found guilty of very serious offences (usually a range of violent offences) or have continued to offend and appear in court repeatedly and have served a number of community-based orders, such as a probation order, youth supervision order and youth attendance order, prior to their incarceration. Young people remanded in custody have been detained prior to sentencing and refused bail while they await a full court hearing.

The participants in this sample were recruited through Parkville College, which is a Victorian government school that provides education to young people who are involved in the criminal justice system and who are detained within various secure settings across Victoria, including the PYJC. The school provides a wide range of curriculum including all Victorian Education senior secondary certificates and Vocational Education and Training. The school also adopts a trauma informed approach that best support students who have suffered childhood trauma. All participants are expected to participate in the educational program at the PYJC.

Table 2.3. Breakdown of Parkville Youth Justice Precinct by Facility and Unit

Unit	Capacity	Function
Parkville Youth Residential Centre		
Barnett	15	Accommodates sentenced and remanded young male detainees aged 10 to 14 years.
Cullity*	15	Accommodates sentenced and remanded female detainees aged 10 to 21 years.
Melbourne Youth Justice Centre		
Oakview	11	Accommodates sentenced detainees aged 15 to 18 years.
Remand North	13	Accommodates remanded detainees aged 15 to 18 years.
Remand South	13	Accommodates remanded detainees aged 15 to 18 years.
Southbank	15	Accommodates sentenced detainees who are typically aged 15 to 16 years and are assessed as particularly vulnerable, with high needs and intellectual disabilities.
Eastern Hill	15	Previously a unit for sentenced detainees, usually aged 17 to 18 years and have been convicted of a violent offence or have displayed violent behaviour while in custody, which has become a unit for remanded detainees aged 15 to 18 years.
Westgate	15	Accommodates sentenced detainees aged 15 to 18 years.
All units	112	

Note: As all study participants were male, the student researcher did not recruit participants from Cullity.

2.3. Quantitative Research Methodology

2.3.1. Participants.

Participants were 70 adolescent males aged between 14 to 19 years (*M*= 16.53, *SD* = 1.00) incarcerated in the PYJP. Participants were recruited across all units in PYJC, including both remand and sentenced units. First age of arrest ranged from 10 to 17 years (*M* = 13.17, *SD*= 2.05). Fifty four percent (n = 38) of participants were from a Culturally and Diverse Linguistic Background, 35.7 % (n = 25) were from an English Speaking Background and 10 % (n = 7) were from an Indigenous background. Ninety-three percent (n = 65) of participants reported having been suspended or expelled from school. Sixty-three percent (n = 44) reported having been expelled from school. Sixty percent (n = 42) of participants reported that they were either living with both biological parents or in a single parent family prior to their arrest. An additional 11.4 % (n = 8) reported that they were living in a residential care unit. One participant reported being homeless prior to arrest.

2.3.1.1. Exclusion criteria.

Young people were excluded from the study if they: (ii) were experiencing an acute psychotic or depressive episode or were substance intoxicated (ii) were female (iii) or were aged less than 14 years or above 19 years. The student researcher, a provisional psychologist, used her clinical judgement to ascertain whether participants were experiencing an acute psychotic or depressive episode or were substance intoxicated and not fit to participate in the study. The student researcher also checked with the unit's correctional staff to help determine the young person's mental state and wellbeing prior to the interview. Only one participant was excluded from the study on the basis of their unstable mental state.

Female and young offenders (under the age of 14) were excluded from this study on the basis that they formed a characteristically different subgroup of offenders, with potential differences (e.g., developmental differences, different offending pathways) that needed to be studied separately from older male youth offenders, who make up the majority of young offenders detained in detention centres in Victoria.

2.3.2. Procedure.

The researcher verbally presented the study to the young people on their units in the lunchroom during their lunch break. This allowed for the researcher to reach each of the young people together as a group. This method was the primary recruitment method used throughout the study but was not always allowed on particular units due to concern about the researchers safety in the lunchroom where young people had access to kitchen utensils. As a result, the researcher also presented the study to participants at the beginning of their classes, which were held at the Programs Centre, where young people attended Parkville College educational programs and classes. This often meant that the researcher had to attend a number of classes at different times to recruit participants, as each PYJP unit would be split into two separate classes. At times, the researcher also approached young people individually during their spare time outside of formal classroom activities on the unit. This method was used minimally as recruitment during classes and lunchbreaks allowed the researcher to approach the majority of the young people on the unit. This method was used on three occasions when the researcher was not able to utilise class time to present the research opportunity to students.

Once the study was presented to potential participants, the researcher asked the young people whether they would like to participate in the study. The young people then had an opportunity to ask questions about the study before agreeing to take part.

The researcher then recorded the first name of the participant and a preference for when they would like to partake in the study. The researcher arranged a time with the unit staff to interview the participant at the specified time. The unit staff would either write this time in the unit diary or ask the researcher to telephone on the day of the interview to make these arrangements. The researcher contacted the unit on the day of the interview to confirm the interview could go ahead and could be supervised on the unit, to check in as to the wellbeing of the participant, and to make arrangements to conduct the interview in a room on the unit which would allow for the interview to take place in a manner that would best protect the confidentiality of the young person's information. The research interviews were most often conducted in the unit lunchroom within staff view, allowing the interview to be supervised without staff being able to hear the content of the interview. At times these rooms were not available to the researcher and interviews were conducted in a quiet corner on the PYJP unit, which means that interviews were conducted away from the main communal areas and away from the other young people (in order to protect the young person's confidentiality). This sometimes affected the participants' level of concentration on the task but only minimally. Interviews were only conducted in these areas on four separate occasions.

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The research interview required participants to complete a series of questionnaires. These questionnaires involved participants answering questions about their social experiences and demographics as well as self-concept and related constructs (as detailed in section 3.6). The questionnaires were read out to participants to minimize the potential impact of any difficulties with reading and writing. The participants were also given the option of completing the questionnaires on their own. However, this option was rarely utilised (n = 3), with most participants asking for questions to be read

aloud. With the assistance from a speech pathologist at the PYJC, a participant questionnaire aid (See Appendix A) was also developed to help participants understand the different levels of each of the questionnaire's Likert scales. Some participants chose not to use the aid to fill in the questionnaires.

The interviews typically lasted between one hour and a half to two hours to complete but were conducted in a format that allowed participants to take short breaks as and when required. Similarly, the interviews were conducted over more than one session for participants who found it difficult to maintain concentration for the duration of the interview or became fatigued. Some participants were unable to complete all interview questionnaires. To account for this, the researcher adjusted her protocol by administering the core study questionnaires (Piers Harris Children's Self Concept Scale, Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale, General Self-Efficacy Scale, Student Engagement Measure, and Self-Reported Delinquency Scale) first and the rest of the questionnaires if the participant felt able to continue. However, some participants expressed at the outset of the interview that they would only be able to complete the core questionnaires.

The narrative interviews were conducted on a separate occasion after the initial interview. Participants recruited into this second component of the study were required to give consent to participate in the additional narrative-based interview and for the interview to be audio recorded by ticking a separate box on the initial participant consent form. This gave participants the option of either participating in the quantitative component of the study or both the quantitative and qualitative components.
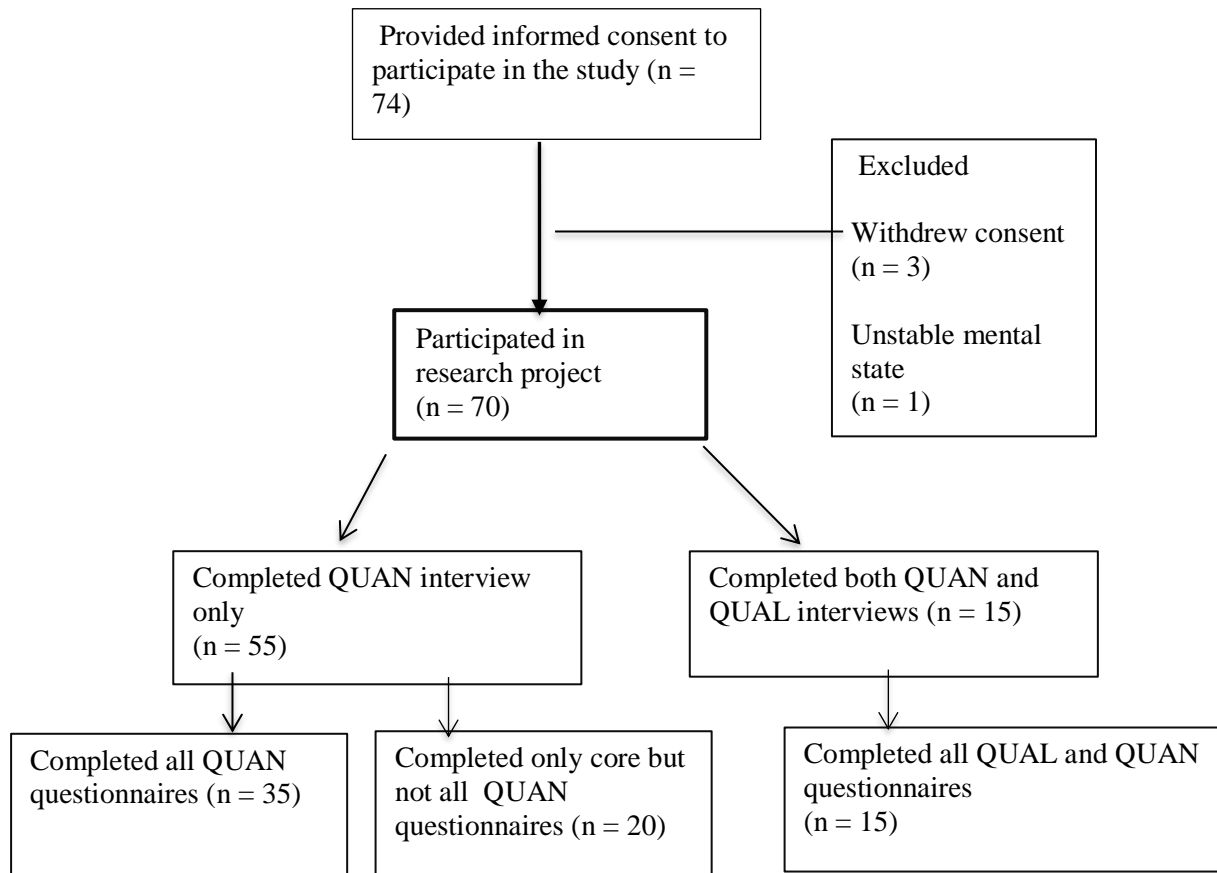
Figure. 3.4.2.1. *Flow diagram of study participation in quantitative and qualitative phases of the study.*

2.3.2.1.Ethical considerations.

The current study's methodology was reviewed and approved by the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee (MUHREC), the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD), the Victorian Department of Human Service's Research Coordinating Committee (DHS RCC) and the Centre for Human Services Research and Evaluation (CHRSE). The study was also approved by the Swinburne University Human Research Ethics Committee (SUHREC) when the

student researcher's doctoral candidature was transferred to Swinburne University of Technology.

Prior to conducting the current study, the student researcher was required to make a number of amendments to the study's protocol in accordance with the ethical requirements of each of the aforementioned ethics committees. In particular, the DHS RCC raised concerns regarding aspects of the project's research protocol that involved the collection of data from each participant's file, giving researchers access to the participant's criminal history and other relevant information (e.g., current charges, length of stay, prior psychiatric diagnosis, diagnosis of intellectual disability, participant demographics). In line with section 1.11 of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007), the committee had concerns about the confidentiality of the young people involved. Consequently, access to the participants' files was not approved by the HREC. The DHS RCC was also concerned about the collection of self-report data relating to childhood maltreatment and mental illness and the potential impact that the disclosure of this information may have had on the young people who were interviewed. The researchers were therefore unable to collect these data during participant interviews.

Although it is becoming increasingly common for research studies to acknowledge participation inconvenience, in accordance with section 2.2.9 of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research, the DEECD ethics committee were concerned that participants may be coerced into participating in the study if the student researcher offered them some form of compensation (for example, being eligible to go into a draw to win an iPad if they participated in the study) for their time. The issue of providing study participants with compensation was also further complicated by the sample of interest being incarcerated and not having access to cash

or being able to spend vouchers. As a result, compensation could not be offered to the young people who participated in the study.

The study's methodology was approved by DHS RCC in July 2013, by MUHREC in September 2013 and by the DEECD in October 2013. Approval was also granted by SUHREC in April 2014. Data was collected over 12 month period from December 2013 to January 2015.

2.3.2.1.1. Informed Consent

Due to the age and the vulnerability of the participants, the student researcher took steps to ensure that the young people were not coerced to participate (in line with section 2.2 of National Statement Ethical Conduct in Human Research). More specifically, the researcher ensured that she presented the study to participants in the presence of correctional staff or teachers who made sure that the young person was not coerced. The young people were provided opportunity to think about whether they wanted to participate before the researcher returned to the unit to seek informed consent. All young people were also notified at the outset that their research participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time and that there were no consequences to participating, withdrawing or non-participation.

The process of obtaining informed consent from the young people involved a number of steps. First, the researcher explained the research study and went through the explanatory statement (See Appendix A) with each young person at a slow pace and using simple language. After this, the researcher asked each young person to describe the facets of the study including the purpose of the study, its associated risks and anticipated benefits, tasks involved in participation, and the voluntary nature of, and alternatives to study participation. The researcher also used specific criteria to

determine whether the young person was competent to give informed consent. A young person was considered to be competent to give informed consent if they were able to: (i) comprehend and retain information relevant to making the decision (ii) believe the information provided (iii) understand further implications of the decision, and (iv) weigh the information in the balance and arrive at a decision. Only participants who were deemed to be competent to provide informed consent were asked to participate in the study.

Consent was not obtained from the parents of the young people who participated in this study. This is because the young people, at the time of participation, were in custody at the Parkville Youth Justice Precinct, where the State was acting *in loco parentis* 'in place of the parent*'*.

2.3.3. Quantitative measures.

(i) Self-concept. To assess self-concept the Piers Harris Children's Self Concept Scale, Second Edition (Piers, Harris & Herzberg, 2002) was used. The PHCSC-2 is a 60-item self-report questionnaire designed to assess self-concept in children aged 7 to 18 years of age. The scale yields a score that reflects overall self-concept (TOT) and subscale scores in six domains. The six domain scales include a 14-item Behavioural Adjustment scale that measures children's perceived acceptability of their conduct, a 16-item Intellectual and School Status Scale that reflects how youth regard their performance on intellectual and scholastic tasks, a 14-item Freedom from Anxiety Scale that measures symptoms of anxiety and depression, an 11-item Physical Appearance Scale denoting perceptions of physical appearance, a 12-item Popularity Scale involving perceived popularity among peers, and a 10-item Happiness and Satisfaction Scale involving personal confidence and self-satisfaction. Additionally, two validity scales identify

biased responding and the tendency to answer randomly. Test items are simple descriptive statements, e.g., "It is hard for me to make friends", written at a Year 2 reading level and require respondents to select a forced choice (yes-no) response. The PHCSC is one of the most widely used self-concept measures in children and adolescents and the TOT scale has an alpha reliability of .91 whilst the six domain scales have reliabilities ranging from .74 to .81 (Butler and Gasson, 2005). The scale was standardised using a US sample of 1400 students aged between 7 and 18 years of age.

(ii) Self-Esteem. The Rosenberg Self Esteem (RSE; Rosenberg, 1965) scale was used to measure self-esteem. The RSE is one of the most popular and well-utilised measures of self-esteem. It comprises 10 items rated on a 4-point Likert scale (strongly agree to strongly disagree). Five items are negatively worded, e.g., "All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure" and five are positively worded, e.g., "I feel that I have a number of good qualities." The total score is a summation of all 10 items on the scale; a higher score representing higher self-esteem. The RSE has good reliability with alpha coefficients ranging from .72 to .88 (Gray-Little et al., 1997). It has demonstrated validity, with a wide range of samples including high school students, and internal consistency, with alpha coefficients ranging from .66 to .88 (Bagley & Mallick; Hagborg, 1993).

(iii) Personality. The short version of the Temperament Character Inventory-Revised (TCI-R; Cloninger et al. 1999) was used to assess personality. The TCI-R is a 140-item, self-administered questionnaire constructed to assess seven basic dimensions of personality, four of which evaluate temperament (Novelty Seeking, Harm Avoidance,

Reward Dependence and Persistence) and three of which assess character (Self-Directedness, Cooperativeness and Self-Transcendence). The four temperament scales describe aspects of the personality that are hereditary, automatic and unconsciously influence learning processes, and can be observed early in childhood. The three character scales refer to dimensions that involve individual differences in higher cognitive processes, which influence personal and social effectiveness, as well as the acquisition of conscious self-perception.

Novelty Seeking refers to individual differences in the activation and initiation of behaviour (reflects the behavioural activation system). Individuals high in Novelty Seeking show excitement in response to novel stimuli, intuitive decision-making and an avoidance of rules or orders. They are impulsive, exploratory, and quick tempered and disorderly. Individuals who score low on this dimension tend to be reflective, slow tempered and orderly.

Harm Avoidance refers to individual response differences in the inhibition and cessation of behaviours (reflects the behavioural inhibition system) Cloninger et al, 1993). Individuals high on Harm Avoidance are sensitive to signals of adverse stimuli and inhibit their behaviour to avoid punishment, novelty and non-reward (van Berkel, 2009). They show worry, pessimism, and tenseness in unfamiliar situations, are prone to fatigue, and show shyness with strangers. Individuals low on this dimension tend to be optimistic, carefree, outgoing and energetic (Cloninger et al, 1993).

Reward Dependence refers to the maintenance of previously rewarded behaviour without current reinforcement (reflects the behavioural maintenance system) (Cloninger et al, 1993). Individuals high in reward dependence are highly sensitive to signals of reward, especially social reward and maintain and resist extinction of behaviour that was previously associated with rewards or relief from punishment. Individuals high in

Reward-Dependence are sentimental, affectionate, sensitive to loss and rejection and are dependent upon the approval of others. Those who score low on this dimension tend to be cold, practical, enjoy time alone and be socially insensitive.

Persistence reflects individual differences in persistence of behaviour despite frustration and fatigue. Individuals high in Persistence are industrious, hardworking, determined, and tenacious. Individuals with low persistence tend to be inactive, unreliable and erratic.

The character dimension Self-Directedness refers to the ability to control, regulate and adapt behaviour to meet set goals and values (Hansenne, Delhez, & Cloninger, 2005). Individuals high in Self-Directedness have high self-esteem, responsibility, and ability to pursue a purpose. They are described as responsible, purposeful and resourceful (Cloninger et al., 1993). Individuals with low self-directedness have difficulty accepting responsibility, setting and meeting meaningful goals, accepting limitations and with self-discipline (Cloninger et al., 1993; van Berkel, 2009).

Cooperativeness refers to the extent to which an individual considers himself/herself to be a part of society (Richter et al., 2003) and the extent to which he/she accepts other people (Hansenne et al., 2005). Individuals high in Cooperativeness are socially tolerant, empathetic, helpful, and compassionate (Cloninger, 1993). Individuals with low cooperativeness are described as socially intolerant, disinterested in other people, unhelpful and revengeful (van Berkel, 2009).

Self-Transcendence reflects the spirituality of an individual and their identification with the "oneness" of nature and society (Hansenne et al., 2005). It also includes consciousness and moral maturity (Richter et al., 2003). Individuals high in Self-Transcendence are described as fulfilled, serene, intuitive, creative, and spiritual

(Cloninger et al., 1993). Individuals with low self-transcendence are described as individualistic, self-aware and rational (van Berkel, 2009).

Each of these dimensions is composed of a number of facets, which are described as traits which respondents rate (e.g., "I often give into the wishes of my friends") on a 5-point Likert Scale (1 = definitely false, 5 = definitely true). The TCI has been validated internationally in countries such as Japan, Germany, China, France and Sweden (Cloninger et al., 1994) and has demonstrated convergent and concurrent validities with other personality models such as the Millon (Bayon et al., 1996) and Rorschach (Fassino et al., 2003). A factor analytic study by Pelissolo et al. (2005) confirmed the factor structure of the TCI-R as having four distinct dimensions of temperament and three dimensions of character. Studies have also reported test-retest reliabilities ranging from 0.60 to 0.93 and from 0.68 to 0.88 (Pelissolo et al. 2005) and Martinotti et al., 2008) and internal consistencies for the facets ranging from 0.58 to .90 (mean alpha coefficient .77) (Farmer & Goldberg, 2008). With an adolescent sample, internal consistencies ranging from .83 (Novelty Seeking) to. 89 (Harm Avoidance) have been reported for the temperament scales and between .84 (Self Directedness) to .87 (Self-Transcendence, Cooperativeness) for the character scales (Snopek et al., 2011).

(iv) Early maladaptive schema. The Young Schema Questionnaire – Short Form (YSQ-SF; Young, 1998) was used to assess early maladaptive schemas. The YSQ-SF is a self-report questionnaire, which employs a 6-point Likert scale to assess participants' perceptions of a given item from "1-completely untrue of me" to "6-describes me perfectly. The questionnaire measures 15 early maladaptive schemas (Emotional Deprivation, Abandonment, Mistrust Abuse, Social isolation, Defectiveness Shame,

Failure, Dependence Incompetence, Vulnerability to Harm, Enmeshment, Subjugation, Self-Sacrifice, Emotional Inhibition, Unrelenting Standards, Entitlement, Insufficient Self-Control) which can be broken down into five schema domains: Impaired Autonomy and Performance, Disconnection and Rejection, Unrelenting Standards, Other-Directedness, and Impaired Limits. Internal consistency for the overall scales was found to be at alpha level of .96 and above .80 for the subscales (Waller, Meyer & Ohanian, 2001). Stopa, Thorne, Waters & Preston (2001) found internal consistencies across the scales ranging from .66 to .94. The YSQ has also been validated for use with adolescents, with one study reporting alpha coefficients for each domain ranging between.67 to .89 (Mousavi, Low & Hashim, 2016).

(v) Self-efficacy. The General Self-Efficacy Scale (Sherer et al., 1982) is a 17-item scale designed to assess self-efficacy in a broad array of contexts and was primarily developed for clinical and personality research. Items (e.g., "I feel insecure about my ability to do things") are responded to on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The sum of the item scores reflects general self-efficacy; the higher the score the higher the self-efficacy. Internal consistency reliabilities have been found to be moderate to high (α =. 76 to.89) and test retest reliability (r = .74 and .90) (Chen, Gully & Eden, 2001).

(vi) Self-reported delinquency. The Self-Reported Delinquency Scale (SRD; Elliot, Hurzinger & Ageton, 1985) is a widely used measure of self-reported delinquency derived from the National Youth Survey (Huizinga & Elliot, 1983). It comprises 47 items covering a wide range of offences including property, status, drug and violent crimes and it has been normed for youths aged 11 to 19 years of age. For each type of

delinquent act or item, (e.g., "Knowingly bought held or sold stolen goods") the participant is asked whether he/she ever committed it, how many times in the past year, if others were involved, and if he/she was under the influence of alcohol or drugs while committing it. Scores on the Self-Reported Delinquency Scale can then be summed into offence category scales or summary scales (index offences scale and general delinquency scale). Furthermore, the types scores can be calculated for this measure include an'ever-variety' score (the number of delinquent acts the respondents report ever having committed), a 'last year variety' score (the same type of measure for the past year), and a 'last year frequency' score (the total number of times respondents report committing each of the delinquent acts). In this study, the 'ever-variety' score was used to measure the frequency of the young person's general delinquency over their life. Elliot and colleagues (1985) reported that the Self-Reported Delinquency Scale has an internal consistency of .91.

