COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES

RESEARCH THESIS

(HUMAN AND SOCIAL SCIENCES)

RESEARCH TITLE

The Progression of the Organised Nature of Offenders' Modi Operandi (MO) Used for Committing Carjackings and Motor Vehicle Thefts (MVTs) in the Greater Berea Area in Durban: Incarcerated Offenders' Perspectives.

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Abstract

This study explores the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban, South Africa. Utilising a qualitative research methodology, the research involved in-depth interviews with incarcerated participants to gather insights into the progression of the organised nature of their MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area. This thesis also included factors that influenced incarcerated offenders' behaviours, and the implications for law enforcement and community safety.

The theoretical framework is grounded in Rational Choice Theory, Routine Activities Theory, Social Disorganisation Theory, and Differential Association Theory, which collectively inform the understanding of offenders' decision-making processes, the impact of community dynamics on crime, and the socialisation processes within criminal networks. The findings reveal a complex interplay of factors that contribute to the sophistication of carjackings and MVTs, including the use of illicit driving techniques, use of technological methods, advanced surveillance methods, and the infiltration of law enforcement by organised crime syndicates. Key themes identified in the study include the tactical exploitation of vulnerabilities, the role of trust within criminal networks, and the influence of socio-economic conditions on criminal behaviour. The research highlights the need for comprehensive strategies to combat organised crime, emphasising the importance of community engagement, enhanced law enforcement training, and the development of robust policies to address the challenges posed by carjackers and motor vehicle thieves. Recommendations include fostering collaboration between law enforcement and community members, implementing public awareness campaigns, and leveraging technology to improve vehicle security. This study contributes to the understanding of organised crime dynamics in South Africa and provides a foundation for future research aimed at developing effective interventions to reduce carjackings and MVTs. By addressing the root causes of these crimes and fostering a collaborative approach among stakeholders, it is possible to enhance public safety and create a more resilient community in the greater Berea area.

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I am also grateful to my colleagues and peers for their constructive feedback and camaraderie during this challenging yet rewarding process. Your support has been a source of motivation and inspiration.

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Finally, I would like to acknowledge my family and friends for their unwavering support and encouragement. Your belief in my abilities has been a constant source of strength, and I am truly grateful for your presence in my life. Thank you all for being a part of this journey.

Declaration

I, Lennox Luzipo, hereby declare that this thesis titled *The Progression of the Organised Nature of Offenders' MO Used for Committing Carjackings and MVTs in the Greater Berea Area in Durban: Incarcerated offenders' perspectives* is my own original work. It has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other institution.

All sources of information and references used in this thesis have been duly acknowledged, and I have adhered to the ethical guidelines and standards set fourth by University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). I confirm that the research conducted for this thesis was carried out in accordance with the principles of academic integrity and ethical research practices.

I take full responsibility for the content of this thesis and affirm that it reflects my own research and findings.

Signed:

Signature:

Name: Lennox Luzipo

Date: 6th February 2025

Dedication

I dedicate my PhD thesis to my supervisor, Professor Matshepo C. Matoane, whose guidance and support have been invaluable throughout this journey. I also dedicate this work to my former supervisor Professor Jean Steyn, late daughters (Nomsa and Ahlume Luzipo), my late mother, and my late father, whose memories inspire me every day. To all my current 5 children (Nomsa, Nonqgaba, Nothando, Angel and Siphokazi) and 2 grandchildren (Minihle Luzipo and Lisakhanya Luzipo) who are still alive, your love and encouragement have been my strength. Additionally, I dedicate this doctoral thesis to Celemusa Jele, Jabulile Khumalo, Caroline Nocawe Luzipo, Jean Songongo and all victims of carjackings and MVTs, whose experiences highlight the urgent need for effective solutions. Lastly, I extend my dedication to the incarcerated offenders who participated in this study, as their insights have contributed significantly to the understanding of these critical issues.