(vii) School engagement. Originally developed for the MacArthur Network for Successful Pathways through Middle Childhood study (Fredricks et al., 2005), the Student Engagement Measure (Fredricks et al., 2005) includes items on three Engagement subscales: five Behavioural Engagement items (sample items: "I pay attention in class," "I get in trouble at school"); six Emotional Engagement items (sample items: "I feel happy at school," "I am interested in the work at school"); and eight Cognitive Engagement items (sample Items: "When I read a book, I ask myself questions to make sure I understand what it is about," "I read extra books to learn more about things we do in school"). The Emotional Engagement scale measures students affective responses toward schoolteachers, students and other school personnel. The Behavioural Engagement scale measures students' involvement in school based and

extra-curricular activities. The Cognitive Engagement scale measures the effort, motivation control and strategy use students put into accomplishing or mastering tasks. Each item on these scales is rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (all of the time). Scale scores are created by averaging responses to all items in a scale, after reverse scoring negatively worded items. The authors of the Student Engagement Measure have reported good reliability for the measure, with Cronbach's alpha ranging from .72–.77 for behavioural engagement, .83–.86 for emotional engagement, and .55–.82 for cognitive engagement among elementary and middle school aged children but has yet to be validated with older adolescents.

(vii) *Social desirability*. The Paulhus Deception Scales (Paulhus, 1998) is a 40 item self-report inventory using a five-point Likert scale that measures an individual's tendency to give socially desirable responses on self-report instruments. It is designed to be administered concurrently with other instruments to indicate the validity of the results of the other instruments. The Paulhus Deception Scales includes two principal and relatively independent subscales: Self-Deceptive Enhancement, which represents the tendency of respondents to provide agreeable self-profiles that are due to an overly confident, yet inaccurate, self-image; and Impression Management, which represents, the tendency to consciously respond to items in an attempt to make themselves appear favourable to whomever interprets their results. The Paulhus Deception Scales have been normed on community and student samples from American and Canadian universities, military recruits and adolescent and adult inmates. Cronbach's alphas for the current sample were: 0.83 for Self-deceptive Enhancement, 0.80 for Impression Management and 0.86 for Paulhus Deception Scales Total. According to the Paulhus Deception Scales user manual, a score below 1 or above 12 on the Impression

Management scale indicates that a participant's responses on other study measures are "probably invalid" and should be interpreted with caution. However, in this study none of the participants' scores exceeded these cut-off scores.

2.3.4. Quantitative data analysis.

2.3.4.1 Data screening.

Initially, the dataset was inspected for missing data. As previously noted, more than 10% of cases had missing data on the Temperament and Character Inventory scales and Early Maladaptive Schema domains. As a large number of cases were missing data on these variables and the sample size of this study was modest, it was decided that these cases would be retained. Missing data was therefore dealt with using the *pairwise deletion* options in IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 22 for each analysis used in the study. Analyses that are conducted using this approach remove the specific missing values from the analysis (not the entire case) so that all available data is used in the analysis. This approach is useful for studies with smaller sample sizes to ensure sufficient power for further analyses. Prior to using pairwise deletion as a method of dealing with missing data, missing data must be deemed to be missing completely at random. As a result, missing data analysis was conducted using SPSS and showed that the missing data was missing completely at random.

An analysis of standard residuals was also conducted to identify univariate outliers. This analysis showed that the data contained no univariate outliers. Tests of the assumptions of normality however revealed three variables, *Physical Appearance, Freedom from anxiety* and *Popularity* and all Early Maladaptive Schema variables with skewness values exceeding ±1.96 (See Appendix A). Rather than performing a transformation on these variables, non-parametric alternatives (i.e., Spearman's Rank

Order Correlations) were specifically reported for these variables. However, as Early Maladaptive Schema Subjugation was used in the regression analysis a square root transformation was conducted to increase normality. This reduced Early Maladaptive Schema Subjugation skewness and kurtosis to below ±1.96.

Mann-Whitney and Chi Square tests were also conducted to assess whether participants significantly differed on important demographic and study variables. A Chi Square test of independence indicated that both groups did not differ significantly in terms of their highest level of education $\chi^2(9) = 9.679$, p = .377. The Mann-Whitney test also indicated that participants who partook in the qualitative surveys did not significantly differ from the rest of the participants in the sample on age at first arrest *(Mdn =13)*, $U = 265.0$, p = .116 and educational engagement *(Mdn =2.97)*, $U = 315.0$, p = .163 but did significantly differ in age *(Mdn =13)*, $U = 266.5$, $p < .05$, $r =. 26$. Participants who partook in the qualitative surveys were younger than the participants in the rest of the sample. This was done purposively (as participants were purposively sampled) to allow for both the perspectives of younger and older offenders to be captured in the qualitative analysis. As there was a larger proportion of older offenders in the overall sample, the average age of those participants who completed the qualitative interviews was slightly younger. However, the qualitative study participants were not significantly different on other study variables and therefore did not differ from the rest of the young people overall.

Prior to conducting the multiple regression analyses, residual scatter plots were examined and revealed no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity. Furthermore, all correlations between the predictor variables ranged from r = - 32 and r = .64, tolerance statistics were greater than .10 and VIF statistics were less than 10, indicating that no issues with multicollinearity were present. With the

use of $p < .001$ criterion for Mahalanobis distance, suggested by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), no multivariate outliers among the cases were identified..

2.3.4.2. Data analytic plan.

To explore the proposed research questions of the current study, statistical analyses were performed using the SPSS Version 22. Descriptive statistics were used to examine the individual characteristics of young offenders as measured by self-concept, self-esteem, self-efficacy, personality, and early maladaptive schema. Pearson's Product Moment correlations were used to examine the relationship between the self-concept measures, educational engagement and self-reported delinquency. Spearman's Rank Order correlations were reported for variables that violated assumption of normality (as detailed above). Multiple regression analyses were used to assess whether self-concept variables predicted educational engagement and self-reported delinquency.

An a priori power analysis for multiple regression with four predictors was conducted using G*Power to determine a sufficient sample size using an alpha of .05, a power of .80 and a small effect size ($f^2 = 0.15$), which was estmated on the basis of previous studies (Faul et al., 2007; Hattie, 2009; Viega et al., 2015). Based on the aforementioned assumptions the desired sample size for the analysis was 85. However, due the time restrictions associated with completing the doctoral research project within the set time (12-month period), data collection ceased with a total of 70 participants having participated in the study. Based on post-hoc power analysis, conducted for linear multiple regression, ($p < .05$), the statistical power for the present study was .70.

2.4. Qualitative Research Methodology

2.4.1. Participants.

Fifteen of the 70 participants recruited to the quantitative study, aged between 14 to 17 years of age, were also purposively invited to participate in the narrative interview, which is the qualitative component of the study. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique, which relies on the judgment of the researcher to select participants (Creswell & Clarke, 2011). Maximum variation sampling, a type of purposive sampling, was used in this study. Maximum variation sampling is used to capture a wide range of perspectives relating to the research question, ranging from cases that are viewed to be typical through to those that are more extreme in nature (Patton, 2002). The basic principle behind maximum variation sampling is to gain greater insights into a phenomenon by looking at it from all angles. This can help the researcher to identify common themes that are evident across the sample. The student researcher used maximum variation sampling in this study to ensure that young people from a range of educational, experiential and cultural backgrounds were represented in the sample.

Nine of these participants (60%) had been sentenced to serve time at the Parkville Youth Justice Precinct and six (40%) were remanded while awaiting trial. These participants had committed a range of offences including theft from motor vehicle, burglary, armed robbery, possession of firearms, arson, assault, serious assault, assault with deadly weapon, conduct endanger life, intentionally cause injury and manslaughter. First age of arrest ranged between 10 to16 years. Nine participants (60%) were from a Culturally or Diverse Linguistic Background, three (20%) participants were from an English Speaking Background and three (20%) participants were from an Indigenous background. Half (50%) of the participants reported having been expelled

from school and whilst the other half reported multiple school suspensions. One participant reported never having been expelled or suspended from school.

2.4.1.1 Theoretical Saturation.

To date, there are no clear guidelines or research criteria that clearly delineate what is considered to be an adequate sample size for qualitative research studies. Researchers are therefore often faced with this challenge of having to justify their sample size in the absence of any clear guidance around how to come to a judgement about sample size. Patton (2002) argues that there are "… no rules for sample size in qualitative inquiry. Sample size depends on what you want to know, the purpose of the inquiry, what's at stake, what will be useful, what will have credibility, and what can be done with available time and resources" (pp. 242-243). Whilst some researchers agree that there are no explicit rules regarding sample size in qualitative inquiry, much of the literature has focussed on the concept of 'theoretical saturation', in which depth as well as breadth of information has been achieved, as one of the primary means through which researchers can make judgements about the adequacy of their sample size. However, theoretical saturation, is a term that is vaguely and diffusely defined and there is limited practical guidance to show researchers when saturation has been reached (Bowen, 2008; Guest et al., 2006). "This prompts questions around how the research community might agree on principles that researchers and reviewers can use to determine when saturation has been reached and how to best defend judgements in a way that is transparent to readers" (Francis et al., 2010).

Keeping these limitations in mind, Marshall and colleagues (2013) describe three methods that can be used to justify the sample size of interviews in qualitative research. The first method is to cite recommendations by qualitative methodologists. The second

method is to act on precedent by citing sample sizes used in studies with similar research problems and designs. The third method involves the demonstration of saturation within a dataset.

In light of the limited practical guidance around the issue of sampling adequacy, the student researcher followed the aforementioned recommendations and consulted the literature in search for prior studies using narrative interviews to make judgments about sample size. Specifically, Mason (2010), references a number of research studies with samples varying between one to 20 participants. The student researcher therefore set out to conduct approximately 20 narrative interviews. However, during the process of data collection and transcription, the student researcher made a judgment, in consultation with supervisors that theoretical saturation had occurred after fifteen interviews. The student researcher felt by that stage the same common themes were emerging from the data and no new substantive information was being acquired, as she continued to collect and transcribe the interview data. This decision was based on the student researcher's knowledge of the data (as the sole interviewer) during both data collection and transcription. The student researcher recorded her reflections and ideas in a reflective journal and consulted with her supervisors about themes emerging from data, all of which helped the student researcher to come to this judgment around theoretical saturation.

2.4.2. Qualitative research interviews.

Narrative Identity.   Narrative inquiry, a qualitative research method involving the study of stories or narratives, was used to understand young offenders' narrative identity. In particular, the study followed the recommendations outlined in Catherine

Reissman's (2008) *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences* to explore participants' narrative identities.

Narrative Inquiry is an approach that follows the assumption that story is one of the most fundamental units that accounts for human experience and that narration (the act of storytelling or narrating of experience and story) forms the practice of constructing meaningful selves, identities and realities (Chase, 2011). Many researchers use in depth interviewing as their method of gathering narrative data. Whilst there are various other methods of collecting narrative data, in this research study interviews were used as the primary method for collecting narrative data. The aim of conducting these interviews was to understand young incarcerated offenders' narrative identities, through story, as a means of obtaining a comprehensive understanding of their self-concept. The interviews began with a broad question asking participants to tell the researcher their life story, "I would like you to share with me your life story and how your life has helped shape who you are".

The researcher utilised a naturalistic approach to narrative interviewing and it was therefore important not to impose a rigid structure on the interview by asking a standardized set of questions. This style of interviewing was relaxed and questions flowed as the young person engaged in the narrative of their life story.

As Reissman (2008) notes, "Creating possibilities in research interviews for extended narration requires investigators to give up control, which can generate anxiety. Although we have particular paths we want to cover related to the substantive and theoretical foci of our studies, narrative interviewing necessitates following participants down their trails" (Reissman, 2008, p. 24). Using a naturalistic style to interviewing therefore opened up the possibility for participants to engage in narration. However, this approach does not always produce long extended narrative accounts. This is because

some individuals find it difficult to respond if simply asked to produce an account of their life. A life history grid was therefore presented at the beginning of each interview and respondents asked to use it to help guide them as they recount the story of their life (See Appendix 4). By moving backwards and forwards between the different areas of the respondent's life, using the life history grid, the participant's memory is stimulated (Elliot, 2005).

However, establishing a climate that allows for storytelling in all of its forms requires substantial changes in practice (Reissman, 2008). The goal in narrative interviewing is to generate detailed accounts rather than brief answers or general statements. At times this requires both interviewer and speaker to become two active participants who jointly construct narratives and meaning or render events and experiences meaningful collaboratively (Reissman, 2008). This can involve exploring with the participants associations and meanings that might connect stories (within the broader narrative) and eliciting details about specific incidents and turning points. As such, the interviewer did at times, depending on the nature of the responses participants gave to the research question, work collaboratively with participants by helping them to make meaning of their experiences and exploring the associations between the stories or events that happened over the course of their life.

The length of the interview was dependent on the amount of detail the young person included in their life story and ranged between 40 minutes to two and half hours. All narratives were audio recorded with written consent.

2.4.3. Qualitative data analysis.

Narrative analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data. Narrative analysis refers to a family of methods for interpreting texts that have a common storied form

(Reissman, 2008). The current study specifically used narrative thematic analysis, one of the most widely used analytic strategies within narrative analysis, to analyse interview data. The focus of narrative thematic analysis is on 'what' is being said rather than 'how' 'to whom' or 'for what purposes' (Reissman, 2008). Whilst all narrative inquiry is concerned with content ('what' is said), in thematic analysis, content is the exclusive focus (Reissman, 2008). There is minimal focus on how a narrative is spoken, the structures of speech a narrator selects, the audience, the local context that generated narrative, or the complexities of transcription. Narrative analysts take segments of data apart, name them in concise terms, and propose an analytic handle to develop abstract ideas for interpreting each segment of data. Specifically, the narrative thematic analysis used in this study is based on the methodology of Ewick and Sibley (2003) in which the interest is not specifically in the form of the narrative as a whole but in its thematic meanings and point. Ewick and Sibley focus on the acts and events that occur within the narrative and the overall point of the story. Excerpts are contextualised only in relation to themes or theory.

There are however, a number of limitations associated with this approach. The first of these is that readers learn little about the lives of individual narrators except in relation to categories and the investigator's interpretive schema. Second, readers also assume that themes have similar meaning across narratives and narrators. Reissman (2008) compared this approach to the category-centred approach of grounded theory where the primary interest is in generating thematic categories across individuals while preserving individual stories.

Once the interviews had been conducted, the student researcher transcribed the audio-recorded interviews verbatim and saved them into Microsoft (MS) word document files. No software was used to aid the transcription process. Each of these MS

documents was then imported into NVivo (Version 10, 2012) software package as separate files. The student researcher then used NVivo to assist with managing the narrative data after having completed two day NVivo training with QSR International. The analysis of these interviews began with a reading and re-reading each of the transcribed interviews in NVivo, coding and identifying recurrent themes elicited from each of the transcribed interviews.

Codes were derived from the data via a process of reading and thinking about the text contained in the narrative interviews and via a process of segmenting and labeling text as it forms categories or themes (Creswell, 2002). This was an iterative process that began with one interview being "dissected" and categorised into themes, and continued with each subsequent interview, using the previous codes or by adding new ones, until all interviews had been analysed. From this, the student researcher created a list of codes, with descriptions and examples in the NVivo software package, from each of the interviews through the process described above. This list was then referred to as the student researcher analysed the remainder of the interviews and new codes were added to the list for text that did not fit within previous codes. Once this process was complete, these codes were then reviewed for overlap or redundancy and more were generated and organized into hierarchical categories, in which some were subsets (also known as subthemes) of larger categories (or themes).

The student researcher then re-read each interview. This allowed the student researcher to refine her ideas and decide on central themes that were emerging from the data and to determine the exact nature of how each theme was revealed through each young person's story. As new patterns began to appear, the student researcher returned to the transcripts to verify whether certain variables played a role in each pattern. This process of reading, coding, and re-reading interview transcripts to identify important

themes is a prescribed qualitative data analysis technique (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Glesne, 1999; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

During this process, the student researcher kept a reflective journal to record her ideas, thoughts and reflections. This consisted of notes, which she kept in her own manual workbook and in memos kept in NVivo. The student researcher used these notes to reflect on themes and her interpretation of these during the analysis and as she wrote up the findings in the results chapter of this thesis.

The student researcher then returned to the literature to develop a richer and more informed understanding of the themes that had emerged from the interviews. This ultimately aided in the process of refining the central themes and the key concepts that emerged from the data. This also allowed the student researcher to "take a step back" and return to the data with fresh eyes. This was followed by discussion between the student researcher and her research supervisors, who challenged the student researcher's interpretations of the data and as a means of validating the analysis (as discussed below).

2.4.3.1. Establishing Research Credibility.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) described four commonly used criteria for evaluating qualitative research studies: credibility, dependability, transferability and confirmability. Credibility refers to the accuracy or credibility of the research findings. It involves determining how congruent the findings are with reality. There are several methods that researchers can use to establish the credibility of their qualitative findings. According to Lincoln and Gruba prolonged engagement or time spent building relationships with participants as well as at the research site and in interviews

contributes to trustworthy data. Glesne (1999) argued that "When a large amount of time is spent with your research participants, they less readily feign behavior or feel the need to do so; moreover they are more likely to be frank and comprehensive about what they tell you" (p. 151). The researcher therefore spent one month at the research site prior to collecting data, establishing and building relationships with staff at the research site and becoming familiar with the research site itself (and this was an ongoing process that occurred throughout the data collection phase). The researcher also spent a significant amount of time on each of the units with the young people throughout the data collection phase. This involved engaging with youth during programs (e.g., participating in cooking, music and sport classes) and spending time with them during their spare time on the unit (this involved playing cards, watching TV, playing table tennis). This allowed the student researcher opportunities to build rapport with the youths at the PYJP and may have increased the engagement of the youths in the research project and trust that was established between the researcher and participants.

Another method of establishing credibility involves the use of multiple data sources to produce understanding (triangulation) (Lincoln & Gruba, 1985). One of this study's strengths, being a mixed methods research study, is that it involves the use of both quantitative (self-report questionnaires) and qualitative (interviews) research data. More specifically, the current study used both quantitative data obtained from several questionnaires and qualitative data obtained from research interviews. Mixed methods research, however, which requires the use of two methods or data sources, may provide a less powerful method than true triangulation, which uses three or more data sources, methods, or analyses (Teddie & Tashakkori, 2009). Teddie and Tashakkori (2009) argue that whilst triangulation is a worthy purpose of mixed methods research, as congruent results from more than one method can afford greater confidence in the

inferences to be made, the primary goal of mixed methods research to provide a richer or better understanding of the research question and should not be equated with convergence or corroboration as it is in triangulation. The purpose of using mixed methods design in this study was not primarily to triangulate the research data but also to seek elaboration or clarification of results for one method from another method and extend breadth and depth of understanding using mixed methods.

The process of peer review and debriefing, when external sources reflect and provide input on analysis, also enhances credibility and can be used to demonstrate dependability (the stability of findings over time) (Creswell, 2002; Glesne, 1999). The process of external review for this project involved presenting the research to a panel of experienced researchers at three time points during the research process (the development of the study, during data collection, and during analysis of findings). The student researcher also regularly submitted her analysis to her supervisors for review and critique. External audits provide an opportunity for an outsider to challenge the process and findings of a research study and provide important feedback that can lead to additional data gathering and the development of stronger and better-articulated findings. Consulting with peers in a similar field, or working within a similar branch of research, who would have some familiarity with the relevant research literature, research methods, and would have engaged in similar research work and thus, would be able to provide some sort of corroboration with regard to the interpretation of the data. The fresh perspective that such individuals may be able to bring may allow them to challenge assumptions made by the investigator, whose closeness to the project frequently inhibits his or her ability to view it with real detachment. Furthermore, through discussion between the researcher and his or her superiors or research team, the vision of the investigator may be widened as others bring their experiences and

perceptions to bear on the data. The researcher therefore consulted with research supervisors during each stage of the analysis for validation of the codes and themes generated from the data. This increased the likelihood that the themes derived from the data did in fact reflect the participants' histories (Glesne, 1999).

Transferability involves ensuring that the results of the study are applicable the other contexts. Transferability can be enhanced using thick description (or detailed description) of the context in which the work was undertaken and sufficient thick description of the phenomenon under investigation (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, 2009). Without this, it is difficult for the reader of the final account to determine the extent to which the overall findings "ring true". It is the reader who ultimately decides if the results of the study apply to the new context and it is the responsibility of the researcher to provide sufficient descriptive detail to allow readers to make such judgements (Ary et al., 2009).

The student researcher has therefore included a detailed description of the methodology, including the relevant contextual information, in the current chapter and information pertaining to the phenomena under study in the literature review. However, it must be noted that there is often disagreement between researchers regarding the nature and extent of background information that should be offered and this is further complicated by the possibility that factors considered by the student researcher to be unimportant, and consequently unaddressed in the research report, may be critical in the eyes of a reader.

Finally, the concept of confirmability is related to the notion of objectivity, in which the work's findings are the result of the experiences and ideas of the informants, rather than the characteristics and preferences of the student researcher (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Triangulation has a significant role in reducing the effect of

investigator bias and enhancing confirmability (Miles & Huberman, 1984). A key criterion for confirmability is the extent to which the researcher acknowledges his or her own predispositions or beliefs underpinning decisions or interpretations made, methods adopted and weaknesses in the techniques employed within the research report. Content relating to this was derived from the student researcher's ongoing reflective notes and memos

CHAPTER THREE: QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter presents the quantitative findings. The chapter has been organised into three sections. The first section includes descriptive statistics for each self-concept measure. The second explores the relationships between each self-concept construct and educational engagement and self-reported delinquency. The third section explores whether self-concept predicts current educational engagement and self-reported delinquency.

3.1. Descriptive Findings

Means, standard deviations, ranges and internal consistency scores are presented in Table 3.1. One-sample t-tests comparing the current sample's scores with non-offending adolescent samples (reported in Piers & Herzberg, 2002; Ruchkin, Eisemann, & Hagloff, 199; Zafiopoulou, Avagianou & Vassiliadou, 2014) are also presented in Table 3.1. Comparisons could not be made for the General Self-Efficacy Scale and Student Engagement Measure as no adolescent comparison sample could be sourced.

Results summarised in Table 3.1 showed that all scales, except Subjugation (α = .42) and Popularity (α =.58)$,$ showed acceptable internal consistency. The results also showed that the Total School Engagement scale yielded a mean of 2.95 (SD = .72). Higher engagement scores were reported for the Behavioural Engagement subscale (M = 3.17, SD = .82) and Emotional Engagement subscale (M = 3.67, SD = .74) as compared to the Cognitive Engagement scale (M = 2.50 SD = .91). Regarding self-concept, the total self-concept scale yielded a mean of 42.13 (SD = 7.9), which falls in the Average range. The Physical Appearance (M =8.51, SD = 2.22), Freedom from Anxiety (M = 10.97, SD = 2.85), Popularity (M = 9.16, SD = 2.35) and Happiness (M = 7.64, SD = 2.21) subscale mean scores all also fell within the Average range. However,

the mean scores for the Behavioural Adjustment scale ($M = 7.71$, $SD = 3.02$) fell in the Low range and in the Low Average range ($M = 10.61$, $SD = 2.09$) for the Intellectual Status subscale. Higher mean scores were found for the following schemas - Unrelenting Standards *($M = 1.00$, $SD = 1.45$)*, Entitlement ($M = 1.37$, $SD = 1.40$) and Self-Sacrifice ($M = 1.45$, $SD = 1.62$), Emotional Deprivation ($M = .85$, $SD = 1.33$) and Abandonment ($M = .80$, $SD = 1.49$).

The results of the one-sample t-tests revealed significant differences between young offenders and non-offenders across most scales. In particular, young offenders scored significantly higher on indices of Novelty Seeking, Harm Avoidance, Reward Dependence, Persistence and Cooperativeness and lower on Self-Directedness and Self-Transcendence. They also reported significantly lower Self-Esteem and lower Total Self-Concept scores and Behavioural Adjustment and Intellectual Status Self-Concept scores but higher self-concept scores in domains of Physical Appearance, Freedom from Anxiety and Popularity, as measured by the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale (see p.103). Significantly lower scores were also reported across all schema domain.

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Table 3.1

Means, Standard Deviations, Ranges and Internal Consistency Reliabilities for all Measures

Measure	n	M	SD	Range	α	t
Self-Report Delinquency	69	20.59	7.55	7 - 35	.89	-
Educational Engagement	70	2.95	.72	1.3 - 4.4	.90	-
Behavioural Engagement	70	3.17	.82	1.3 - 4.7	.78	-
Emotional Engagement	70	3.67	.74	2.2 - 5.0	.89	-
Cognitive Engagement	70	2.50	.91	1 - 4.1	.83	-
Self-Concept	70	42.13	7.9	24 - 56	.81	-2.61*
Behavioural Adjustment	70	7.71	3.02	2 - 14	.72	-9.65*
Intellectual School Status	70	10.61	2.99	3 - 16	.66	-3.59*
Physical Appearance	70	8.51	2.22	2 - 11	.69	2.69*
Freedom from Anxiety	70	10.97	2.85	3 - 14	.78	2.85*
Popularity	70	9.16	2.35	2 - 12	.58	2.70*
Happiness	70	7.64	2.21	2 - 10	.70	-1.73
Self-Esteem	70	19.99	4.62	9 - 30	.86	-11.72*
General Self-Efficacy	70	60.51	9.33	9 - 30	.86	-
TCI- Novelty Seeking	35	13.39	1.68	10.4 -	-	8.62*
TCI- Harm Avoidance	35	10.05	2.08	5.2 -	-	6.27*
TCI- Reward Dependence	35	11.97	1.66	8.2 -	-	18.29*
TCI- Persistence	35	14.04	2.37	7.6 -	-	29.68*
TCI- Self-Directedness	35	16.85	2.56	11.7 -	-	9.45*
TCI- Cooperative.	35	16.25	2.54	11.5 -	-	5.25*
TCI- Self-Transcendence	35	7.39	1.71	4.1 -	-	- 3.06*
EMS - Emotional Deprivation	41	.85	1.33	0 - 5	.78	- 2.72*
EMS - Abandonment	41	.80	1.49	0 - 5	.93	- 2.99*
EMS - Mistrust and Abuse	39	1.05	1.64	0 - 5	.88	- 2.44*
EMS - Social isolation	39	.54	1.07	0 - 5	.77	- 9.27*
EMS - Failure	39	.32	.87	0 - 4	.87	- 7.96*
EMS - Defectiveness	39	.13	.53	0 - 3	.85	-24.12*
EMS- Dependence/Incompetence	39	.28	.56	0 - 2	.64	-28.43*
EMS - Vulnerability to Harm	38	.29	.65	0 - 3	.79	-19.33*
EMS - Enmeshment	38	.39	.92	0 - 5	.81	-20.62*
EMS - Subjugation	38	.37	.63	0 - 2	.42	-21.33*
EMS - Self-Sacrifice	38	1.45	1.62	0 - 5	.84	- 3.77*
EMS - Emotional Inhibition	38	.63	1.05	0 - 4	.74	- 11.67*
EMS - Unrelenting Standards	38	1.00	1.45	0 - 5	.84	- 8.70*
EMS - Entitlement	38	1.37	1.40	0 - 5	.80	- 4.36*
EMS - Insufficient Self-Control	38	.82	1.09	0 - 4	.65	-7.57*

3.2. Relationship between self-concept, educational engagement and self-reported delinquency

The Pearson's Product Moment correlational analyses were used to examine the relationship between the self-concept measures, educational engagement and delinquency. The correlation matrix showing the significant relationships between these variables is presented in Table 3.2. To adjust for multiple comparisons, a Bonferroni correction was applied and the corrected version of the correlation matrix included in Appendix Six. Due to exploratory nature of the study and concerns about the inflation of the Type II error rate, the non-corrected matrix was used in the study and the limitations of this are discussed in section 5.5 (p.214).

Table 3.2.

The Correlation Matrix of the Relationships between Self -Concept Variables and Educational Engagement and Self-Reported Delinquency

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
1 Age first arrest	-																									
2 Self Report Delinquency	-.45**	-																								
3 Educational Engagement	.03	-.33**	-																							
4 Behavioural Engagement	.12	-.34**	.74**	-																						
5 Emotional Engagement	.06	-.34**	.87**	.72**	-																					
6 Cognitive Engagement	-.01	-.23	.86**	.46**	.51**	-																				
7 Self concept	.21	-.38**	.36**	.34**	.38**	.24*	-																			
8 Behavioural Adjustment	.14	-.51**	.40*	.41**	.42**	.25*	.64**	-																		
9 Intellectual School Status	.12	-.47**	.64**	.56**	.59**	.51**	.66**	.57**	-																	
10 Physical Appearance[a]	.28*	-.10	.10	.17	.22	.02	.54**	.20	.34**	-																
11 Freedom from Anxiety[a]	.05	-.21	.10	.02	.04	-.03	.57**	.26*	.13	.12	-															
12 Popularity[a]	.17	-.20	.03	-.17	.17	-.05	.59**	.19	.26*	.53**	.49**	-														
13 Happiness[a]	-.04	-.06	.08	.03	.19	-.01	.54**	.32**	.24*	.45**	.45**	.42**	-													
14 Self Esteem	-.05	-.08	.31**	.32**	.29*	.21	.61**	.20	.35**	.37**	.56**	.48**	.55**	-												
15 General Self Efficacy	.02	-.13	.44**	.44**	.35**	.37**	.47**	.39**	.37**	.25*	.27*	.21	.24*	.53**	-											
16 TCI- Novelty Seeking	-.23	.27	-.20	-.04	-.09	-.30	-.25	-.42**	-.19	.03	-.16	-.11	.07	.22	-.02	-										
17 TCI- Harm Avoidance	.26	-.09	-.06	-.06	-.06	-.03	-.49**	-.13	-.13	-.20	-.51**	-.44**	-.27	-.62**	-.64**	-.16	-									
18 TCI- Reward Dependence	-.14	.06	-.07	-.15	-.07	-.03	.13	.26	.09	.25	.02	.15	.34*	-.02	.07	-.04	.06	-								
19 TCI- Persistence	.05	-.44**	.59**	.40*	.58**	.48**	.66**	.58**	.49**	.33	.42*	.38*	.50**	.47**	.58**	-.34	-.36*	.12	-							
20 TCI- Self-Directedness	-.36*	-.05	.29	.39*	.32	.14	.54**	.23	.42*	.41*	.54**	.49**	.56**	.57**	.69**	-.01	-.51**	-.14	.40*	-						
21 TCI- Cooperative.	.37*	-.36	.36*	.23	.37*	.31	.47**	.50**	.49**	.38*	.09	.32	.37*	.09	.29	-.32	-.16	.54**	.64**	.15	-					
22 TCI- Self Transcendence	.35	-.32	.40	.10	.28	.46**	.31	.28	.29	.35*	.11	-.01	.37*	.15	.22	-.06	-.03	.24	.41*	-.05	.39*	-				
23 EMS - Emotional Deprivation[a]	.05	.21	-.26	-.20	-.32*	-.16	-.35*	-.20	-.15	-.09	-.30	-.28	-.18	-.13	-.07	.29	.09	.02	-.24	-.20	-.03	.12	-			
24 EMS- Abandonment[a]	-.07	.30	.01	-.05	-.02	.09	-.30	-.16	-.09	.10	-.53**	-.40**	-.04	-.28	-.19	.08	.33	.32	-.08	-.09	.07	.24	.08	-		
25- EMS - Failure[a]	-.02	.01	-.18	-.25	-.24	-.08	-.18	-.38*	-.34*	-.05	-.01	-.01	.18	.05	-.20	.27	.11	.33	.06	-.19	-.06	-.01	.36*	.27	-	
26 EMS- Subjugation[b]	-.18	.22	-.46**	-.35*	-.42**	-.39*	-0.3	-0.21	-.38*	-.35*	0	-0.14	-0.18	-0.3	-0.27	.24	.16	-0.1	-0.32	-0.19	-0.32	.18	.22	.01	.03	-

Note: *p<0.05 (two tailed) **p<.0.01 (two tailed)   [a] Spearman's rank order correlations were reported for this variable. [b] Transformed EMS Subjugation

TCI scales n = 35, Emsed, Emsab n = 41, Emsfa n = 39 Emssb, EMSet n= 38, Age at first arrest n = 66, All other scales n = 70

3.2.1. Educational engagement, self-concept measures, and self-reported delinquency.

Results summarised in Table 3.2. show that Educational Engagement was moderately and positively correlated with Total Self-Concept and Behavioural Adjustment and was strongly and positively correlated with Intellectual School Status. Educational Engagement was also moderately and positively correlated with Self-Esteem, General Self-Efficacy and Cooperativeness, strongly and positively correlated with Persistence but moderately and negatively correlated with Subjugation. Regarding to the Educational Engagement subscales, Behavioural Engagement was also moderately and positively correlated with Self-Directedness, Cognitive Engagement was moderately and positively correlated with Self-Transcendence and Emotional Engagement was negatively correlated with Entitlement. Educational Engagement, Behavioural Engagement and Emotional Engagement subscales were all negatively correlated with Self-Reported Delinquency.

3.2.2. Self-concept, self-esteem, self-efficacy, personality, EMS and self-reported delinquency.

Total self-concept scores were negatively correlated with Harm Avoidance and Entitlement and were positively correlated with Self-esteem, General Self-Efficacy, Self-Directedness, Persistence and Cooperativeness. The Behavioural Adjustment subscale was positively correlated with Intellectual School Status, Freedom from Anxiety, Happiness, Self-Esteem, General Self-Efficacy, Persistence and Cooperativeness and negatively correlated with Failure. The Intellectual School Status subscale was positively correlated with Physical Appearance and Happiness, Self-Esteem and General Self-Efficacy, Self-Directedness, Persistence and Cooperativeness and negatively correlated with Failure and Subjugation.

Results also indicated that Physical Appearance was positively correlated with Freedom from Anxiety, Popularity, Happiness, Self-Esteem, General Self-Efficacy, Persistence and Cooperativeness, but negatively correlated with Subjugation. Freedom from Anxiety was also positively correlated with Popularity, Happiness, Self-Esteem, General Self-Efficacy, Self-Directedness, but was negatively correlated with Harm Avoidance and Abandonment. Happiness was also positively correlated to Self-Esteem and General Self-Efficacy but was negatively correlated with Abandonment. Total Self-Concept, Behavioural Adjustment, Intellectual School Status, Persistence and Cooperativeness were all negatively correlated with Self-Reported Delinquency.

3.3. Predicting educational engagement and delinquency

Multiple linear regression analyses were performed to determine whether self-concept variables significantly predicted educational engagement and delinquency. All predictor variables selected for the analyses were significantly correlated with the dependent variables, indicating that the multiple linear regression analyses could be reliably undertaken. The variables with the strongest relationship to educational engagement and delinquency and which were therefore selected for the analyses included; educational engagement-Intellectual School Status, Subjugation, Persistence General Self-Efficacy; and delinquency - Intellectual School Status, Behavioural Adjustment, Persistence, Cooperativeness. Similarly, those variables most highly correlated with the educational engagement subscales were selected for their respective regression analyses. Summary statistics for the multiple regression analyses are provided in Tables 3.3.1 to Table 3.3.5..

Table 3.3.1

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Educational Engagement

Predictor	β	t	p
Constant		.628	.535
Intellectual School Status	.390	2.555	.016
Subjugation	-.197	-1.408	.170
TCI- Persistence	.299	1.785	.085
General Self-Efficacy	.070	.447	.658
R^2	.55		
ΔR^2	.49		

Results summarised in Table 3.3.1 revealed that the overall model significantly predicted Educational Engagement, $F(4, 28) = 8.53$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .55$, $\Delta R^2 = .49$, in which 55% of the variance in Educational Engagement was accounted for by self-concept variables. The analysis also showed that as individual predictors Intellectual School Status ($\beta = .44$, $t(32) = 2.55$, p $< .05$) significantly predicted Educational Engagement. Examinations of the semi-partial correlations revealed that 10.2% of the variance in educational engagement was accounted for by Intellectual School Status.

Table 3.3.2

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Behavioural Engagement

Predictor	β	t	p
Constant		1.479	.150
Behavioural Adjustment	.065	.335	.740
Intellectual School Status	.420	2.315	.028
TCI- Persistence	.009	0.44	.965
General Self-efficacy	.258	1.447	.158
R^2	.38		
ΔR^2	.30		

Results summarised in Table 3.3.2 revealed that the overall model significantly predicted Behavioural Engagement, $F(4, 30) = 4.56$, $p < .01$, $R^2 = .38$, $\Delta R^2 = .30$, in which 38 % of the variance in Behavioural Engagement was accounted for by self-concept variables. The analysis also showed that as individual predictors Intellectual School Status ($\beta = .42$, $t(32) = 2.32$, $p < .05$) significantly predicted Behavioural Engagement. Examinations of the semi-partial correlations revealed that 9% of the variance in Behavioural Engagement was accounted for by Intellectual School Status.

Table 3.3.3

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Emotional Engagement

Predictor	β	t	p
Constant		.639	.528
Behavioural Adjustment	-.044	-.243	.810
Intellectual School Status	.361	2.034	.052
TCI- Persistence	.374	2.161	.039
Subjugation	-.182	-1.223	.231
R^2	.49		
ΔR^2	.42		

Results summarised in Table 3.3.3 revealed that the overall model significantly predicted Emotional Engagement, $F(4, 28) = 6.71$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .49$, $\Delta R^2 = .42$, in which 49% of the variance in Emotional Engagement was accounted for by self-concept variables. The analysis also showed that as individual predictors Intellectual School Status ($\beta = .36$, $t(32) = 2.03$, $p < .05$) and Persistence ($\beta = .37$, $t(32) = 2.16$, $p < .05$) significantly predicted educational engagement. Examinations of the semi-partial correlations revealed that 7.5% of the variance in educational engagement was accounted for by Intellectual School Status. Persistence uniquely accounted for 8.5% of the variance in Emotional Engagement.

Table 3.3.4

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Cognitive Engagement

Predictor	β	t	p
Constant		-.291	.774
Intellectual School Status	.242	1.413	.169
Subjugation	-.253	-1.591	.123
TCI- Persistence	.141	.812	.424
TCI-Self-Transcendence	.343	2.154	.040
R^2	.45		
ΔR^2	.37		

Results summarised in Table 3.3.4 show that the overall model significantly predicted Cognitive Engagement, $F(4, 28) = 5.63$, $p < .01$, $R^2 = .45$, $\Delta R^2 = .37$, in which 45% of the variance in Cognitive Engagement was accounted for by self-concept variables. The analysis also showed that, Self-Transcendence ($\beta = .34$, $t(32) = 2.15$, $p < .05$) was also a significant individual predictor. Examinations of the semi-partial correlations showed that it accounted for 9.2% of the variance in Cognitive Engagement.

Table 3.3.5

Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Self-Reported Delinquency

Predictor	β	t	p
Constant		4.892	.000
Intellectual School Status	-.223	-1.159	.256
Behavioural Adjustment	-.277	-1.362	.183
TCI- Persistence	-.163	-.763	.452
TCI-Cooperativeness	-.012	-.059	.953
R^2	.32		
ΔR^2	.23		

Results summarised in Table 3.3.5 revealed that the overall model significantly predicted Self-Reported Delinquency, $F(4, 30) = 3.55$, $p < .05$, $R^2 = .32$, $\Delta R^2 = .23$, in which 32% of the variance in self-reported delinquency was accounted for by self-concept variables. Although the overall model was significant, the analysis revealed that none of the variables included were significant individual predictors of Self-Reported Delinquency.

CHAPTER FOUR: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter describes the findings of the narrative thematic analysis used to examine the narrative interviews of 15 young offenders, purposively selected to take part in the qualitative component of this study. In order to protect participants' confidentiality, the qualitative data was anonymised and all potential identifiers removed (e.g., name, address, school name). All participants' names were replaced with de-identified participant codenames (e.g., PP105) and street names or suburbs replaced with pseudonyms. Analysis elucidated six broad themes: unstable childhoods, negative school experiences, delinquency, incarceration, self-concept and hope for change. These themes followed a temporal sequence and aligned with how the young people's stories were told, beginning with their account of their childhood, their primary and then high school years, their offending, current incarceration and concluding with their hopes for the future. Each theme described below commences with a description of the theme and is followed by as string of examples and quotes. These are included to illustrate the theme and provide an account of the experiences of the young people interviewed in this study. A summary of the analysis has been included at the end of this chapter and a more detailed discussion and interpretation of these findings is presented in Chapter 5.

4.1. Unstable childhoods

Participants often began their life stories recounting their experiences in childhood. In doing so, they described childhoods characterised by violence, chaos and instability. In particular, they spoke about experiences of domestic violence, childhood maltreatment, family separation and disadvantage. Some participants recalled vivid memories of abuse, which often involved feelings of fear, anger and confusion and they spoke about the impact they felt these experiences had on their overall well-being and

on their own violence and involvement in the criminal justice system. Some participants spoke about their involvement with child protection services from a young age and placements across different foster care homes and residential care units as a result of government intervention, while others spoke about their experiences growing up without a father and associated feelings of abandonment. The following sections explore the experiences participants shared in more detail.

4.1.1. Domestic violence.

Most of the young people spoke about growing up in violent and unstable homes. Some participants provided vivid and detailed accounts of the domestic violence they witnessed in the home. PP105, for example, described his childhood as being the most violent years of his life.

> We had a lot of trouble. My mum and my dad had a lot of trouble against each other. …They were married for 16 years and then everything went to shit. But, during those 16 years, probably the first maybe four or five, were probably the most violent days, violent years, of my mum's life and mine. Most violent life. Every time when my old man would come home, he was upset, he'd just bash the living shit out of her until she would be black and blue, 'till her jaw would be down here and she wouldn't be able to speak.

Other participants described their experiences of domestic violence more generally and reflected on the significance of domestic violence in their childhood

> ….and my dad he left because he used to hit my mum a lot and my dad would probably come around maybe three or four times a week hitting

my mum and stuff and then asking her for money. Then he would go

again (PP106).

…like I remember watching him bash my mum 'cause mum would try

and stop him from hitting me (PP107).

4.1.1.1. Fear and helplessness.

A subtheme that emerged as young people talked about domestic violence

involved the fear and helplessness they experienced when they witnessed or were

subjected to domestic violence in the home. The young people also commonly spoke

about wanting to intervene to protect their mothers (who were often the victims) from

domestic violence but felt that they could not due to fears that they would be harmed.

I never got involved. I was way too fuckin' scared, way too scared and

I'd sit there and I'd see my mum getting belted. If I get in, I could help

her but if I get in, I'm going to get belted even worse. My old man told

me if I ever get involved he'll kill me. I felt for her but I was scared for

my life. I didn't know what to do. I didn't know what to say. I didn't

know who to go to (PP105).

Personally, seeing that, seeing my mum get hit is like, hard to watch,

but at the same time, what can you do really? You can't go in, you'd

always go in but then you'd get punched or something like that

(PP106).

However, some participants reported that they did eventually intervene (usually violently) by the time they entered adolescence.

…my old man says "You hit me?" "Fucking hell I hit you. Of course I'm gonna hit you. You hit me, you belted me and my mum for the past 16 years maybe even, I don't even know how much batter, how much shit we copped from your fuckin' your shit…" (PP105).

…and then I think from then it was the last time my dad comes around. Yeah, me and my brothers grown up a little bit more so yeah me and my brothers grabbed, I grabbed a plank of wood, my brothers grabbed a chain each and we just chased our dad down started hitting him with them. He never come back then about 2 years maybe (PP106).

4.1.2. Childhood maltreatment.

The young people interviewed were not only subjected to domestic violence but were also victims of physical abuse, which they reported was most often perpetrated by their fathers. As with domestic violence, some participants recalled vivid memories of extreme acts of physical violence perpetrated toward them.

I've just been thrown, thrown in the window. I got markings, the glass sitting in my elbow. There was this big piece like that. I'm telling you they had to umm put that butterfly thing, fuckin I don't know what it was but there was big piece of glass sitting in my elbow. I was like shit I'm fucked. Oh God, I can't move and then I was unconscious. I was dizzy, I

was dizzy and my ears were like ringing. Oh God, I can't live this life anymore. I come to get out of the glass and he grabs me from my hair and pulling me and I'm just bleeding from my nose and my elbow. I'm telling him "let me go, let me go", and he threw me on the floor and "burn it". He was telling me to burn my mum's clothes.

…… and he yelled at me and grabbed his pocketknife and tried to stab me. I don't know, he stabbed me, I don't know where he stabbed me. He stabbed me in the leg somewhere (PP1010).

Other participants spoke about violence being perpetrated against them in more general terms.

……and like my dad he would hit me as a child and he'd bash my mum. I used to get bashed stuff like that (PP107).

However, physical abuse was not always reported to have been experienced in the family home. Some participants talked about the physical abuse they suffered in foster care homes, following their removal from their family homes by child protection services.

…..and I lived there until I was eight years old and in those two years I got bashed and stuff like that (P108).

……umm got put in foster care, got bashed… (PP115).

The abuse suffered by the young people often took many forms including different forms of physical and emotional abuse

..... my foster carers burnt my clothes (PP115).

… and my foster parents they used to be real bad to me and stuff like that. Uh they used to get me drunk… they used to give me alcohol (PP110).

4.1.3. Impact of domestic violence and childhood maltreatment

When describing their experiences of domestic violence and abuse, participants spoke about the impact these had on their lives and considered how they might have contributed to their current situation. Participants talked about how domestic violence and abuse impacted on their familial relationships, mental health and offending. They often expressed anger toward their fathers, who were most often the perpetrators, for the abuse they suffered at their hands.

Participant P101, for example, expressed great anger and frustration toward his father, after being separated from him as a child (due to domestic violence) and having suffered physical and emotional abuse at his hands, when he was re-united with him years later.

I was a good kid before I met you. Now I met you and you're a fuckin prick to me and you're fuckin' telling me to go fuck myself (PP101).

Other participants expressed confusion as to why the child abuse occurred. One particular participant (PP105), tried to make sense of the abuse he suffered. He explored

potential causes, including his father's own upbringing but ultimately struggled to understand why his father was so violent toward him.

I would understand why he did it (the abuse) but it is kinda hard to understand why.

Some participants demonstrated an awareness around the impact that family violence had on their own pathways to crime, and more specifically, about how they had learnt to become violent.

I told my old man, I spoke to him on the phone when I left. I told him "You fucked my life. I turned out something, I turned out something I wish I never turned out in my life. I turned out to be a person who hits people for money, turned out to do crime to make money. I turned out to be the worst person possible because of you. I blame myself for choosing these choices but it was always your fault" (PP105).

Umm my mum, my dad hit my mum, yeah, really bad. I think maybe that's one of the reasons why, I'm not saying, I'm not being up myself, but I'm a pretty good fighter you know. That's why I reckon because watching that like, you know, punches going everywhere (PP106).

Participant P1103 spoke about the physical abuse he suffered as a child and commented that he thought it had had a profound psychological impact on him. He stated that he felt that he had lost hope and considered that this was one of the main

reasons for his repeat offending and incarceration.

> Umm when I went to foster care I didn't really give a shit because of what happened with me and my step dad and because my mum just watched me get bashed and from there I didn't give a shit. I wasn't….I didn't have hope (PP103).

Another participant also reflected on the psychological impact that the abuse had on him. He commented,

> It makes you not want to live anymore, makes you think my life is worthless (PP105).

4.1.4. Family separation.

Ongoing exposure to, and experiences of, family violence most often led to the separation of the young people from their families. At times, this meant that the young people would have to be removed from their family home, usually through the involvement of the Department of Human Services (DHS), and placed into foster care or residential care leading to what the young people described as further destabilisation and disruption to their lives, particularly their schooling. Removal from the family home however, was sometimes initiated by the young person contacting DHS due to an unsatisfactory domestic situation, or by the parents, who felt unable to manage the young person's challenging behaviour.

For example, participant (PP101) stated that it had been his aggression, frequent substance use and anti-social behaviour that led to his removal from the family home. He stated that his behaviour had become too hard for his mother to manage.

I started stealing from my mum……..my mum got sick of it and I wasn't coming home and I was smoking bongs all day, kicking back really that was it….. She couldn't handle me. It was anger…. very, very angry kid (PP101).

Participant PP102 stated that he had sought Department of Human Services (DHS) involvement as he was no longer happy living at home.

I called the DHS on mum. I told them to move me out of home and went to resi (residential care) (PP102).

Most of the children involved with DHS however reported that their removal had been due to the domestic violence and abuse experienced and witnessed at home.

… like when I was one and half years old, I got taken off my mum and my dad and was put in foster care. I went through four foster care homes (PP109).

One day my dad bashed me and yeah next day I went to school and they kind of called up the police and DHS and from that day on I was involved with DHS and childcare. They tried to take my little sisters away and my step dad sent them to where his dad lives and …….umm I went into foster care with my…..brother's girlfriend (PP103).

However, it is worth noting that family separation did not always involve the intervention of DHS, some participants spoke about their experiences growing up

without a father, and sometimes mother, due to their parents' divorcing or separating when they were children. Almost half of the young people stated that they never really knew their fathers and sometimes their mothers too.

> … umm my real dad split with my mum when I was six years old. Umm I don't know him. I can't remember him (PP103).

> … so um my dad left when I was born and my mum put me in foster care when I was six years old (PP109).

> I grew up without a father so I've never seen my father…Mum hardly talks about him so I can't say much about him (PP113).

As a result of their separation from their parent/s, the young people reflected a lot of anger and hurt over what was perceived as abandonment by their caregivers.

> … and when you think about it, it just makes you angry because like other people had someone to go to as a dad and I never had no one (PP108).

> … it was already struggling (the relationship), strained, because she left me in foster care so I was pretty angry with her for that (PP109).

> I grew up pissed off that my mum wasn't around and like the trouble it was causing to the family because like when she left I could always see that my dad wasn't as happy and my brothers weren't as happy. I wasn't as happy…I started smoking (PP111).

One participant expressed his anger towards his father in quite violent terms during the interview. He said:

I swear to you if I had the chance, if I had the chance to kill him when I was younger, I would have killed him…. I'm telling you I would have killed him. He was one of them people, he scarred me, he scarred mum and he scarred my brother. Fuck, I would have shot him dead. I would have fuckin' laid him on the pavement and killed him. He damaged heaps of people, not just me, heaps of people (PP105).

After being separated from the family, the young people talked about having to take on the role of the caregiver or having to parent themselves.

I just remember I had a lot of pressure on me. Seven years old, fuck, only man in the house…. I used to see my brother once a week and he used to tell me "It doesn't matter you don't need a man, you need to become a man". He was right you know. Now, far out, I go home you know, I go to the shops, I buy everything for the house (PP108).

… and my younger brother had enough because I was taking him to school, I was washing his clothes, I was feeding him, everything, I was doing everything (PP105).

4.1.5. Disadvantage.

Along with domestic violence and abuse, some participants recounted their experience growing up in low socioeconomic, high crime neighbourhoods, in government housing and with financial hardship.

As long as I can remember living in Melville, umm mum and dad were on drugs, fuckin' pretty poor back then (PP104).

I didn't have money. The Salvos, got heaps of shit from there like clothes and beds and shit.

Some participants also reported being homeless at some point in their life. In particular, Participant PP106 spoke about his family being evicted from their home by their landlord and not having a place to stay after that.

I remember I got kicked out of our house, we were homeless for ages. Yeah we were homeless for a long time, I think since I was six to seven years old. (PP106).

Another participant reported that he had run away from home and was living on the streets for three weeks, where he committed crimes and was eventually arrested.

And then me and my mum started having massive arguments and I didn't like it because like she would say all this hurtful shit to me. Then she would say "You're not allowed back into my house" and all this stuff like that. That's when I would run off……… and I'd be walking out on the streets and the longest I'd be walking out in the streets is three weeks….. doing burglaries and stealing shit and stuff like that.

Coupled with violence, separation, experiences of disadvantage further put young people at risk of negative academic outcomes and increased their risk of

offending. Indeed, as summarised in the following sections, the young people went on to describe negative experiences in school and their involvement in crime.

4.2. Negative School Experiences

As a result of the violence and instability the young people reported having experienced in childhood, participants reported difficulty engaging in school and commonly described their experiences of school in negative terms. Subthemes centred around having a disinterest in school, behavioural problems, conflict with teachers, poor school attendance, social isolation, and the need for connectedness and engagement with peers who were of similar backgrounds. In particular, the participants identified range of issues surrounding their disengagement from school, including a lack of interest in school and low engagement in schoolwork. They also talked about having behavioural and learning difficulties and problems managing negative emotions, particularly anger. These factors were reported to have contributed to conflict with students and teachers, further disengagement from school, involvement with peers who engaged in crime, and delinquent behaviour.

4.2.1. Disinterest in school.

Participants expressed a lack of interest in and enjoyment of school. They identified their lack of emotional engagement in school as one of the factors that led to their truancy, absenteeism, general problem behaviour and eventual involvement in delinquent activity.

> … nah I hated it (school)….. I'd always sneak out with my mates and
>
> smoke cigarettes and fuckin' run amok most of the time (PP104).

Some participants identified various school-related factors such as the basic

structure of the classroom, the style and quality of the teaching instruction, and general culture of the school as contributing to their general disinterest in attending school.

> … our school it was fuckin' stupid there was no classrooms it was all open so you would see three other classes where you would sit. Fuckin' yeah it was just shit so I'd go off with my mates and not do work (PP104).

Instead of disengaging from school participant P111 moved schools in order to have a better chance at succeeding.

> It was like a rebel school. Teachers were shit. Students were shit. It wasn't even a school. It was like a resi…there would be no work done and kids would smoke on the playground…..and then l thought this is already getting bad. This is a shit school.... I better move to a better school (PP111).

Whilst moving schools did ultimately lead to an improvement in engagement and academic performance, PP111 reported that his continued contact with a friend from his previous school who was involved in crime, eventually led to his offending.

4.2.2. Behavioural problems.

Coupled with a lack of interest and low engagement in school, participants described a range of behavioural problems in school, including difficulties with managing their anger, conflict with teachers and being involved in frequent fights in school. These behavioural problems often resulted in multiple suspensions and expulsions, which served to further ostracize the young people from the education system.

… always getting into trouble, getting in lockdowns, suspended and fighting with people nearly every day (PP104).

Some participants reflected that their behavioural difficulties may have stemmed from underlying learning difficulties.

… it (school) was good fun I guess …I never did the work. I never used to listen to the teachers. I guess the work was just too hard for me and the teachers used to piss me off so I used to take it out on the students. Just hit 'em, bash 'em, bully 'em (PP113).

I wasn't really good at reading or writing so the teacher wouldn't explain it to me properly and I'd just get annoyed and fuckin' just get angry and run out of the room and fuckin' just start running amok (PP104).

4.2.2.1. Difficulty managing anger.

The young people described their difficulties with anger commencing at a very young age and commented that they had no real opportunity to learn to manage this emotion in more adaptive ways. Instead, they described violence as the main means through which they could express it.

I got to like 8, 9 years old. I started getting angry (PP101).

The role of the family in the modelling of ineffective strategies to manage anger, which often occurred in the context of domestic violence, was also commented upon.

My dad, he has got anger issues as well. I got all that anger from him I reckon (PP106).

These difficulties managing anger often led to broader behavioural problems as well as the difficulties they presented with in school.

… I'd just punch things a lot. I had anger issues. I'd walk out of the class. I'd put dents in the desks, cabinets and all that stuff (PP101).

Participants also acknowledged that their behvioural difficulties and problems managing anger had contributed to their exclusion from school though either suspension or expulsion, which only exacerbated their disengagement from school.

I got expelled from there because I was just angry and I hated it (school) (PP110)

I don't know. I just used to get pissed off very easily. I had a high temper (PP113).

I don't know. I was just bad at school and get angry real quick at people and stressed most of the time (PP104).

4.2.3. Conflict with teachers.

Conflict with teachers was a common sub-theme, which reoccurred throughout participant's narratives around their difficulties at, and disengagement from, school. The types of conflict participants reported with their teachers varied from verbal abuse to physical violence. Some suggested these conflicts related to their frustration with their own academic difficulties. In this regard, one participant talked about an outright rejection of teachers' attempts to help him in school. He stated that he would often respond to attempts to help by the teachers with verbal abuse.

I used to abuse my teachers a lot.…I would tell them to fuck off

whenever they tried to help me (PP103).

Another participant suggested that his learning difficulties and reluctance to ask for help often led him to feel angered and frustrated which resulted in conflict with his teachers.

… teachers wouldn't explain it properly or else I wouldn't know what it is or how to do it properly and I would just get annoyed because I didn't like saying or asking for help. I'd just get annoyed and angry and then they would say something, I would yell at them and I'd just walk out of the classroom and shit (PP104).

Another participant considered his problems with teachers to be a result of the labels that he felt had been attached to him at the school. He made particular reference to this when talking about his behavioural problems in school, saying:

When I was at school there was a lot of problems. Issues with teachers. They didn't trust me because apparently I was a criminal (PP101).

4.2.2. Poor school attendance.

The accumulation of negative experiences participants had in school and their increasing disengagement from education often led them to spend less and less time in school and, consequently, to engage in delinquent behavior (e.g., drug-taking, vandalism) as well as criminal offending. For example:

I hardly went to school. I hardly went. I used to wag school. I used to rock up to school late. (PP113)

… started wagging school, smoking cigarettes, this and that and then umm just started smoking cigarettes. Then in Year 9 I started smoking joints and that's when my life pretty much fucked up. I used to just wag school to go out with girls, smoke up, kick back at houses ………I used to think it's alright. Then umm… I dropped out of school because I thought there is no point of me going if I am just gonna leave. I just thought I'd drop out of school and started getting into crime and doing stuff that I regret (PP108).

… I wasn't going school umm I was doing crime. It involved heaps of fights at school. I was yeah too much wagging and was spending most of my time in here (incarcerated) (PP106).

4.2.3. Engagement with delinquent peers.

Most participants reported forming friendships with peers who also engaged in crime and who were similarly disengaged from school. Most participants spoke about their involvement with these peers as having had an impact on their engagement in education,

One of the participants very specifically indicated that he had been well engaged in education prior to his involvement with a delinquent peer group. He reported that his gang involvement led him to become disengaged from school.

I was happy at this school. I was satisfied with the teachers, satisfied with the students so I was pretty happy there but then I got into the gang and that led to wagging and I didn't really care about school (PP111).

Other participants were not as specific about their engagement levels prior to their involvement with these peer groups but gave detailed responses regarding the influence their peers had on their engagement (which was often through increased truancy, fighting and substance use).

When I got to high school, because I was hanging around with the year 10's they like gave me ciggies and they gave me joints and stuff and smoked. Then that led to having bongs, smoking in bongs a bit more, got in a few fights at high school and then I got suspended and went to Wexely College, for troubled kids that school is. I went there for 6 months because the program only went for 6 months. Then I went back to high school at Burra High and I got into more fights, wagged more, started hanging around other people that stole and stuff like that, started stealing (PP107).

The friends that I had in that school were pretty much all Asians and Australians and I remember one day there was a big fight and my Asian mates had the fight and that's when I had my first fight. I jumped in and we had a group fight, a brawl. From that day everyday I was smoking weed with them, drinking. I wasn't going school, I was doing crime (PP103).

4.2.3.1. Social isolation and need for connectedness

The young people's engagement with peer groups that engaged in delinquency appeared to stem from the feelings of increased social connectedness or belonging that the young people felt within these peer groups. This was usually preceded by social

isolation, hence the establishment of a peer group contributed to the satisfaction of the young person's social needs. A common story among the participants was neatly summarised by one of the boys:

> I had like not many friends. I was always alone at school. Never had friends because I was an angry kid. I could never keep someone close to me. It's like I was always worried if they hurt me then they are gonna hurt my feelings and I don't wanna be hurt in that way (PP101).

Participants described their close bonds with their friends in terms of them becoming like their brothers and family.

> Because you were out in the night you were with your mates you were doing whatever made your mates happy. It was like we were all together it was like a big family (PP101).

> Yeah it's like you want to join this crew (gang) you got to have beef with this guy, this guy, this guy. I just said yeah whatever. I just liked the friends. It's like family. It's like a second family. Like, they are all funny. Hang out. They look after you and you look after them (PP111).

During their narratives, participants reported becoming increasingly aware of the deleterious influences that their (antisocial) friends were having on their involvement in crime but, at the same time, expressed a difficulty leaving these groups or friends due to the strong social bonds they had formed. As a result, they continued to commit crimes.

> 'Cause it's like people you've grown up with people you've known a long time. It's like hard to stay away from them if you are close with

them so it's basically like being with my friends has brang me back in

constantly (PP112).

I had so much fun with my mates over the years. The only thing is I

still look back and reminisce on the days when I was with my mates

having fun to just think we coulda had fun without crime (PP101).

Some participants also reported feeling a sense of belonging and acceptance in peer groups, which they had formed with other young people from within their own cultures or ethnic backgrounds. Engaging with these groups provided participants with an opportunity to establish meaningful connections with others who they felt they could connect with on a social and cultural level. For participant PP105, relating to peers in school was often very challenging. He stated that he struggled relating to others who were from a different cultural background. He reported that he often felt that he did not fit in with the other students in school because of his cultural differences, was often "picked on" for being different and as a result felt socially isolated. He stated that this was one of the reasons he became disengaged and stopped attending school.

That's it. That's how I was in school. I didn't like no one. I didn't

want to speak to no one. I never ever wanted to speak to anyone

because I knew I wouldn't get along with him because he is not my

culture.

… I didn't want to go to school because every kid there would tell me

I look different. I speak different. I am different. They would just tell

me this person is just a different kid and don't hang around with him.

He is a weird person. That's why I never went to school (PP105).

4.3. Delinquency

Participants talked about the various factors that influenced their involvement in crime, including the influence of family, substance use, high crime neighbourhoods, peers, difficulties with emotional regulation and seeking freedom and independence. Participants also identified a number of perceived rewards associated with committing crimes. These are discussed below.

4.3.1. Criminal families.

Most of the young people interviewed identified one or more members of their family who had previously been involved in the criminal justice system. Most often it was the young person's father or older brother.

When my oldest brother got locked up and my dad and my brother, well, my brother was locked up so we used to go court every day for around 2 months. That's all I can remember when I was young, going court cases……I remember my brother was 14 years old and they sentenced him to 11 years in jail (PP108).

And then when I started getting older and older and older I just got introduced to the family. All my family were corrupt. Running businesses here running businesses there and oh fuckin' forging this, forging that. It was corrupt. We're the most corrupt people you will ever meet (PP105).

Participants reported that having criminal family members led to acquiring knowledge of anti-social behaviour and attitudes that condoned crime. They noted that

family members' involvement in crime also provided opportunities for them to become personally involved in crime.

> I called my uncle and I said look I need a job. He's like "Job? You know what I do for a living". I'm like "Yeah I know and I need money and I need it urgently". He got me a job driving, doing getaways, robbing TABs (PP105).

> I remember dad bashing people when I was young. I watched my dad stab someone in the throat and blood just spurted out and then about 2 and half years going on 3, my dad went off he got arrested and mum was in jail at this time for doing a robbery (PP107).

> I guess my brother when he was younger, I don't know, he used to come home late and stuff. He was like me at my age when I was like a little kid. He pretty much did the same thing I'm doing now but he just didn't get locked up (PP113).

4.3.2. Substance use.

Drug and alcohol use was identified as a factor that interfered with the youths' participation in pro-social activities, such as school and leisure and recreation, and also influenced their involvement in crime. As is the case with violence and crime, some of the young people were exposed to substances in the home during their childhood.

> That's all I remembered him (father), he was just always smoking weed with his mates and just always on drugs (PP115).

Umm so my mum had me when she was 17. After she had me, she

got on drugs, like heroin and stuff like that, and my dad was already

using drugs like he was a poly drug user (PP107).

As a result of this early exposure to alcohol and other drugs, participants

reported using substances at very young ages.

Well my drug use, I started smoking bongs when I was nine years old

and haven't stopped. I had my first crack when I was 11 and like yeah,

got hooked on it and was smoking it for three years. Then, I don't

know, when I was 15, I start shooting it and then coming in here I

realised it was stupid. I didn't touch it again (PP109).

In primary school actually, I started smoking pot in about Grade five

and started smoking ciggies in Grade four (PP107).

Participants also stated that they were further influenced by peers to continue to

take substances in social contexts; in these situations they reported that they were often

also exposed to more harmful substances.

Then when I got to high school because I was hanging around with the

year 10s they like gave me ciggies and they gave me joints and stuff

and smoked. Then that led to having bongs, smoking in bongs a bit

more (PP107).

I got umm a mate showed me this thing with um petrol. If you sniff it,

you get off your head and so I started doing that and got real addicted

(PP104).

In this study, the young people who lived further away from the city appeared to be more severely affected by drugs. They described the use of a number of harmful, addictive substances, despite their primary use of methamphetamines, and their eventual substance dependence.

> …..'cause like four months after I moved to Bendly Way like a shard epidemic came to New Port and everyone started getting onto shard when they were going to parties (PP104).

As a consequence of their use of drugs, the young people reported that they then engaged in crime to help support and fund their drug use. These offences often involved a range of acquisitive crimes such as robberies, burglaries and drug dealing. However, some youth also reported that they were committing crime while they were substance affected.

> We robbed a house probably nearly every week, once a week and sometimes like after two weeks or three weeks we'd rob another house and shit and umm yeah I just look back on all the shit I got. I've gotten so many Plasmas and TVs and X-boxes and jewellery and gold just to give it away for weed. It was just a fuckin' waste (PP104).

> I decided I needed a little bit of sleep so I had 4 "Zannies", Xanax but that didn't mix well with the ice (methamphetamines). It caused me to go into psychotic, I had a psychotic episode. I went into psychosis. I robbed IGA and bashed four workers and umm, then I went and robbed a reject shop, bashed a worker there and I bashed like 12 policemen….I can't remember nothing. All I remember is waking up here. Two days later I got out. The judge didn't do nothing about it

because I was drug affected. I was literally in a psychosis (PP104).

Most participants reported the casual social use of cannabis and alcohol and discussed the impact their drug use had on familial relationships. For example, Participant PP102 reported that he became violent when he was unable to obtain drugs and as a result of his withdrawal from substances. This aggression and violence led to problems at home and affected his relationship with his mother.

….started kicking holes in the wall. Just stupid stuff. Yeah I was just

angry when I didn't have the stuff (drugs) (PP102).

Similarly, Participant PP101 commented on his lack of presence at home and lack of involvement in activity, as a result of substance use, as being the cause of his problems with his relationship with his mother.

Umm because my mum got sick of it and I wasn't coming home and

I was smoking bongs all day, kicking back really that was it (PP101).

4.3.3. Perceived rewards for crime.

Participants identified a number of other factors that they thought had contributed to their offending. Participants, typically older offenders aged 15 to 17 years, who committed robbery and violent offences, made particular reference to the excitement and thrill they experienced whilst committing a crime.

Bottle runs, get away with at night but then oh there is security

footage you're screwed umm but from there it was like I started

enjoying it because you got the adrenaline from it, the adrenaline

rush. It was pretty fun when you got the adrenaline rush because you

couldn't stop running because it was so fun (PP101).

Yeah just got hooked onto the adrenaline rush (PP108).

One participant expressed a lack of presence (or an absentmindedness) and forethought and explained becoming consumed by the adrenaline he experienced during his offence.

It is just in that moment pure adrenaline (PP102).

Participants also talked about their desire to make money from crime, another perceived reward for their continued involvement in crime.

I was making big, big money ….I'm telling you the amount of money I was making was un-fuckin-believable. I was making 50 to 60 thousand dollars, I'm telling you, in less than two to three weeks and all that money all in one account. Just shove it all in one account. Then I got too greedy. I got money hungry really bad. I had money but I just got money hungry. I just wanted to get as much money as I can and then I'll stop (PP105).

Started getting too hungry, just doing stupid stuff and got me locked up (PP108).

I like money. I wanted to do more stuff to get money so I started doing robberies and armed robberies and burglaries (PP109).

4.3.4. Emotional regulation and crime.

Another theme that emerged from the interviews involved their difficulty with managing negative emotions. More specifically, participants, across all ages and offence types reported that they would engage in crime as a means of coping with or regulating their negative emotions. For example, one participant talked about negative emotions related to childhood maltreatment, which he thought he could resolve through committing crime.

> I just kept doing it anyway. I thought doing that will make it better but it didn't really fix anything…….both taking the drugs and doing crime. (PP103)

Another participant reflected that his offending was related to his difficulties coping with grief.

> … that was when I started like committing more offences because I was angry…. since the funeral on April 15th…. Assaults on police, umm assault with a deadly weapon, umm robbery as in burglary, theft, theft from a motor vehicle because I just wanted to try and not remind myself. (PP101)

Participant PP115 also reported that his difficulty coping with negative emotions, in the context of his relationship problems, had an impact on his offending.

> Well whichever chick I am with at the time starts doing my head in, been nagging fuckin' whatever, annoying. I just go out and rob people and get on the drugs.

4.3.5. Freedom and independence.

Older participants, typically those aged between 15 to 17 years of age, expressed in their stories the tendency to want to live their life their way and not be controlled or be told what to do. This often led to defiance against authority figures, such as teachers and parents, and sometimes led to crime.

I guess it was, I wasn't in the right place. I didn't like people trying to stand over me. I don't want to look weak to people and then I wagged a lot because I didn't get much freedom because mum wouldn't be home (PP102).

I don't want any of that shit. I don't want any of it. I wanted to live life the way I wanted to and I couldn't so I chose to, I chose to move on with the rest of my life and that was it. That was the end of it bro. I had enough. I had enough. I had enough from everyone…everyone possible. I wanted to do things my way (PP105).

And I didn't want anyone to tell me what to do because I don't listen to no one. I'm very thick headed so I just tell them to fuckin shut up man. I don't listen to no one so in a way I regret not listening to them because I wouldn't have been here speaking here. I would have been on the outside doing something (PP108).

4.3.6. Involvement with peers and crime.

Although peers were described as having considerable impact on young people's disengagement from school, they also had a strong influence on young people's

continued involvement in crime (repeat offending) and incarceration. As a result, peers have been described again as a subtheme under delinquency as a means of reflecting the constant and strong influence they had on these young people's pathways to crime. All of the participants in this aspect of the study reported having peers involved in crime. One particular participant stated that it had been through his peers that he had learned criminal behaviour

> And after that I just started hanging out with older guys. I was 12 or 13 and they were 15 to 17. They taught me how to steal cars stuff like that and I like driving ….. I stole a lot of cars and didn't get done for them. All but the ones I got done for I ended up coming in here (PP109).

Some participants reported that in addition to having peers who engaged in criminal activity, they also had friends who did not engage in crime. One participant explained that his non-offending friends often tried to discourage his anti-social behaviour but he thought that he was already too involved in crime and peers who engaged in anti-social behaviour , and indicated that he had made the choice to continue to engage in crime.

> …yeah I've got a lot of good friends who tried to get me out of a lot of the things I was doing but my friends and what I was doing was two separate things so I used to just go do what I had to do........They used to tell me "No it's not right what you're doing your gonna end up like your older brother". If I stuck to my good mates, the ones who told me to stay out of stuff, stop driving stop doing this, stop doing that, I wouldn't have been here today.

Most participants identified their friends as having had a strong influence on their involvement in crime. Participant PP112, for example, reported that despite his attempts to desist from crime, his strong bond with his friends always led to continued involvement in crime.

> Every time I come out I've like tried to change like to change what I've been doing but it's like at first it seems easy to me but it gets harder every time so I just end up doing the wrong thing again and just come back in....'cause it's like people you've grown up with people you've known a long time. It's like hard to stay away from them if you are close with them. So, it's basically like being with my friends has brang me back in constantly.

Participant PP114 noted that it was his older friends who tried to pressure him to engage in crime because they perceived him to be more susceptible to peer pressure.

> I've had older mates as well like not just my age. I've had mates in their 25s and I've kicked it with them. It's alright in a way and it's shit in a way. Like I've kicked it with a 25-year-old criminal. They think 'cause you're young they can put it on ya'. Like "Go do this and we'll help you out".

Some participants minimised the impact that their peers had on their involvement in crime. They stated that offending was ultimately their choice and that their friends had no influence over their offending.

Nah no one encouraged me. I just got up off my feet one day and

thought enough is enough and I'm gonna start (PP108).

One participant, who was adamant that his peers had no influence over his offending, recognised that it may have been him who was influencing his friends to engage in crime.

They are my mates. They are not the ones influencing me. They don't

make the decisions for me. I make my own. If anything, I influence

them (PP115).

4.3.7. Neighbourhood and crime.

Young people reported living in what would be considered low-socioeconomic and high-crime neighbourhoods, which they felt were not ideal environments for them to grow up in. They identified their neighbourhood as a factor that increased their likelihood of meeting peers who were involved in criminal activity and being exposed to, and engaging in, crime. For example, while participant PP113 stated that he lived in area with a high incidence of crime and acknowledged it was not an ideal area in which to live, both Participant PP103 and PP106 reported that it was in these neighbourhoods, that they first became acquainted with peers who engaged in crime.

Gerfield Place was not that good because that is where people that

migrated from other countries came from…… it wasn't really a

good place to live in. It's just young teens like me now like getting

into trouble and stuff, fighting, stealing things like that (PP113).

I got involved in crime by going to bad places like Surrey Bay where

my brother used to hang and met a couple of my brother's old mates.

All they ever did was steal cars and rob shops and one day they asked

me if I can come and yeah I said yes (PP103).

… and umm that's when we got here and I went to Hansley stayed in a

hotel in Hansley and you know that's a bad suburb as well now. Yeah

that night I needed to smoke so I walked to Hansley. I didn't know

where I was going nothing, seen a big pack of Sudanese

boys........They were like "Yeah kick back, have a drink, you know.

We'll go out go robbing tonight, you know. Go rob someone, get

money". I was like "Yeah mad" you know (PP106).

4.3.8. Reputation and respect

Participants also talked about gaining popularity among their peers and having a

reputation within their community through their involvement in crime. This was

perceived by youth as positively reinforcing and may be interpreted as youth taking on

what could be referred to as a criminal identity. Interestingly, this theme recurred

among mainly older offenders, aged 16 to 17 years, who are likely to have had more

extensive criminal histories, and as a result may have been more known for their

criminal activities in their community.

A lot of people hear about me, know me, like a lot of people in the

community….I'm very popular on the outside. Everybody knows

me. Everybody knows me (PP108).

I guess I just kinda got addicted to the name I get. It's like another drug. People know you for a sick cunt fuckin' funny cunt. It's just a good feeling to be recognised by people (PP104).

Participants also reported that the reputations they gained through their antisocial behaviour had also gained them "respect". They stated that others respected them because they feared them.

My fighting I've got a good reputation for that as well and um so people respect me (PP107).

People treat me with respect because they know if they don't they will get fucked up (PP115).

4.4. Incarceration

Towards the end of their narratives, participants talked about their incarceration and the time it gave them to reflect over their past actions. This reflection involved the participants thinking about the past across many aspects of their life, including relationships with family, friends and schooling but more particularly their involvement in crime. These discussions often tied into themes of regret over their offending and remorse for the crimes they had committed. These themes were common across all participants, regardless of their age and nature and extent of their prior offending.

4.4.1. Reflection.

Participants talked about having a lot of time to think and reflect whilst they were locked in their rooms. They commonly reflected on their offending, past mistakes

and the lessons they learnt from their mistakes. In particular, Participant PP108 reflected over his offending and past mistakes and he explored the alternate pathways he could have pursued. He made particular reference to his schooling and how this may have averted his offending.

It's 5 ½ months. I've had a lot of time to think about the things I could have done right. I should have stayed in school but you know you got to learn from your mistakes and this is my mistake and I learnt from it (PP108).

Participant PP102, through his reflection, was able to attribute his offending to his immaturity.

I've had a lot of time to think about what I've done and it's stupidity and immaturity (PP102).

As participants reflected upon their offending and incarceration, they reported that they often felt regret. Some participants spoke with regret about their offending and in wasting years of their childhood in custody while others spoke about regret over disrupted relationships and missing quality time with family.

Umm I look at it and think I wasted all my childhood. Like it's been three years now since I've been coming in and that. I reckon about eight months all up I've been out so yeah I've spent pretty much three years in here. I could have done something else, something better (PP103).

And I regret doing all of that because I missed quality time with my mum and now I'm going back to home when I get out which is good. I regret doing all the crimes that I done because I wasn't in the right place. I wasn't in the right headspace at the time because I was just locked out of home thinking I could do what I want and I'm disgusted with myself because I done it (PP102).

Participants also reported feeling remorseful about their crimes. Some participants, in discussing their remorse, spoke about moving on from their past mistakes while others reflected over what purpose their offending served for them. This helped participants make sense of their behaviour and manage their feelings of guilt.

Yeah I feel bad for it but all you can do is move on get up and do something different, you know, instead of that (PP106).

I know what I did to him was wrong. I put the gun in his mouth and told him to give me the money, but either way, it's the only way I could have lived (PP105).

Some participants were more selective with respect to feelings of remorse, and reported feeling remorseful only for crimes that involved victims who were perceived not to have wronged them.

Most of the assaults I don't really care because like they fuckin' hit me first or stabbed me so like in my head they deserve it. For the ones that don't deserve it, I do feel bad for a little bit (PP107).

If it is someone that I like and it is something stupid I will feel

bad but if it someone that's starting shit I won't feel bad (PP109).

4.5. Self-concept and Self-esteem

Most participants did not describe themselves in negative terms. They were able to separate their offending behaviour from their sense of self-worth and sense of who they are but reported that others often assigned negative labels to them because of their offending. For example, PP106 reported that while others viewed him as a bad person, he did not view himself in this way even though his behaviour was wrong.

Some people say I'm a bad, bad person for what I did…. I shaped

myself not as a bad person but doing that to innocent people you know

is pretty bad (PP106).

Similarly, Participant PP108 described himself positively and did not associate his sense of self with his offending but nevertheless expressed regret over his offending.

Who I am today? I done this. I don't regret a thing I've done but I

regret the crimes I've done because that's not me. I'm not that type of

person. I'm a good kid (PP108).

Some offenders spoke about devaluing school because it was not congruent with their sense of self, often stating that they felt "too cool for school"

I didn't really like school. I thought I was too cool for school. I was

wagging. I just wasn't going to school at all (PP103).

I used to…skip school 'cause I don't know I just thought it was cool

back then (PP108).

A strong sense of self-reliance and resilience were also prominent features of the self-concepts of young people in this study. Their stories centred around overcoming adversity and learning to become self-sufficient in the absence of their caregivers. This ultimately shaped their identity.

Just made me realise that I'm really independent….Yeah just made me

more of a man really (PP110).

I taught myself how to do everything because I never had anyone else

to teach me (PP109).

However, participants emphasised that their story was unfinished and hoped for change as they no longer wanted to live a life of crime. This theme will be discussed in more detail below.

4.6. Hope for Change

Participants typically ended their stories with a sense of hope for the future. They talked about learning from their mistakes and wanting to make what they described as a change for the better.

I want to change now and become a better person because I want to become a better person for my family too…..It's been a journey with some rough patches. Just all the stupid stuff I've done. I've learnt from it and I'm ready to move on (PP102).

…you just have to pick up, you have to move on that's what I've done. I've moved on but I don't want to be that person that pulls the trigger one day and kills someone, someone's sister, someone's daughter you know (PP106).

…just made me realise that I don't want to go back to that life that I've been going to or that I have done (P111).

The young people presented goals and plans to stay away from crime when they were released. These plans involved education, employment and pursuing careers in sport.

Go back up to Queensland, get into school, play rugby league, find a job up there, stuff like that (P111).

I want to play AFL and get out play a lot of football and get into the scouts…..you know keep going to school, teach my little brothers and sisters different from what I did, make my mum and dad proud (PP106).

I'm just gonna get out and work, save and buy a house, become a full

tradie and earn a lot of money and once I earn a lot of money, I'll buy

a business. And the Mrs…. (PP114).

4.7. Analytic Summary

In summary, five broad themes emerged from the narratives of the young people interviewed for this study. These themes were unstable childhoods, negative school experiences, delinquency, incarceration and hope for change. Within these themes, participants talked about their experience growing up in violent, chaotic, unstable homes, in families struggling with issues with violence, substance abuse and socioeconomic disadvantage. Participants also described negative school experiences in which they struggled with a range of academic and behavioural difficulties and rejection by their peers, leading them to eventually disengage from school. Whilst already at-risk of offending, participants acknowledged that their increasing educational disengagement and poor attendance in school further increased their risk of engaging in antisocial and criminal activities. Participants also identified a number of other factors they felt had contributed to their involvement in crime and their eventual incarceration. At the time of incarceration however, their stories reflected a sense of regret and remorse, which ended with hope for change and a different way of life. A discussion of these findings with respect to how they relate to the literature and the quantitative results of the study will be presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

This study used a mixed-methods research design to examine the relationship between self-concept and the educational engagement and delinquency of an Australian sample of young male incarcerated offenders. Consistent with recommendations by Creswell and Clarke (2011), the study used a convergent mixed methods research design in which both qualitative and quantitative research methods were weighted equally and implemented concurrently during one phase of data collection, and where both qualitative and quantitative strands of data were kept independent during analysis and mixed during the overall interpretation. The use of a mixed methods design in this study allowed the student researcher to bring together a comprehensive account of the self-concept of young offenders, through the use of a range of validated quantitative questionnaires and an examination of the life stories of young offenders through qualitative investigation.

Consistent with the study's hypotheses, results showed that aspects of temperament and character, self-esteem, self-efficacy and early maladaptive schema were all related to self-concept and suggest that the self-concept may be the product of an interaction between certain self-beliefs, temperament and character. As expected, the results also revealed that young offenders' self-concepts were associated with educational engagement. Their beliefs about themselves (general self-concept) as well as specific beliefs about their academic ability (academic self-concept) and behavioural conduct (behavioural self-concept) were associated with educational engagement. Additionally, the results indicated that young offenders' general beliefs about their capabilities (general self-efficacy), their self-esteem, their propensity to be hardworking, determined, and persistent (persistence), socially tolerant, empathetic, helpful, and compassionate (cooperativeness) and maladaptive beliefs about their need

to excessively surrender control to others despite their own feelings, needs and desires (subjugation) were also moderately associated with educational engagement (*r*s ranging from .31 to .59) .

Furthermore, as predicted, self-concept was associated with delinquency, specifically, young offenders' general self-beliefs, and specific self-beliefs in both the academic and behavioural domain. In addition, temperament styles marked by the propensity to be hardworking, determined, and persistent (persistence) were moderately associated with delinquency.

Whilst the quantitative findings helped to provide an understanding of how young offenders' self-beliefs and personality characteristics, as measured by common psychological tests, were related to each other and to their educational engagement and delinquency, the qualitative findings provided a context for understanding how self-beliefs developed (e.g., through academic failure or negative childhood experiences). The qualitative findings also identified a number of additional factors that contributed to young offenders' disengagement and delinquency and therefore provide a more in-depth understanding of the relationship between the self and educational engagement and delinquency. In particular, young offenders identified a number of familial, social, school and individual factors they felt had contributed to their disengagement in school and involvement in delinquent acts. They also talked about their incarceration and their hope for change, which often included a desire to re-engage in education.

In line with the study's research design, this chapter will begin with a discussion of the quantitative and qualitative findings separately and then provide an integration of these findings. The implications of the findings will then be presented and followed by a discussion of the limitations of the study, and possible directions for future research.

5.1. Discussion of Quantitative Findings

5.1.1. The interrelationship between self-concept and other measures of self.

Given that both theory and research suggest that self-esteem, self-efficacy, personality and early maladaptive schema all influence self-concept and limited research has investigated the interrelationships between these constructs, a critical primary aim of this study was to examine their interrelationships. Consistent with past theory and research (Broidy, Nagin, Trembaly & Bates, 2003; Buhs, 2005; Lopez, Cruz & Rutherford, 2002; Marsh, 2007), associations between self-concept, temperament and character, self-esteem, self-efficacy and early maladaptive schema were anticipated. In line with the study's hypothesis, the findings revealed associations between self-concept and all of the self-concept related constructs. More specifically, the findings showed that young offenders who hold more positive general beliefs about themselves, including more positive general self-appraisals (high general self-concept), higher levels of self-esteem and general self-efficacy. They also tend to have more well developed mature characters marked by the propensity to be autonomous, purposeful (high self-directedness), compassionate, empathetic, tolerant and accepting of others (high cooperativeness) and temperaments characterised by the tendency to be more optimistic, carefree, outgoing (low harm avoidance), determined, perseverant and hardworking (high persistence). Individuals with temperament and character typified by low harm avoidance, high persistence, cooperativeness and self-directedness have all been found to be associated with more positive outcomes including academic success (Moreira et al., 2009), job performance (O'Connor, 2011), and overall psychological well-being (Nima, Archer & Garcia, 2012). Therefore, a possible explanation for these findings is that individuals with these temperament and character profiles tend to have more positive experiences and receive more positive feedback about the self across different

life domains, and therefore develop more positive self-beliefs. Whilst young offenders did not present with low levels of persistence or cooperativeness, they reported high levels of harm avoidance and low self-directedness. They also presented with low academic self-concepts and behavioural self-concepts. The quantitative findings revealed that young offenders with low self-concepts in these more specific academic and behavioural domains, who perceived themselves as less behaviourally adjusted (low behavioural self-concept), and who lacked confidence in their academic ability (low academic self-concept), also held a range of other negative self-beliefs. More specifically, they also perceived themselves as more emotionally unstable, perceived themselves as failures, had low self-esteem and self-efficacy and also had a temperament and character typified by low persistence and low cooperativeness. Young offenders with positive academic self-concepts on the other hand reported an overall sense of wellbeing, perceived themselves as popular with peers, expressed general satisfaction with their physical appearance, had higher levels of self-esteem and general self-efficacy, had high persistence and cooperativeness, tended to be responsible, reliable, resourceful and goal-oriented and did not describe feeling overly controlled by others.

Consistent with Young and colleagues' (2003) schema theory, and previous research investigating the relationship between temperament and negative self-beliefs (Atalay et al., 2013; Halvorsen et al., 2009), it is possible the young offenders' negative self-views may develop through an interaction between their temperament (which is largely heritable or biological) and negative early life experiences. Although this study is cross sectional and causation cannot be determined, it is possible that particular temperamental styles (e.g., low persistence and low cooperativeness and harm avoidance) may predispose young offenders to more negative outcomes and elicit more

negative experiences and responses from others. This may then foster the development of negative self-views which persist into adolescence and influence school engagement and delinquency. While temperament may have an influence on the development of negative self-views, negative self-views may not necessarily develop if the child's environment is optimal (Atalay et al., 2013; Young et al., 2003). For example, a safe and emotionally warm home environment might make a shy child quite friendly in many situations; alternatively, if the early environment is rejecting, even a sociable child may become withdrawn. The same is true for young offenders in this sample who may have had temperaments characterised by the tendency to be compassionate, empathetic, tolerant and accepting of others (high cooperativeness), determined, perseverant and hardworking (high persistence) but were reared in environments that lacked nurturing or were cold and rejecting. It is therefore important to understand how negative self-views develop in the context of both temperament and early life experiences. Prospective studies are of course necessary to determine the relationship between temperament, its interaction with environmental factors, and their subsequent relationship with educational outcomes and delinquency. The qualitative findings of this study also provide insights into these relationships, helping to understand how temperament and negative childhood experiences may have influenced the development of negative self-views. These findings will be discussed and integrated with the quantitative findings later in this chapter (See section 5.2 and 5.3).

Furthermore, the quantitative findings also provide insight into the relationships that exist between self-concept and other self-concept related constructs (e.g., self-esteem, self-efficacy, and schema). Results of the correlational analysis suggest that the self-concept may arise from an interaction between temperament and experience. It may also be argued that the overlap that exists between the self-concept and related

constructs reflects the presence of a higher order construct or broader construct of self, which consists of a range of both general and domain specific self-beliefs and personality characteristics. These beliefs and characteristics likely interact with and influence each other in very specific ways (as the findings of this study revealed a very specific pattern of relationships among different personality and temperamental variables and facets of the self-concept). It clear that the self-concept has a complex relationship with a range of other self-beliefs that young offenders hold about themselves.

5.1.2. Relationship between self-concept, educational engagement and delinquency.

The next aim was to examine the relationship between self-concept, educational engagement and delinquency. It was hypothesised that the self-concept and related constructs would be associated with both educational engagement and delinquency. As expected, results showed that participants who were more educationally engaged had more positive general self-appraisals (e.g., had high general self-concepts, high self-esteem and self-efficacy) whereas participants with low general appraisals were less educationally engaged. The results also showed that young people who expressed confidence in their intellectual abilities and who had higher levels of self-esteem and belief in their general capabilities were also more educationally engaged. They reported more positive feelings toward school, their teachers and peers (high emotional engagement), were more actively involved in academic activities and school based and extra-curricular activities (high behavioural engagement) and put more effort, control, and persistence into accomplishing tasks (high cognitive engagement). Consistent with past research, the quantitative results suggest that individuals with high academic self-

concepts may be more educationally engaged because they are more intrinsically motivated to do well in school (Green et al., 2012; Hamacheck; 1995), tend to have better relationships with their teachers, have a greater sense of belonging in school and have more positive attitudes toward school (again, it is important to note that the findings presented here are correlational and do not reflect causal relationships). As discussed in section 5.1.1 of this chapter (p.169), individuals with both high general and academic self-concepts also tended to have high levels of self-esteem and self-efficacy, all of which have positive associations with educational engagement. More specifically, prior research has suggested that individuals with higher levels of self-esteem and self-efficacy were more likely to persist with schooling despite low grades and potential setbacks, and to use various learning strategies and put more effort into completing tasks and as a result are more educationally engaged (Finn & Rock, 1997; Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2003).

Contrary to the study's hypotheses, self-esteem was not associated with cognitive engagement. One possible reason for this unexpected finding is that students' evaluations of their self-worth are not directly related to the motivation, effort, and control they put into mastering skills and knowledge in the school setting. Instead self-esteem may have a more direct impact on their feelings toward school, teachers and classmates (emotional engagement) and involvement in academic and school based activities (behavioural engagement). The findings of this study, along with those of previous research (Linnenbrink & Pintrich, 2003), indicate that, it may be students' self-efficacy and their beliefs about their academic ability (as opposed to self-esteem) that have more influence over cognitive engagement.

Additionally, results revealed an association between behavioural self-concept and educational engagement. This is a novel finding as past studies have typically

focused on investigating the relationship between academic self-concept and engagement or have used measures that do not incorporate scales that assess the behavioural self-concept. However, one may speculate that because the self-concept is assumed to guide behavior, young offenders' awareness of their behavioural problems, or perception of their behavioural maladjustment, perpetuate behavioural difficulties in school, including conflict with peers and teachers, and as a result disrupt academic progress and engagement in school.

Additionally, associations between young offenders' temperament and character and their educational engagement were revealed. In particular, associations were found between propensities to be helpful, compassionate and tolerant (cooperativeness) and feelings toward school. The tendency to be hardworking, determined, and persistent (persistence) was associated with engagement across all domains, such that a young person with high persistence reported feeling more positively toward school, teachers and peers (emotional engagement), was more involved in academic activities and school based and extra-curricular activities (behavioural engagement) and applied more effort, control, and persistence, and used various strategies, to accomplish and master tasks (cognitive engagement). This may be because in community samples, persistent individuals tend to have higher cognitive abilities, experience academic success (Moeira, et al., 2009) are often overachievers, have high levels of enthusiasm (Cloninger et al., 2012), work harder, do not give up easily and are willing to make major sacrifices for success (e.g., good grades). Buhs (2005) added that cooperative individuals are also more likely to be intrinsically motivated to do well in school, are more likely to have positive relationships with their peers and may be seen as more capable and desirable partners for cooperative tasks in the classroom. Young offenders who possess these characteristics are therefore much more likely to experience success

in school and remain engaged in education. Those low on these characteristics however, have the propensity to give up quickly or are easily discouraged and tend to underachieve.

Results also showed that individuals with high levels of self-directedness, who have an increased propensity to be resourceful, responsible and reliable, were also more behaviourally engaged and that those who had the tendency to be more spiritual, creative and intuitive (high self-transcendence) had higher levels of cognitive engagement. This may be because highly self-directed individuals are more open to and are more likely to, encounter new learning experiences and are more likely to be intrinsically motivated to do well in school (Tanaka et al., 2009) and are therefore more active in their participation in school-based activities. Individuals with high levels of self-transcendence may be more likely to use a larger repertoire of cognitive strategies to accomplish and master tasks and may therefore be more psychologically invested (or cognitively engaged) in their learning. In this sample, young offenders reported lower levels self-directedness and self-transcendence as well as lower levels of behavioural and cognitive engagement.

With regard to early maladaptive schema, subjugation was found to be associated with overall educational engagement and all subdomains. In other words, students who felt that they were excessively submitting control to others and suppressing their own desires and feelings were less educationally engaged. This is consistent with previous research, which has indicated that students feel more educationally engaged when their autonomy is supported in the classroom (Jang, Deci & Reeve, 2010; Reeve, Deci & Ryan, 2004; Reeve et al., 2004). Individuals who endorse early maladaptive schemas, which reflect impaired autonomy and who often

feel over-controlled by others, are therefore likely to feel less engaged in school and may require more autonomy support from teachers. As hypothesised, general self-concept and academic self-concept were also associated with delinquency. Results also revealed an association between behavioural self-concept and delinquency. These findings are similar to Pisecco and colleagues' (2001) findings, and those of Vermieren and colleagues (2004) and suggest that individuals' self-referent cognitions may affect their behaviour. In particular, young offenders who perceive their behaviour as problematic may be more likely to engage in problem behaviour (including antisocial behavior). Similarly, young offenders who lack confidence in their academic ability, when placed in challenging academic situations, may be more likely to exhibit maladaptive helpless response patterns (Dweck & Legget, 1988). In particular, when faced with a potential failure situation, they may adopt a defensive style that includes devaluing the task, expressing contempt and defiance, which may lead to aggression and anti-social behavior (Dweck & Legget, 1988). Another explanation is drawn from Reputation Enhancement Theory (Emler 1984; Emler & Reicher, 1995), which posits that individuals select a particular self-image they want to promote in front of an audience of peers and this audience provides feedback so that the individual maintains this social identity overtime. As a result, in order to maintain a non-conforming reputation, a young person may reject tasks that are inconsistent with their non-conforming self-image.

Contrary to the hypothesis that self-esteem and self-efficacy would be associated with delinquency, no statistically significant association was found. Whist there is mixed research regarding the link between self-esteem and offending, the current findings are inconsistent with previous studies that have revealed a link between self-esteem and offending (Pervan & Hunter, 2007; Oser, 2006; Bushman et al., 2009;

Ferriday, Vartanian & Mandel, 2011). These results also conflict with previous research that has demonstrated an association between self-efficacy and delinquency. Consistent with Andrews and Bonta's (2010) RNR model, however, self-esteem and self-efficacy may be better thought of as non-criminogenic needs, which may have an overall impact on the well-being of the offender, but have no direct effect on offending. However, as self-esteem and self-efficacy were associated with other measures of the self that were related to offending it may be that they have a more indirect effect on offending (discussed in more detail in section 6.1.3).

The findings also revealed a negative association between persistence and delinquency. This is consistent with past research, which has found associations between low persistence and delinquent behaviour (Schmeck et al., 2001). It is possible that low persistence may predispose young offenders to delinquent behaviour because it represents characteristics of irresponsibility, lack of planning and poor emotional regulation (Hare, 2003). However, in contrast to past research (Cloninger et al., 1994; Fritz et al., 2008; Tremblay et al., 1994), high novelty seeking (reflecting frequent exploratory behaviour, impulsive decision-making, a quick loss of temper, active avoidance of frustration, and usually lower behavioural inhibition) and low cooperativeness (reflecting deficits in empathy, and hostile, aggressive, and hateful attitudes) were not associated with delinquency. This may be because in this sample, the young offenders were not high in novelty seeking or low in cooperativeness (as compared to non-offenders) and therefore these factors may not have been directly related to the offending of this sample of young offenders.

It was also hypothesised that there would be an association between educational engagement and delinquency; this hypothesis was supported. However, delinquency

was associated with behavioural engagement and emotional engagement but was not significantly associated with cognitive engagement. This is consistent with recent research by Wang and Fredericks (2014) who argued that the lack of association with cognitive engagement might be because cognitive engagement is more strongly related to academic outcomes rather than problem behaviour. Other authors (Archambault et al., 2009) have suggested that manifestations of behavioural disengagement may be more proximal to problem behaviour and may be a consequence of cognitive disengagement. Furthermore, this study's results are consistent with Wang and Fredericks (2014) as they revealed an association between past delinquency and subsequent educational disengagement. In line with previous research (Hirschfield & Gasper, 2011; Wang & Fredericks, 2014), this finding may also indicate a bi-directional relationship between delinquency and educational engagement. In other words, while poor educational engagement may lead to delinquency, involvement in delinquency may in turn, lead to disengagement from education. Future research is needed to determine the causal direction of this relationship.

Overall, the findings of this study suggest that young offenders' general self-perceptions (including general self-concept, self-esteem and general self-efficacy) as well as domain specific beliefs about their academic ability and behavioural conduct are all associated with educational engagement and delinquency. Young offenders' temperaments were also associated with both outcomes, suggesting that they may be born with particular predispositions that in turn render them vulnerable to negative outcomes, such as disengagement from school and offending. However, character and self-concept develop as a result of a relationship between temperament, the family environment and life experiences. In this sense, both inherited and environmental

factors influence young offenders' self-beliefs and these self-beliefs in turn affect educational engagement and involvement in delinquency.

5.1.3. The impact of the self-concept on educational engagement and self-reported delinquency.

As individual factors, the self-concept and related constructs were found to be associated with educational engagement and delinquency. Results also indicated that together, academic self-concept, subjugation, persistence and general self-efficacy, accounted for over half of the variance in educational engagement. These findings demonstrate a cumulative effect that various self-beliefs have on the educational engagement of young incarcerated offenders. Although these variables significantly predicted overall educational engagement when considered together, academic self-concept was the only variable that uniquely predicted variance in overall educational engagement. This suggests that there is something unique about a young person's perception of their own academic ability, which accounts for their educational engagement regardless of their levels of self-esteem, self-efficacy, persistence, and the presence of early maladaptive schema. In accordance with multidimensional models of self-concept (Marsh & O'Neil, 1984; Shavelson, Hubner &Stanton, 1976), perhaps this finding is due to the domain specificity of academic self-concept in tapping into a young person's beliefs about their academic ability compared to other scales, which assess more general self-beliefs and personality traits.

With respect to engagement domains, behavioural self-concept, academic self-concept, persistence and general self-efficacy together accounted for over a third of the variance in behavioural engagement. Again, academic self-concept was the only variable that uniquely predicted variance in behavioural engagement. Similar findings

were obtained for the emotional engagement scale. Behavioural self-concept, academic-self-concept, persistence and subjugation together predicted half of the variance in emotional engagement. However, along with academic self-concept, persistence uniquely predicted variance in emotional engagement. This suggests that it is not only a young person's beliefs about their own academic ability that uniquely predicts emotional engagement, but their temperament and more specifically their persistence, also has a specific impact on their feelings towards school.

Academic self-concept, subjugation, persistence and self-transcendence accounted for just under half of the variance in cognitive engagement. Self-transcendence was however the only variable that uniquely predicted variance in cognitive engagement. As noted previously, this may be because self-transcendent individuals are more likely to use a larger repertoire of cognitive strategies to accomplish and master tasks and may therefore be more psychologically invested (or cognitively engaged) in their learning.

Results also revealed that academic self-concept, behavioural self-concept, persistence and subjugation predicted over a third of the variance in delinquency. Although together these variables predicted self-reported delinquency, no one variable individually predicted delinquency. This finding may be due to the significant overlap that exists between each of these variables, which may mask their significance as individual predictors. It may also be the case that these variables predict delinquency only when combined but not individually and that there are other more important predictors (e.g., substance use history, family or mental health factors) of delinquency. Furthermore, although these findings indicate that young offenders' self-cognitions predict variance in delinquency, this does not suggest that they are causally related to

offending. Instead, it may be that the self-concept is associated with other correlates and causes of crime (e.g., educational engagement, poor academic achievement).

In summary, results support the idea that self-concept, educational engagement and delinquency are related. In particular, results highlight the important role that self-concept has in combination with a range of positive self-beliefs and temperament traits in keeping young offenders engaged in education. Of these, the academic self-concept is a particularly important predictor given its domain specificity, and is therefore likely to have a unique impact on educational engagement as opposed to more general self-beliefs. Whilst the findings do indicate that young offenders' self-cognitions and personality traits also predict variance in delinquency, they do not suggest that they are causally related to offending. In order to establish casualty, these factors need to be studied longitudinally among a range of other familial, individual, social, community and cultural factors. The findings do, however provide some insight into how young offenders' individual characteristics, including their self-cognition and personality characteristics affect both their involvement in crime and engagement from education.

5.2. Discussion of Qualitative Findings

This study also explored the narrative identities of young incarcerated offenders as a means of gaining an in depth understanding of young offenders' self-concepts and the relationship between self-concept and educational engagement. In doing so, narrative interviews were conducted with 15 participants. These interviews were analysed for common themes rather than for the generation of specific case studies. Whilst young people revealed idiosyncratic views of self, values and personal experiences, some features were common across participants. More specifically, the young people in this study identified a number of individual, social, familial and school

factors that they felt contributed to their disengagement from school and their offending. Young people also spoke about their incarceration, the impact that it has had on them and their hope for change.

5.2.1. Factors which contribute to the educational engagement and delinquency of young offenders.

Analysis of the young peoples' narratives identified numerous factors that contributed to their educational disengagement. Participants described a number of school level factors, such as the socioeconomic level of the school and their overall school and classroom environment (e.g., high rates of anti-social behaviour, size and arrangement of the classroom) as having an impact on their level of disengagement. This is consistent with previous research that has also linked the socioeconomic level of the school (Gemici & Lu, 2014) and the classroom environment, including the physical setting, psychological characteristics, class size and arrangement of seats with educational engagement (Blatchford, Bassett & Brown, 2011; Guardino & Fullerton, 2010; Reyes et al., 2012; Persaud, 1999; Wright, 1991). As such, these findings are consistent and unsurprising. They do however add to the extant research base and suggest that school-level characteristics contribute to young offenders' educational disengagement. In particular, the findings indicate that young people who may not be provided with a positive learning environment with the necessary resources to support them within the classroom and broader school context may struggle to remain engaged in school. However, it is important to note that there was a range of other risk factors and a lack of protective factors that were also raised by participants in the qualitative study.

Conflict in the teacher-student relationship was also a common feature of the narratives of the young offenders. In particular, the young people described negative teacher-student relationships, which often involved verbal and physical aggression towards teachers; many said these poor relationships contributed to their disengagement and behavioural problems in school. This is consistent with prior research which suggests that negativity in the teacher-child relationship, including conflict and dependency, is a significant predictor of disengagement and poor academic achievement (Bergin & Bergin, 2009; Davis, 2003; Murray, 2009; Pianta et al., 2003; Roorda et al., 2011), behavioural problems (Hamre & Pianta, 2001; Murray, 2009) and overall school adjustment (Hamre & Pianta, 2001). As such, these findings provide support for previous research that has identified the teacher-student relationship as crucial to the educational engagement and behavioural adjustment of young people in school. The findings reinforce the need for young people to feel safe, respected and connected to their teachers in order to remain engaged in school.

The young people in this study also spoke about peer rejection and social isolation as factors associated with their disengagement in school and involvement with peers who engaged in crime. This is consistent with previous research that has shown that children who have been socially rejected are more likely to cluster into peer groups that promote anti-social behavior and are more susceptible to the influence of these peers (Dishion et al., 2008; Snyder et al., 2010). Their involvement with this peer group appears to have provided the young people with a sense of connectedness that also increased their propensity toward substance use and delinquent activity, which further impacted their education. Increasingly, these young people spent more time out of school, either seeking or using substances and engaging in crime. They also spent less time in pro-social extra-curricular activities (e.g., sport). This is consistent with previous

studies which have shown that children who are rejected by their peers, who experience more loneliness and social isolation, and who affiliate with more disaffected peers are themselves more likely to become disaffected with academic activities and eventually leave school prematurely (Buhs, 2005; Juvonen, 2007; Sage & Kindermann, 1999; Wentzel, 1999). They also attend school less frequently, receive poorer grades, and report that their parents or adult caretakers are less involved in their schoolwork (Croninger & Lee, 2001). As such, these findings suggest that peer relationships have a key influence on the level of educational engagement young people experience in school.

Young people in this study also reported difficulties with attachment relationships, which they attributed to abuse, abandonment and separation from key caregivers in childhood. This is particularly important as parental attachment has been shown to have an impact on a young person's engagement in school (Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Shochet, Smyth & Homel, 2007). Attachment difficulties may have contributed to the conflict participants experienced with teachers. This is consistent with previous studies that have shown associations between the teacher-student relationships and parent-child relationships (Lynch & Cicchetti, 1997; Murray, 2009; Ryan, Stiller, & Lynch, 1994) and suggests that students may be re-enacting or replaying past (parental) relationships with their teachers. Parental attachment may therefore act as a template for the construction of new relationships with the teacher and may influence how connected young people feel with adults within the school environment.

Affect regulation is also shaped by the parent-child relationship; parents model emotional expression and affect regulation techniques in their interactions with their child (Gillion et al., 2002). Young people reported that their difficulties managing anger often contributed to emotional and behavioural problems in school. Prior research

suggests that students experiencing emotional and behavioural problems are also at heightened risk of negative relationships with teachers, are not as well liked, and are perceived as less socially competent by both teachers and peers (Eisenberg et al. 1995, 1997; McDowell et al. 2000; Murray, 2005)

Participants also pointed to their academic difficulties as a potential cause for their behavioural problems. They reported that the labels teachers, parents, guardians used to describe them (e.g., "criminal") also influenced the way they perceived themselves and that this exacerbated their behavioural problems. This is consistent with symbolic interactionist and labelling theories (Becker, 1934; Cooley, 1902; Mead, 1934) in which the individual's self-concept is seen as a reflection of their perceptions about how they appear to others or the labels that are ascribed to them.

In summary, the qualitative findings extend this study by identifying a number of additional factors that contribute to educational disengagement. In particular, school characteristics, conflict in teacher-student relationships, attachment difficulties, poor peer relationships and social isolation, problems managing anger and behavioural problems in school all appeared to contribute to disengagement.

Consistent with previous research, educational disengagement was associated with the young offenders' involvement in delinquency (Archambault et al., 2009; Brookmeyer, Fanti & Henrich, 2006; Hirschfield & Gasper, 2011; Li et al., 2011). However, in this study, participants identified a number of criminogenic needs, which had an impact on their education as well as their delinquency. In other words, they identified a number of common factors, which have been shown to be strongly associated with both delinquency and poor academic outcomes. These included low parental attachment, substance use, affiliation with peers involved in crime, and poor affect regulation. They also identified a range of academic, social, and behavioural

difficulties experienced in school (as described above) which led to their disengagement, truancy, increased absenteeism and an increase in criminogenic needs; this included involvement with peers who engaged in delinquency and increased substance use that then contributed to their involvement in crime. The progression from school disengagement to delinquency therefore appears to be contingent on a number of other factors and is not solely the product of disengagement, since not every student who disengages from school will offend. However, the results do suggest that school disengagement is important and does expose youth to a greater risk of offending.

It is worth noting that the young people in this study also identified a number of additional factors that influenced their anti-social behaviour. In particular, the need for autonomy was identified as having led to defiance, aggression and offending. This is consistent with research that has demonstrated a link between a need for autonomy and violence (Brezina, 2008). Material or monetary gain was also identified as a perceived reward for acquisitive crimes (theft, armed robbery and drug trafficking/selling). The "adrenaline rush" or thrill, was also reported by some participants as an important cause of their criminal behaviour.

5.2.2. Self-concept, hope and intervention.

Across all of the interviews completed, resilience and self-sufficiency were prominent features of participants' life narratives. Young people referred to themselves as resilient individuals who had endured extreme childhood adversity, including domestic violence, child abuse, family separation, multiple foster care placements and homelessness. They also referred to themselves as self-sufficient individuals who for the most part, had to take care of themselves in the absence of a stable or present caregiver or father figures. Additionally, some young offenders reported taking on a

criminal identity. This was particularly prominent among the older offenders who were likely to have had more extensive criminal histories, and as a result may have been more known for their criminal activities in their community.

Consistent with Reputation Enhancement Theory (Emler 1984; Emler & Reicher, 1995), these young offenders talked about wanting to maintain an image or reputation for their offending in order to uphold their status among their peers and in the community. In line with past research (Abrams & Hyun, 2009), respect and a sense of personal power or status among peers tended to reinforce young offenders' criminal identities.

Interestingly, some offenders also spoke about devaluing school because it was not congruent with their sense of self, stating that they were "too cool for school". This is consistent with Peixoto and Almeida (2010), who showed that individuals who experience academic failure tend to devalue their school competencies in academic self-concept domains. These findings are also consistent with the quantitative findings and highlight again how life experiences shape self-concept, and self-concept influences behaviour.

Despite their common background of disadvantage and acquisition of a criminal identity, most participants reported a sense of hope for change. Hope seemed to stem from having time to reflect on their past with regret and/or remorse for their behaviour during their time in detention. Instilled in this hope for change was a desire not to relive their parents' mistakes as well as their own past mistakes and the desire to be a role model for their siblings and their children. Some young people went as far as describing plans to stay away from crime and a desire to re-engage in education to pursue educational and vocational goals.

Maruna (1997) describes these types of stories as redemptive scripts in which the individual "openly acknowledges their mistakes and claims to view their lives from a new vantage point" (p.88). These particular stories are characterised by a belief that the individual has agency, the ability to take control of their own life, make choices and achieve goals, and a strong belief in this possibility even though it represented a change from their former criminal lifestyle. According to Maruna, the development or construction of a new "reformed" identity, which involves cognitive re-appraisals of past (criminal) identities (often through the generation of these redemptive scripts), is an important element of the process of desistence from crime.

It was not clear whether particular supports or interventions were in place to help these young people develop these redemptive scripts or whether the young people were acting in a way within the institution that would enable these new goals. It is noteworthy that intervention, or support for change was not a significant part of the young people's narratives. Instead, they reported receiving multiple suspensions and expulsions in school, which were apparently ineffective in addressing their underlying problems and may have further excluded them from school and related pro-social peers and activities, thus putting them further at risk of offending. Indeed, past research has suggested that school suspensions are significantly associated with the likelihood of subsequent antisocial behaviour (Hemphill et al., 2006).

During their custodial sentences, the young people engaged in change talk (language that is used to convey a desire, ability, reason, need or commitment to make a change) and demonstrated a preparedness to change. This may be an ideal point for intervention to strengthen the young person's commitment to change, to help him or her to make a firm decision about change, to develop a realistic plan for making a change

and to take steps toward change (e.g., re-engaging in education, involvement in drug and alcohol counselling) that will help address risk factors (Miller & Rollnick, 2013).

In summary, the qualitative findings provided a context for understanding how the life experiences of young offenders influenced their negative self-beliefs. They also highlighted the importance of a number of additional factors that have been shown to predict educational engagement and delinquency. In particular, participants identified a number of school, familial, social and individual factors which contributed to their poor educational engagement. The qualitative findings also illustrated how young offenders' educational disengagement, amongst a number of criminogenic needs led to their involvement in crime. The findings also demonstrated how change talk and changes in identity (from criminal identity to identities that involved reform) might be an important part of desistence process.

5.3. Integration of the Findings

The use of a mixed methods research design facilitated a more comprehensive account of the self-concept of young offenders, through the use of validated quantitative questionnaires and an examination of the life stories of young offenders through qualitative investigation. Several key findings emerged upon integrating data from the quantitative and qualitative studies. Perhaps the most striking realisation was the need to understand the context in which young offenders' negative self-beliefs develop. Although the quantitative findings helped to understand the self-concept of young offenders and its relationship to various self-concepts, offending and engagement, a more comprehensive understanding of the self-concept was derived through understanding young offenders' life experiences through the qualitative investigation. In particular, results from the quantitative investigation revealed that young offenders'

general self-appraisals (general self-concept) as well as their beliefs about their academic ability (academic self-concept) and behavioural conduct (behavioural self-concept) were significantly associated with their educational engagement and past delinquency. Findings from the qualitative investigation provided an important context for these findings by illustrating how negative experiences in school, including academic failure and conflict with teachers and peers, played an important role in shaping the academic self-concept and subsequent academic achievement and educational engagement. Similarly, the qualitative findings illustrated how young offenders' behavioural difficulties experienced in school may have shaped their behavioural self-concepts (or their negative perceptions of their behaviour). The qualitative findings revealed that these self-perceptions were influenced by the labels (e.g., "little devil", "criminal") used by parents, guardians, teachers and other school staff to describe the young people. These labels, once incorporated into the self-concept, may exacerbate behavioural difficulties and contribute to disengagement and delinquency. The self-concept in this sense is both a reflection of the individual's own interpretation of their experiences (which is guided by temperament and past experience) and their experience of how others perceive them or the feedback they receive about the self in the social context. Once these experiences are incorporated into the self, they guide the individual's behaviour. In other words, the individual behaves in a manner that is congruent with their sense of self (which is in part a reflection of how they think others perceive them).

The qualitative findings also help to understand how negative childhood experiences influence the development of young offenders' negative self-views. Whilst other influences such as peers, school, community groups and the surrounding culture become increasingly important as the child matures and may lead to the development of

schemas or negative self-beliefs, negative childhood experiences are the primary determinant of early maladaptive schemas (Young et al., 2003). In this study, young offenders described childhood experiences that involved abuse, neglect, parental or family separation and instability. In response, they endorsed schemas in the disconnection and rejection (abandonment and emotional deprivation) and other directedness domains (subjugation and self-sacrifice). According to Young and colleagues (2003), individuals who endorse schemas in the disconnection and rejection domain often have traumatic childhoods and come from unstable, rejecting, abusive and cold families. As a result, these individuals also tend to believe that their needs for stability, safety, nurturance, love and belonging will not be met and will struggle to form secure satisfying attachments to others. Individuals who endorse schemas in the other directedness domain place emphasis on meeting the needs of others in order to gain approval or avoid retaliation. They come from families based on conditional acceptance and in which parents prioritised their own emotional needs above those of the child. These experiences are consistent with the childhood experiences that the majority of young offenders in this study described in their life stories. It is unsurprising then that young offenders hold these negative self-beliefs and report difficulties forming relationships with peers and teachers in school (which all affect educational engagement). Consistent with this, the young people in this study identified their need for autonomy as having an impact on the student-teacher relationships. More specifically, participants expressed the tendency to want to live their life their way and not be controlled or be told what to do. This often led to defiance against authority figures including teachers. The quantitative findings also revealed that a young person's belief that they must excessively submit their own desires, feelings and opinions in order to avoid anger, conflict and abandonment (or their early maladaptive schema

relating to subjugation), which is the opposite of autonomy, was associated with educational engagement. As previously discussed, these findings are consistent with prior research revealing a relationship between autonomy and both educational engagement and delinquency (Brezina, 2008; Jang, Deci & Reeve, 2010).

Participants indicated that experiences of child abuse and parental separation in childhood influenced their involvement in crime, through either a sense of lost hope, the modelling of violence in the home, and anger related to abandonment. However, this finding was not supported by the quantitative findings; no significant association between the abandonment schema and delinquency was detected. It is worth noting however, that this association approached significance and that possibly the lower statistical power achieved with the sample recruited contributed to this null finding. Similarly, while the young people reported that their need for autonomy, which when not met, had an influence on their aggression and involvement in crime (often as a result of defiance and rebellion), the quantitative results suggested no statistical association between subjugation and delinquency. This is in contrast to previous research that has demonstrated a significant relationship between autonomy and delinquency (Brezina, 2008). The finding may be partly due to the poor reliability of the study's measure of subjugation with this sample ($\alpha = .42$).

The qualitative findings validated the quantitative findings with regard to the relationship between the academic and behavioural self-concept. In particular, across narratives, the young people pointed to their academic difficulties as a potential cause of their behavioural problems. This may be because experiences of academic failure may elicit feelings of anger and frustration, leading to aggression and behavioural problems, interrupting learning and academic progress in school, and fostering the development of negative behavioural and academic self-concepts. Alternatively, it may be that the

behavioural problems that lead to poor academic outcomes and foster the development of these negative self-views. Future research is needed in order to resolve this uncertainty and determine the nature and direction of this relationship

The qualitative findings also confirm the quantitative findings relating to the relationship between educational engagement and delinquency. While the qualitative results demonstrate how initial disengagement from school leads young people, who already present with an increased risk of offending to become involved in crime, the quantitative results revealed an association between past delinquency and subsequent educational engagement. In this sense, the qualitative and quantitative findings together provide support for past research that identifies educational engagement as a risk factor for delinquency. Consistent with Andrews and Bonta (2010) Risk Need Responsivity Model the qualitative findings indicated that young offenders presented with a number of risk factors which ultimately culminated in their offending. Whilst educational engagement is an important risk factor for offending, interventions are not likely to significantly reduce the likelihood of offending by focussing solely on this one risk factor. Other problematic areas within the person's life will also require attention (e.g., peers, substance use, leisure activities, and family problems).

In summary, the combined quantitative and qualitative findings provide evidence that indicate a relationship between the self-concept and the educational engagement and delinquency of young incarcerated offenders. The qualitative and quantitative findings are generally consistent; the qualitative findings in particular have also provided a value-adding context for the quantitative findings, highlighting the importance of numerous additional factors that are associated with educational disengagement and delinquency. Young people identified a number of school, family, social and individual factors that contributed to their poor educational engagement, and

illustrated how their disengagement, amongst other criminogenic needs contributed to their involvement in crime.

5.5.4. Implications

This study's results are consistent with the Risk-Need-Responsivity Model (Andrews & Bonta, 2010), in which offending is viewed as the result of the cumulative effect of various criminogenic needs as opposed to the product of any one risk factor. Whilst the findings signal the importance of educational engagement as a risk factor which increases the likelihood of offending, a number of criminogenic needs were identified in this study as having influenced young people's crime. As such, and in line with the work of Andrews and Bonta (2010), the findings highlight the need to target various criminogenic needs in order to reduce the likelihood of re-offending. The findings also suggest that self-concept may be important target for intervention. According to Maruna (1997), self-concept change or identity re-construction is an important part of the desistence process. Assisting young offenders construct new "reformed" identities (Maruna) may be an important treatment consideration. Self-concept (specifically general self-concept, academic self-concept and behavioural self-concept) may therefore be a particularly important treatment responsivity factor that may need to be incorporated into interventions designed to rehabilitate young offenders.

The results of this study also contribute to the limited research base that has examined the relationship between self-concept and educational disengagement and delinquency in Australian young offenders. More particularly, the findings contribute to the growing evidence that suggests that young people who disengage from school are more likely to offend. These findings therefore reflect the need for interventions specifically designed to improve the educational engagement of vulnerable or at risk

young people as a means of preventing them from becoming involved in crime. However, the findings also have implications for young people who have already disengaged from education and are involved in the criminal justice system.

In Victoria, Australia, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD, 2009) requires that every school have a Student Engagement Policy that promotes student engagement. However, little guidance is provided regarding the specific teaching and learning strategies or programs schools should use to engage students. Further, there are no evaluations of the efficacy of the current engagement programs that are being implemented in schools or information that is publically available describing different schools' strategies. As such, there is some question around what schools are doing and how effectively schools are implementing programs designed to engage students, especially for those who are identified as at risk of disengagement.

Consistent with current policy guidelines (DEECD, 2009) the results of this study suggest that efforts to engage youths in education should involve prevention and intervention efforts at the individual, social, familial and school level. In line with this, a recent systematic review of school connectedness programs conducted by Chapman and colleagues (2013) supports the efficacy of whole of school approaches to improving engagement. The current study provides insight into the impact that individual factors, such as the self-concept have on the educational engagement and delinquency of young incarcerated offenders. In particular, the results suggest that at the individual level, interventions that aim to improve educational engagement should target students' self-concept.

These interventions could begin with the identification of students at risk of disengaging from education. Currently Victorian schools use the Attitude to School

Survey and Student Mapping Tools to assess students' levels of engagement. These tools contain items pertaining to a range of factors related to engagement (e.g., academic, motivation, academic confidence, teacher relatedness, and school safety), a limited number of items relating to engagement and risk indicators that identify a student's risk of disengagement. However, they do not provide detailed information regarding students' levels of engagement across different engagement domains (emotional, behavioural and cognitive engagement) and other domains of self-concept which this study shows, have a relationship with engagement, is not assessed.

Some research has shifted focus to early warning signs or basic indicators of disengagement as a means of identifying young people who have started to disengage and are at risk for dropping out of high school and engaging in delinquency (Heppen & Therriault, 2008; Neild et al., 2007). Risk indicators include course failure (i.e., failing a school subject), poor attendance, low grade point average, low achievement on standardized test scores and school suspensions. These risk factors are similar to items included in the Student Mapping Tool or which can be obtained through school records. This may be an alternative and a more objective and economical method that schools can use to measure students' risk of disengagement. Students who demonstrate low levels of engagement could then be invited to a discussion with either their teacher or student wellbeing officer, who could enquire further into the student's history, current functioning and school experience in order to determine what additional factors could be contributing to their overall disengagement. Students at risk of disengagement could then be included in programs that target the factors contributing to their low levels of engagement. The intensity of intervention should vary according to the risk factors present and student's level of engagement, which can be determined by measures administered pre and post intervention. At this stage, it would seem important to move

beyond indicators of academic and behavioural engagement as measures of overall engagement and to incorporate assessments, which capture the psychological and cognitive needs of the student or cognitive and affective dimensions of engagement. Use of these measures pre and post intervention will allow schools to evaluate the efficacy of their engagement programs.

While it must be acknowledged that the recommendations stated here do not arise exclusively from the results, the results of this study highlight particular issues which may be targeted using specific, evidence based approaches or interventions. Specifically, interventions to enhance school engagement could include:

- Programs that aim to help vulnerable/at risk students improve their academic ability. According to Snow (2016), improving students' academic ability can lead to improvements in self-efficacy, engagement and reduced problem behaviour. Snow holds that improving academic achievement requires a shift in teaching practices, particularly for children and young people at risk of disengagement and who may be underperforming in school. More specifically, she argues that a shift from the use of whole language based instruction to direct instruction or systematic synthetic phonics instruction is needed to support youth to progress academically. Whole language based approaches operate on the premise that children learn to read naturally largely through literacy experiences and exposure to books (Moats, 2007). Using these approaches, children read books aloud until they can repeat the language and read by "…osmosis, imitation, memorization" (Moats, 2007, p.19) but are offered little direct teaching with regard to reading words or learning language. Through systematic synthetic phonics instruction, children are taught letter sounds and are then shown how these sounds can be blended together to build up words (Johnston & Watson, 2005). Extant evidence

shows that direct instruction is the most effective method of teaching reading (Johnston & Watson, 2005; Rose, 2006). In 2005, the Australian Government (Department of Education, Science and Training, 2005) also conducted its own research with the National Inquiry into the Teaching of Literacy and concluded that whole-language approaches to the teaching of reading were not in best interests of children and that children's literacy progress would be significantly impeded in the absence of systematic phonics instruction. A change in teaching practice may therefore be particularly important for students who struggle academically using whole language based instruction. Indeed, evidence exists that indicates that children from low socioeconomic communities derive a particular benefit from using direct instruction (Roy & Chait, 2013). Snow holds that Response to Intervention (RTI; Justice, 2006) is a promising evidence based model, which aims to prevent academic difficulties through the application of high quality instruction across three tiers: Tier 1, reaching all children regardless of their backgrounds and the early identification of students in need of more frequent instructional support in small groups at Tier 2, and involving specialist intervention to an even smaller group of young people who require one to one services (Tier 3). She argues that teachers may therefore need additional training in order to deliver direct instruction at Tier 1 and that specialised services (which may involve the support of a speech and language practitioner) might be required for children identified at Tier 2 and Tier 3.

- Cognitive behavioural interventions (CBT), which aim to challenge young people's negative self-appraisals (i.e., beliefs about their academic ability and sense of self-worth). The evidence suggests that cognitive programs are more

effective compared to affective and other programs (e.g., academic programs) in enhancing self-concept (Hattie, 2014), with average effect sizes equal to .47. Programs that solely focus on achievement are less effective in enhancing self-concept due to small covariation (or common variance) between the two constructs. As such, programs, more directly related to the self are needed to improve self-concept and educational engagement. CBT programs are based on the notion that negative self-talk occurs as a result of negative thoughts and feelings about oneself and one's characteristics. In these interventions, young people are assisted to identify negative self-talk or negative thinking patterns (through a process of self-monitoring) and then challenged to come up with an alternative or more balanced way of thinking about the self (also referred to as cognitive restructuring). For example, a student who thinks, "I can't complete this task because I am not smart enough" may be challenged to come up with a more balanced thought "I may be struggling with this task but that does not mean that I am not smart enough. I just need to keep trying until I get it right or I need to ask for help". Interventions conducted in educational settings have also been shown to be less effective (average effect size .36) compared to interventions conducted in other settings such as student counseling services or psychology training clinics (average effect size of .50). As such, schools may need to consider running these programs externally, after school or in a space that is not associated with schoolwork, academic performance or tied to achievement related expectations. CBT interventions need only to be targeted to students with low self-concepts. People with positive self-concepts (even if they are disengaged) appear to be resistant to the effects of these interventions. The potential to increase self-concept is also much larger for groups considered to be 'at risk'. It must be noted

however that pre-adolescents experience greater difficulty with change in response to these interventions due to their limited capacity for cognitive reasoning. Schools may also need to consider incorporating an evaluation process by which they can measure changes in self-concept. Self-concept measures, appropriate to the age and cognitive level of the student, can be administered both pre and post intervention to determine the impact of these interventions.

- In most schools, about a third of students will not develop secure attachment patterns, usually as a result of inconsistent, neglectful, unskilled or harsh and abusive parenting. Some of these children will come from chaotic backgrounds which lacked nurturing or may have been marked by domestic violence, parental substance abuse and family separation or multiple changes of carers. These experiences may affect how young people respond to teachers and other students and how they engage and behave in school. As such, an understanding of these difficulties from an attachment perspective and the use of attachment-oriented strategies addressing students' attachment difficulties may be required to help students remain engaged and succeed in school and to buffer the negative effects of familial risk factors. According to Kennedy and Kennedy (2004), this involves the recognition of students' behaviours as a reflection of their inner experiences and relationship history. It also involves teachers understanding how their own attachment styles or internal representations interact with the child's and how this may affect the relationship they form with students. This typically occurs with the assistance of a school psychologist, who first assesses the student's attachment style, through knowledge of the student's relationship histories and risk factors (e.g., child abuse, neglect, separation) and how the student currently relates to

others in school. This attachment-based assessment provides insight into the student's current behaviour within the context of the school and assists with the development of individualised intervention strategies. For example, an avoidant adolescent may anticipate rejection and therefore may present as disinterested and uninvolved, to defend against this anticipated rejection. He or she may find it difficult to trust teachers, may focus attention on the task and not ask for help when needed. A shared focus on the task however, may help students avoid asking for help (a situation in which they anticipate rejection from the teacher). Over time, this helps student to experience the sensitivity of the teacher to their anxiety, begin to feel understood and feel more confident to ask for help once trust is established (Geddes, 2006). School psychologists can support and guide teachers through this process, helping them understand their students, their own attachment styles and the strategies that best support students' attachment needs in the classroom. These strategies are described in further detail in Geddes (2006), Bergin and Bergin (2009), and Kennedy and Kennedy (2004). According to Kennedy and Kennedy (2004), it is important for teachers to establish close relationships with their students and care for them with warmth, respect and trust. They argue the quality of the teacher student relationship is one of the most important variables affecting educational engagement. According to Bergin and Bergin (2009), this is especially important for at-risk students whose teachers may potentially be their only positive and supportive adult role models. Teachers therefore have a unique opportunity to help students foster positive representations of themselves and others.

- Interventions targeting behavioural problems that focus on teaching students how to manage anger and negative emotions. Whilst these interventions are typically administered by school psychologists, either through one to one counselling or group programs, again psychologists can work collaboratively with teachers to help them assist students manage their anger in the classroom. Universal programs delivered in classroom settings to the entire class of students (often implemented in school in low SES and high crime neighborhoods) as well as selected programs that target particular students have been shown to be the most effective programs in reducing disruptive or aggressive behavior (Wilson & Lipsey, 2007). There are no differences in the effectiveness of different treatment modalities (behavioural, cognitive, social skills) of programs (Wilson & Lipsey, 2007). It is also important that teachers learn and practice effective, non-coercive behavioural modification strategies and that schools develop practices and interventions which help address a young person's difficulties. Teachers who use coercive discipline to control students' behaviour in the classroom do not effectively address the issues underlying the behaviour, may damage the teacher-student relationship and ultimately contribute to disengagement from school (Bergin & Bergin, 2009). Furthermore, harsh disciplinary practices which involve multiple suspensions and expulsions risk further marginalising and disempowering youth, thereby putting them at an increased risk of offending (Hemphill et al., 2006). Consistent with the literature, educational psychologists recommend the use of a number of effective classroom behavior management approaches including contingency management (reinforcement), ensuring students feel safe, secure and valued, managing setting conditions and promoting autonomy. They also emphasise the importance of child/young person focused

approaches and a focus on effective and appropriate language and communication (see Hart, 2010). It may be beneficial for teachers to receive support and to undergo professional development that will assist them to further develop their skills in managing challenging and disruptive behaviour in the classroom.

- The results suggest that it is also important for teachers to foster positive relationships between students in the classroom. This may be achieved by building a strong sense of community in the school and creating a caring classroom climate that encourages cooperation between students and opportunities for students to help and care for each other (Bergin & Bergin, 2009). This may also be achieved through teachers modelling respectful relationships and openly praising or reinforcing prosocial behaviour in the classroom (contingent praise). A large research base supports the efficacy of contingent praise (Ferguson & Houghton, 1992; Simonsen et al., 2008; Wheldall, 2013). Contingent praise leads to reductions in inappropriate behaviour and increases the amount of time students spend on tasks or are appropriately engaged (Sutherland, Wehby & Copeland, 2000). Despite this, contingent praise is used minimally to reinforce students behaving appropriately across classrooms in the UK and Australia (Wheldall, 2013). Wheldall argues that contingent praise for appropriate classroom behaviour should be expressed in a ratio of three to four times more than disapproval for inappropriate behaviour.

- Educational institutions may also need to ensure that they are providing students with a supportive and safe educational environment. Within the broader school context, this may involve schools' active involvement in providing a safe and

secure, structured school environment that minimises students exposure to additional risk factors (e.g., substance use, exposure to violence and anti-social behviour) (Morrison & Kirby, 2010). Within the classroom setting, this may include changes to the physical setting (class composition, class size, seating arrangements) and the social/psychological setting (e.g., teacher support, student-to-student relationships, management of disruptive behaviour, communication of goals and expectations). Schools could also aim to develop partnerships with external welfare or support services, which may assist in providing counselling and family mediation and address issues associated with family violence, parental alcohol and drug use and parental incarceration (Kirby & Keon, 2006; Welsh, Domitrovich, Bierman & Lang, 2003) and develop practices which help to involve families in education (Morrison & Kirby, 2010).

In summary, interventions designed to prevent delinquency should include components that promote engagement in school. These could involve efforts to improve teacher-student relationships, and build caring school communities as well as efforts to increase parental involvement, monitor problematic peer influences, promote positive behaviours and foster a positive sense of self.

5.5. Limitations of the Study

Although this study has revealed some important findings, a number of methodological limitations, which may limit the generalisability of the results, must be acknowledged. The most significant limitation involved the study's sample size. The student researcher encountered a number of challenges, including frequent centre and unit lockdowns, timetabling clashes with centre programs, high staff turnover, staff

unavailability to supervise interviews, limited time available to build rapport, length of interview, and participant burden and release, which prevented her from recruiting the desired number of participants (n = 100) at the Parkville Youth Justice Precinct within the study period.

The study was impacted in a number of ways due to the modest sample size achieved. First, it restricted the types of quantitative analyses that could be conducted with the available data. In particular, it restricted the number of variables that could be entered into multivariate models and therefore limited the study's capacity to examine the potential influence of all individual factors, which were found to be associated with educational engagement and delinquency. Secondly, it limited the power of the regression analysis, increasing the study's likelihood of a Type I error. The results obtained from the regression analyses should therefore be interpreted with caution.

A second limitation involved the study's use of multiple and lengthy assessment measures which not all participants were prepared to sit through, or were able to complete. This resulted in a significant amount of missing data for two of the study's measures – the Temperament and Character Inventory and Young Schema Questionnaire-Version Three. As missing data were missing completely at random, this was dealt with using pairwise deletion. One of the limitations of using pairwise deletion is that it may increase the chances of Type II error. The findings of this study must therefore be interpreted with this in mind.

Third, it must be noted that the Subjugation (α = .42) scale on the Young Schema Questionnaire demonstrated poor reliability. The utility of this scale with this particular population is therefore questionable and further research exploring its reliability with young offenders is recommended before it is used in clinical practice.

It must also be noted that as a large number of multiple comparisons were made in the correlational analysis, there is a higher likelihood that a Type I error was made. As a result, the student researcher has applied a Bonferroni correction to adjust for the multiple comparisons. While in such cases it is appropriate to take a conservative approach by adjusting for multiple comparisons using a Bonferroni correction, applying a stringent p value (.0001) to all correlations following this approach increases the likelihood that a Type II error will be made (particularly in cases where a large number of comparisons were made) (see McDonald, 2014). Given that this is an exploratory study and due to concerns about the inflation of the Type II error rate, the student researcher has applied a Bonferroni correction and included the corrected table in Appendix Six (p.291) but retained the original table in the body of the thesis (which was used for subsequent regression analyses), noting here the limitations associated with this approach. In particular, it should be noted that after applying the correction some of the variables included in the regression analyses became insignificant in the correlation matrix. The results should therefore be treated as preliminary and further research using a larger sample will be required to confirm these findings

Additionally, as a number of questionnaires were used in this study, a measure of cognitive ability or literacy was not included so as to not overburden participants. As a result, it is possible that the relationship between the academic self-concept and educational engagement was overestimated as neither literacy level nor cognitive ability were controlled for in the regression analyses.

Furthermore, the researchers were denied access to participants' formal records of criminal history in spite of protracted negotiations with the relevant Human Research Ethics Committees. As such, delinquency was measured via self-report. One of the limitations associated with using self-report measures of delinquency is that they may

not provide an accurate estimate of a young person's true levels of delinquency. It is possible that participants in this study either over- or under-reported their levels of delinquency, for example, it is more likely that participants who were recruited on remand units underreported their levels of delinquency given that they were still awaiting their court appearance. As such, the study's proxy measure of delinquency may not have been accurate.

Another limitation of this study relates to the exclusion of females due to the very limited number of young females incarcerated in Victoria. Whilst males comprise the majority of the population of young offenders in Victoria, these findings are not necessarily generalisable to female young offenders. Finally, due to time constraints and lack of feasibility, this study was not able to employ a comparison sample. The lack of a comparison sample hinders the capacity to examine the similarities and differences in the self-concept of offenders and non-offenders.

In spite of these limitations, the study added to our understanding of the relationship between self-concept and educational engagement and delinquency and has a number of implications for educational practice in both custodial and non-custodial settings.

5.6. Directions for Future Research

In light of the limitations described above, future research should investigate the relationship between self-concept and educational engagement and delinquency with a sample of female offenders. This will allow for the examination of potential similarities and differences in the self-concept and educational engagement of young female offenders and any potential differences in the link between self-concept, educational engagement and delinquency. This research would also help inform and tailor academic

interventions to suit the needs of female offenders, which may differ from those of male offenders.

Furthermore, future research could also examine potential differences in the self-concept of offenders and non-offenders. This will help understand whether young offenders' self-beliefs differ from young people with no criminal history who are not resident in a secure setting. This research may also guide interventions that aim to improve the engagement of young people who are at risk of disengaging from education but have not become involved in crime.

5.6. Conclusion

This research provides evidence for a relationship between self-concept, educational engagement and delinquency in a sample of Australian incarcerated young offenders. More specifically, these findings highlight the important role that the self-concept, in combination with a number of self-beliefs and temperament and character traits has in keeping young offenders educationally engaged. However, the findings also indicate that young offenders' temperament and character traits and self-concept also predict delinquency, suggesting that the self-concept may be a key variable linked to the overall adjustment of a young person and not just their educational outcomes. The self-concept may therefore be a relevant factor for interventions specifically designed for young offenders. This seems particularly important given that identity change has been linked to the desistence process.

It is important to note that the findings here do not suggest that these variables are causally related to offending. In order to establish casualty, these factors need to be studied longitudinally among a range of other established psychological, biological and environmental risk and protective factors. Although it may be that the self-concept is

detecting the variance of other correlates of crime, the causal mechanisms underlying the relationship between self-concept and offending were not explored in this study but could be the focus of future research.

Finally, the findings of this study suggest that the self-concept has a complex relationship with a range of personality traits and other self-beliefs that young offenders hold about themselves and therefore can be better understood in the context of these self-beliefs or within a broader theoretical model of self. They also provide some insight into how young offenders' life experiences contribute to development of their negative self-beliefs, which may render them vulnerable to educational disengagement and crime.

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Appendix 1. Participant Explanatory Statement (Plain Language Statement)

PARTICIPANT EXPLANATORY STATEMENT – PARKVILE COLLEGE STUDENTS

PROJECT TITLE

The impact of self-concept on the educational engagement of incarcerated young offenders

This information sheet is for you to keep:

My name is Rana Abou-Sinna and I am a doctoral student completing the Doctor of Psychology at Swinburne University. I am conducting a research project with Associate Professor Pamela Snow, Professor Michael Daffern and Professor Stuart Thomas. Professor Daffern is from Swinburne University; Associate Professor Snow and Professor Thomas are from Monash University.

In conducting this research project, we would like to know how young people view and understand themselves. This is known as self-concept. It is related to how you define who you are. Self-concept has been shown to be related to how connected or engaged young people feel in school as well as how they perform academically. Not everyone engages well at school and this may affect their academic performance and vice versa. This may be related to the different self-beliefs that young people hold about themselves.

Young people who become involved in the youth justice system were often not happy at school and left early, often after struggling in class. We hope to understand how self-concept impacts on young peoples' difficulties engaging with school, and how the self-concepts' of young people in the community differ from the self-concepts of young people detained in youth justice settings.

Therefore, to investigate this relationship we are inviting young people from youth justice settings and young people from the community and local schools to participate in this study.

The aims to this study are to:

1. Understand the kinds of things young people think about themselves in relation to getting ahead at school**,**

2. Explore how young offenders' ideas about themselves differ from those of young people not in the youth justice system, and

3. Explore how young offenders understand meaning in their lives through the stories they tell about things that have happened to them

Possible benefits

You might find taking part quite interesting, but we don't expect you will get any special benefit out of taking part in the research. However, this research project may help schools to better understand how the self-concept of their students can affect how they feel about being at school and how well they learn.

It is hoped that this project will assist educational staff to refine relevant aspects of their programs, particularly the educational programs at Parkville College in the Parkville Youth Justice Precinct, and also to clinical staff working with the young people in custody, so that these young people may leave custodial settings with an improved self-concept and a better prospect of continuing education outside of those settings.

Possible risks

There are minimal risks involved in taking part in this research. You will be asked some personal questions about your childhood experiences and social experiences and how these have affected your view of yourself. Talking about this may make you feel uncomfortable. However, you do not have to answer questions that make you feel uncomfortable and you may stop the interview at any time, if you are not happy to keep going. If you become upset, we will arrange support for you straight away by linking you in with a clinician from the mental health team.

What does the research involve?

The research involves a semi-structured interview in which you will be asked some questions about your social experiences. You will then be asked to complete a series of questionnaires (with help if you need it), which will help us to understand your self-concept.

Another part of the study asks for only twenty young people to also participate in a narrative interview, which will be audiotaped. The narrative interview requires you to tell your "life story'. I may ask questions in between to help to understand your story. You may not have to participate in this part of the study.

How much time will the research take?

We expect that the interview will take between one to two hours. The interview will be conducted in a format that will allow you to take short breaks when required and can occur over more than one session if required.

A further two hours will be required for the twenty young people who participate in the narrative interview. This interview will take place on a separate day to the initial interview.

Exclusion criteria

Given the nature of this research project we will not require young people to take part in the study if they have (i) an intellectual disability as identified by the educational institution, which prevents them from giving informed consent (ii) are experiencing an acute psychotic or depressive episode or were substance intoxicated (ii) or are aged less than 14 years or above 18 years.

Can I withdraw from the research?

You do not have to agree to take part in this study. Taking part in this study is voluntary and you are under no obligation to consent to participation. You may withdraw your consent at any time during the interview or for four weeks afterwards, by contacting the researchers. If you withdraw your consent for any reason you can also ask that all the information collected about you will be destroyed and no longer used in the study.

Confidentiality

When we publish the research findings we will not identify you in any way. Identifying information will be stored in a secure location and will be separated from the research database. To protect the confidentiality of your data we will give you a special code and the key to this code will be stored in a locked cabinet at the Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science. Only the named researchers will have access to information that can identify you. Your name and the key linking names to codes will be destroyed after the study has been finished.

You are under no obligation to disclose information that you do not want shared. If you disclose any information that makes us concerned for your safety or someone else's safety we may need to share this information with parent or guardian and school counsellor. We are also legally required to disclose your information if we are ordered to do so by a court. In any of these cases, we will tell you about the court's request.

In the unlikely event that any harm to you arises from taking part in the study, this
will be reported as soon as possible to staff, so you will receive support that you need. I will
also notify supervisors of the project in accordance with Swinburne University rules.

Storage of data

Data will be kept in a locked filing cabinet at the Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science and
will be retained <u>until you are 25 years of age or for 5 years following publication of results,
whichever is later.</u>.
A report of the study may be submitted for publication, but individual participants will not be
named or identified in any way in such a report.

Results
The findings of the research study will be known within approximately 12 months. A summary
of the results of this research study will be made available through Parkville College.

If you would like to contact the researchers about any aspect of this study, please contact the Chief Investigator:	If you have a complaint concerning the manner in which this research is being conducted, please contact:
Professor Michael Daffern Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science Swinburne University of Technology 505 Hoddle St Clifton Hill VIC 3068 AUSTRALIA Tel: <u>+ 61 3 99472600</u> Fax: +61 3 9947 2650 Email: mdaffern@swin.edu.au	Research Ethics Officer, Swinburne Research (H68), Swinburne University of Technology, P O Box 218, HAWTHORN VIC 3122. Tel (03) 9214 5218 or +61 3 9214 5218 or resethics@swin.edu.au

Thank you for taking the time to read through this letter.

You are welcome to contact me or my supervisor, whose details are provided above, if you have
any queries that have not been addressed here.

Yours sincerely.

Rana Abou-Sinna

Appendix 2. Participant Consent Form

Participant Consent Form **–** Parkville Students

Title: The impact of the self-concept on the educational engagement of incarcerated young offenders.

NOTE: This consent form will remain with the Swinburne University researcher for their records.

I agree to take part in the Swinburne University research project specified above. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the Explanatory Statement, which I keep for my records. I understand that agreeing to take part means that:

I agree to be interviewed by the researcher ☐ Yes ☐ No

If I am selected to take part in the narrative interview, I agree to be audiotaped ☐ Yes ☐ No

I also understand that:

1. my participation is voluntary, that I can choose not to participate in part or all of the project, and that I can withdraw at any stage of the project without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way.

2. any data that the researcher extracts from the interview for use in reports or published findings will not, under any circumstances, contain names or identifying characteristics.

3. any information I provide is confidential, and that no information that could lead to the identification of any individual will be disclosed in any reports on the project, or to any other party.

4. if I disclose any information that makes the researchers involved in the study concerned for my safety or someone else's safety they will need to share this information with my treating team.

1. data concerning myself obtained by the researchers for this study will be kept in secure storage and retained until I am 25 years of age or for 5 years after publication..

Participant's name: Not required

Participant's signature: Date:

Researcher's signature: Date:

Appendix 3: Letter of Ethics Approval

Department of Human Services

Incorporating: Community Services, Housing, Women's Affairs and Youth Affairs

50 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne
Victoria 3000
GPO Box 4057
Melbourne
Victoria 3001
Telephone: 1300 650 172
Facsimile: (03)9092 1867
www.dhs.vic.gov.au
DX210081

Our Ref: ADF/12/9000∗
Your Ref:

2 July 2013

Associate Professor Snow
Monash University
Bendigo Regional Clinical School
PO Box 666
BENDIGO VIC 3552
Ph 03 5440 9006

RE: Application to undertake research involving the Department of Human Services

Dear Associate Professor Snow,

The Centre for Human Services Research and Evaluation (CHSRE) has considered your revised application to undertake a research study entitled "The impact of self-concept on the educational engagement of incarcerated young offenders".

On 12 June 2013 I wrote to you advising that the Department of Human Services (DHS) was unable to support your project at that stage and as constructed due to strict guidelines around the use of information which identifies a young person subject to court orders under the Act.

After consideration of your revised application I advise I am prepared for the department to support the research project subject to the following conditions:

Pre-research commencement

- The proposed research is conducted in accordance with the documentation you provided to the department;

- An approval letter is received from your University's Human Research Ethics Committee or its equivalent.

Monitoring of research

- The provision of milestone updates to the department on the progress of your research;

- The project is commenced within 12 months of this approval letter, after this time extensions can be granted by notifying the department.

Victoria

Dissemination of research findings

- The provision of a final report to the department at the completion of the research;

- The provision of a one page summary of the outcomes of the research and how it relates to the work of the department;

- The provision of a seminar/presentation to relevant departmental staff on the outcomes of the research – with details to be arranged with the Centre for Human Services Research and Evaluation.

Quality assurance

- That you provide the department with the opportunity to review and provide comment on any materials generated from the research prior to formal publication. It is expected that if there are any differences of opinion between the department and yourself related to the research outcomes, that these differences would be acknowledged in any publications.

Acknowledgement of DHS support
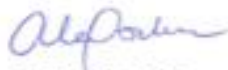
- That you acknowledge the support of the Department of Human Services in any publications arising from the research.

Please note that the departmental contact for day to day liaison with your project is Mr Ian, Lanyon, Director, Secure Services. Mr Lanyon can be reached on telephone 03 9389 4402 and email ian.lanyon@dhs.vic.gov.au.

Further information on the external research application process can be found at www.dhs.vic.gov.au. I wish you good luck in pursuing this project.

If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact me via email on alex.dordevic@dhs.vic.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Dr Alex Dordevic
Acting Director
Centre for Human Services Research and Evaluation

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Strategy and Review Group

2013_002088

Associate Professor Michael Daffern
Centre for Behavioural Sciences
505 Hoddle Street
CLIFTON HILL   3068

Dear Associate Professor Daffern

Thank you for your application of 30 July 2013 in which you request permission to conduct research in Victorian government schools and/or early childhood settings titled *The impact of self-concept on the educational engagement of young incarcerated offenders.*

I am pleased to advise that on the basis of the information you have provided your research proposal is approved in principle subject to the conditions detailed below.

1.   The research is conducted in accordance with the final documentation you provided to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development.

2.   Separate approval for the research needs to be sought from school principals and/or centre directors. This is to be supported by the DEECD approved documentation and, if applicable, the letter of approval from a relevant and formally constituted Human Research Ethics Committee.

3.   The project is commenced within 12 months of this approval letter and any extensions or variations to your study, including those requested by an ethics committee must be submitted to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development for its consideration before you proceed.

4.   As a matter of courtesy, you advise the relevant Regional Director of the schools or governing body of the early childhood settings that you intend to approach. An outline of your research and a copy of this letter should be provided to the Regional Director or governing body.

5.   You acknowledge the support of the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development in any publications arising from the research.

6.   The Research Agreement conditions, which include the reporting requirements at the conclusion of your study, are upheld. A reminder will be sent for reports not submitted by the study's indicative completion date.

7.   If DEECD has commissioned you to undertake this research, the responsible Branch/Division will need to approve any material you provide for publication on the Department's Research Register.

Victoria

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I wish you well with your research study. Should you have further enquiries on this matter, please contact Youla Michaels, Project Support Officer, Research, Evaluation and Analytics Branch, by telephone on (03) 9637 2707 or by email at michaels.youla.y@edumail.vic.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

Joyce Cleary
Director
Research, Evaluation and Analytics Branch

25/10/2013

enc

MONASH University

Human Ethics Certificate of Approval

This is to certify that the project below was considered by the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee. The Committee was satisfied that the proposal meets the requirements of the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* and has granted approval.

Project Number:	CF13/1920 - 2013001015
Project Title:	The impact of self-concept on the educational engagement of young incarcerated offenders
Chief Investigator:	Assoc Prof Michael Daffern
Approved:	From: 5 September 2013 to 5 September 2018

Terms of approval - *Failure to comply with the terms below is in breach of your approval and the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research.*

1. The Chief Investigator is responsible for ensuring that permission letters are obtained, <u>if relevant</u>, and a copy forwarded to MUHREC before any data collection can occur at the specified organisation.
2. Approval is only valid whilst you hold a position at Monash University.
3. It is the responsibility of the Chief Investigator to ensure that all investigators are aware of the terms of approval and to ensure the project is conducted as approved by MUHREC.
4. You should notify MUHREC immediately of any serious or unexpected adverse effects on participants or unforeseen events affecting the ethical acceptability of the project.
5. The Explanatory Statement must be on Monash University letterhead and the Monash University complaints clause must include your project number.
6. **Amendments to the approved project (including changes in personnel):** Require the submission of a Request for Amendment form to MUHREC and must not begin without written approval from MUHREC. Substantial variations may require a new application.
7. **Future correspondence:** Please quote the project number and project title above in any further correspondence.
8. **Annual reports:** Continued approval of this project is dependent on the submission of an Annual Report. This is determined by the date of your letter of approval.
9. **Final report:** A Final Report should be provided at the conclusion of the project. MUHREC should be notified if the project is discontinued before the expected date of completion.
10. **Monitoring:** Projects may be subject to an audit or any other form of monitoring by MUHREC at any time.
11. **Retention and storage of data:** The Chief Investigator is responsible for the storage and retention of original data pertaining to a project for a minimum period of five years.

Professor Nip Thomson
Chair, MUHREC

cc: Assoc Prof Pam Snow; Prof Stuart Thomas; Ms Rana Abou-Sinna

From: Keith Wilkins <kwilkins@swin.edu.au>
Sent: Wednesday, April 02, 2014 3:03 PM
To: Michael Daffern; Rana Abou-Sinna
Cc: RES Ethics
Subject: SHR Project 2014/069 Swinburne Ethics Clearance
(Corrected Copy)

To: Prof Michael Daffern/Ms Rana Abou-Sinna, CFBS/FHAD

Dear Michael and Rana

**SHR Project 2014/069 The impact of self-concept on the
educational engagement of young incarcerated offenders**
Prof Michael Daffern, FHAD; Ms Rana Abou-Sinna et al
Approved Duration: 01/04/2014 to 31/12/2018 [Adjusted]

I refer to your application for Swinburne ethics clearance for the
above supervised student project transferred from Monash
University to Swinburne.

Documentation pertaining to the request was contained in emails,
with attachments, sent 10 March (R Abou-Sinna to K Wilkins) and
26 March 2014 (M Daffern to K Wilkins, including clarification re
project status). This documentation was put to a delegate of
Swinburne's Human Research Ethics Committee (SUHREC) for
consideration significantly on the basis of the prior ethical review
documentation and clearances issued. In this regard, information re
the original clearances issued by Monash University (CF13/1920 –
2013001015), Department of Human Services (DHS) (ADF/12/9000)
and Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
(DEECD) (2013_002088) was noted. Also of significance, in this
instance, sensitive/personal/health information (as per applicable
Privacy and Health Records legislation) is being secured within

Victoria.

I am pleased to advise that, as submitted to date, Swinburne ethics clearance has been given prospectively for the project to continue in line with standard on-going ethics clearance conditions outlined below. SUHREC can be expected to ratify the clearance in due course.

Special Note:
DHS and DEECD may need to be apprised of the Swinburne ethics clearance here issued and note/endorse the revised consent instruments now to be used and note that previous participants would accordingly be apprised of the project's changed circumstances. Responsibility for previous clearances issued remain with Monash University, DHS and DEECD (as applicable) and as regards researcher compliance with the clearances. Copies of subsequent clearances for the transferred/modified project should be submitted to the Swinburne Research Ethics Office as soon as practicable for the record.

- All human research activity undertaken under Swinburne auspices must conform to Swinburne and external regulatory standards, including the current *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research* and with respect to secure data use, retention and disposal.

- The named Swinburne Chief Investigator/Supervisor remains responsible for any personnel appointed to or associated with the project being made aware of ethics clearance conditions, including research and consent procedures or instruments approved. Any change in chief investigator/supervisor requires timely notification and SUHREC endorsement.

- The above project has been approved as submitted for ethical review by or on behalf of SUHREC. Amendments to approved procedures or instruments ordinarily require prior ethical appraisal/ clearance. SUHREC must be notified immediately or as soon as possible thereafter of (a) any serious or unexpected

adverse effects on participants and any redress measures; (b) proposed changes in protocols; and (c) unforeseen events which might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project.

- At a minimum, an annual report on the progress of the project is required as well as at the conclusion (or abandonment) of the project.

- A duly authorised external or internal audit of the project may be undertaken at any time.

Please contact the Research Ethics Office if you have any queries about Swinburne on-going ethics clearance, citing the project number. A copy of this clearance email should be retained as part of project record-keeping.

Best wishes for the transferred project.

Yours sincerely

Keith

Keith Wilkins
Secretary, SUHREC & Research Ethics Officer
Swinburne Research (H68)
Swinburne University of Technology
P O Box 218
HAWTHORN VIC 3122
Tel +61 3 9214 5218
Fax +61 3 9214 5267

Appendix 4: Interview Schedule

NARRATIVE INTERVIEW - YOUNG OFFENDER LIFE STORIES

As the primary aim of carrying out these qualitative biographical interviews is to obtain participants' own accounts of their lives, it is important not to impose a rigid structure on the interview by asking a standardized set of questions. This study therefore will take a naturalistic approach to narrative interviewing.

Objective: The objective of the interview is to hear and record the life stories or self-narratives of young incarcerated offenders.

However, as the question may be too broad for participants, a personal history grid will be used to help focus the question for participants as they think about their life over time.

Introduction: As you know this study is about getting to know you as a person. In order for me to understand who you are, *I would like you to share with me your life story and how your life has helped you shape who you are (key topic).* It will involve you looking back over your life and talking about the events and people in your life to help you tell your life story to me today.

We will use this life history grid to help you reflect over your life and I will sit here and listen as you tell your story.

After this I may ask you how you think these life events over time have helped you understand who you are.

Life History Grid

Childhood

Date	Age	Place	Family	Health	School/ Leisure	Friends/relationships	Arrests/ Incarceration

Adolescence

Appendix 5: Participant Questionnaire Aide

PDS

NOT TRUE   VERY TRUE

1	2	3	4	5

TCI

DEFINITELY FALSE	MOSTLY OR PROBABLY FALSE	NEITHER TRUE NEITHER FALSE	MOSTLY OR PROBABLY TRUE	DEFINITELY TRUE
1	2	3	4	5

GSE

Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree Moderately	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

RSE

Strongly Disgree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4

EMS

Completely Untrue of me	Mostly Untrue of me	Slightly more true than untrue	Moderately true of me	Mostly true of me	Describes me perfectly
1	2	3	4	5	6

Appendix 6. Bonferroni Corrected Correlation Matrix

Table 3.2. The Correlation Matrix of the Relationships between Self -Concept Variables and Educational Engagement and Self-Reported Delinquency (Corrected)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
1 Age first arrest	-																									
2 Self Report Delinquency	-.45**	-																								
3 Educational Engagement	.03	-.33**	-																							
4 Behavioural Engagement	.12	-.34**	.74**	-																						
5 Emotional Engagement	.06	-.34**	.87**	.72**	-																					
6 Cognitive Engagement	-.01	-.23	.86**	.46**	.51**	-																				
7 Self concept	.21	-.38**	.36	.34	.38	.24	-																			
8 Behavioural Adjustment	.14	-.51**	.40	.41	.42	.25	.64**	-																		
9 Intellectual School Status	.12	-.47**	.64**	.56**	.59**	.51**	.66**	.57**	-																	
10 Physical Appearance[a]	.28	-.10	.10	.17	.22	.02	.54**	.20	.34**	-																
11 Freedom from Anxiety[a]	.05	-.21	.10	.02	.04	-.03	.57**	.26	.13	.12	-															
12 Popularity[a]	.17	-.20	.03	-.17	.17	-.05	.59**	.19	.26*	.53**	.49**	-														
13 Happiness[a]	-.04	-.06	.08	.03	.19	-.01	.54**	.32	.24*	.45**	.45**	.42	-													
14 Self Esteem	-.05	-.08	.31	.32	.29	.21	.61**	.20	.35	.37	.56**	.48**	.55**	-												
15 General Self Efficacy	.02	-.13	.44**	.44**	.35	.37	.47**	.39	.37	.25	.27	.21	.24	.53**	-											
16 TCI- Novelty Seeking	-.23	.27	-.20	-.04	-.09	-.30	-.25	-.42	-.19	.03	-.16	-.11	.07	.22	-.02	-										
17 TCI- Harm Avoidance	.26	-.09	-.06	-.06	-.06	-.03	-.49	-.13	-.13	-.20	-.51	-.45	-.27	-.62**	-.64**	-.16	-									
18 TCI-Reward Dependence	-.14	.06	-.07	-.15	-.07	-.03	.13	.26	.09	.25	.02	.15	.34	-.02	.07	-.04	.06	-								
19 TCI- Persistence	.05	-.44**	.59**	.40	.58	.48	.66**	.58	.49	.33	.42	.38	.50	.47	.58	-.34	-.36	.12	-							
20 TCI- Self-Directedness	-.36	-.05	.29	.39	.32	.14	.54	.23	.42	.41	.54	.4	.56	.57	.69**	-.01	-.51	-.14	.40	-						
21 TCI- Cooperative.	.37	-.36	.36*	.23	.37	.31	.47	.50	.49	.38	.09	.32	.37	.09	.29	-.32	-.16	.54	.64**	.15	-					
22 TCI- Self Transcendence	.35	-.32	.40	.10	.28	.46	.31	.28	.29	.35	.11	-.01	.37	.15	.22	-.06	-.03	.24	.41	-.05	.39	-				
23 EMS- Em Deprivation[a]	.05	.21	-.26	-.20	-.32	-.16	-.35	-.20	-.15	-.09	-.30	-.28	-.18	-.13	-.07	.29	.09	.02	-.24	-.20	-.03	.12	-			
24 EMS- Abandonment[a]	-.07	.30	.01	-.05	-.02	.09	-.30	-.16	-.09	.10	-.53	-.40	-.04	-.28	-.19	.08	.33	.32	-.08	-.09	.07	.24	.08	-		
25 EMS - Failure[a]	-.02	.01	-.18	-.25	-.24	-.08	-.18	-.38	-.34	-.05	-.01	-.01	.18	.05	-.20	.27	.11	.33	.06	-.19	-.06	-.01	.36*	.27	-	
26 EMS- Subjugation[b]	-.18	.22	-.46	-.35	-.42**	-.39*	-0.3	-0.21	-.38	-.35	0	-0.14	-0.18	-03	-0.27	0.24	0.16	-0.1	-0.32	-0.19	-0.32	.18	.22	.01	.03	-

Note: **p<.0.0001 (two tailed) following Bonferroni Adjustment [a] Spearman's rank order correlations were reported for this variable. [b] Transformed EMS Subjugation