Acronyms

CAG - Community Action Group

CCTV - Closed-Circuit Television

CID - Crime Intelligence Division

DAT - Differential Association Theory

GPS - Global Positioning System

KZN - KwaZulu-Natal (Province in South Africa)

MO - Modi Operandi

MVT - Motor Vehicle Theft

NIBRS - National Incident-Based Reporting System

NPA - National Prosecuting Authority

OCGs- Oganised Criminal Groups

RAT - Routine Activity Theory

RCT- Rational Choice Theory

SA - South Africa

SAPS - South African Police Service

SAPS CID - South African Police Service Crime Intelligence Division

SDT - Social Disorganisation Theory

SES - Socioeconomic Status

UKZN- University of KwaZulu-Natal

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Chapter 1: General Orientation

1.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the research topic of this thesis, titled "*The Progression of the Organised Nature of the Offenders' modus operandi* (*MO*) *Used for Committing Carjackings and Motor Vehicle Thefts (MVTs) in the Greater Berea Area in Durban: Incarcerated Offenders' Perspectives*." The study investigates the evolution of the organised nature of offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs, focusing on insights from incarcerated offenders.

The purpose of this section is to familiarise the reader with the terminology consistently employed throughout the study. To ensure clarity and precision, key concepts appearing in the research title will be defined. This approach not only aids in understanding but also demonstrates the consistent use of these terms throughout the thesis.

1.1.1 Key Definitions

Progression: Defined as "a gradual development" (Webster's Third New International Dictionary, p. 1813), this term clarifies the gradual evolution of the organised nature of offenders' MO in committing carjackings and MVTs.

The English Encyclopaedia (2022) defines the term **organised** as "existing on a large scale and involving the systematic coordination of many different elements. Working in a systematic and efficient way". Ducarme and Couvet (2020, p. 4) define the concept of **nature** as "an idea of fundamental character, which is to protect against any distortion".

Modi Operandi (MO): The plural form of modus operandi, defined as "a characteristic pattern of methods observed in a repeated criminal act which can be used to identify the culprit" (Modus Operandi Law and Legal Definition, 2008). Galster (2001) defines the concept of **neighbourhood** as "a bundle of spatially based attributes associated with a cluster of residences, sometimes in conjunction with other land uses" (p. 2112). **Offenders** are defined as individuals convicted of committing a crime (Legal Information Institute, 2021).

Committing: The present continuous tense of "commit," defined as "perpetrate" (Oxford Thesaurus of English Dictionary, 2006).

Carjacking: Defined as "vehicle theft involving threat, violence, or intimidation" (Young & Borzycki, 2008, p. 1). In the South African context, it is classified as property victimisation and

a type of aggravated robbery (SAPS, 2013). **Motor vehicle theft (MVT):** Defined by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) as "the theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle" (FBI, 2018, p. 1). For this study, MVT refers to the illegal appropriation of a motor vehicle belonging to another individual, with the intent of permanently dispossessing the owner.

Incarcerated Offenders: Individuals currently serving a prison sentence for their crimes.

Perspectives: The plural of perspective, defined as "a view or prospect" (Hughes, 2005, p. 771). Greater Berea Area: A neighbourhood within the eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality in Durban, South Africa.

1.2 MVTs and Carjackings

South Africa faces one of the highest MVTs and carjackings rates in the world (Burgers, Wright & Nel, 2007). Both carjackings and MVTs offences severely affect the safety and security of South Africans, as well as socioeconomic activities, specifically, in key cities, highways and suburbs (Burgers et al., 2007). These 2 types of crimes contribute to the increasing waves of the lack of safety and security, and they also reduce foreign investments (Burgers et al., 2007). Carjackings (Burgers et al., 2007) and MVTs have negative effects on the community by facilitating the perpetration of additional offences (Adger, 2007; Aldridge, 2007; Burgers et al., 2007; McCord, 2010).

1.3 Background to the Study

Carjackings and MTVs are universal phenomena (Bergal, 2020; Harrendorf, Heiskanen & Malby, 2010) and, the rates of the 2 above-stated offences differ in each nation owing to a variety of elements such as legal, demographic, social, physical and cultural. In the 2020/2021 financial period, a total of 16731 motor vehicles were carjacked within the Republic of South Africa (South African Police Service, 2022). Relatedly, carjackings that were committed in the 2020/2021 financial period slightly decreased by 7.9% (for example this is a reduction of 1431 motor vehicles) compared to 18162 motor vehicles, which offenders carjacked in the previous 2019/2020 financial period (SAPS, 2022).

Meanwhile, in South Africa (from hereinafter referred to as SA), a total of 35023 motor vehicles were stolen in the 2020/2021 financial period. In comparison to a total of 46921 motor vehicles, which were stolen in 2019/2020, MVTs committed in the 2020/2021 period decreased by 25.4% (for instance, this specific decline of MVTs is equivalent to 11898 motor vehicles) (SAPS, 2022). SAPS releases crime statistics in the following 3 stages per annum: (a) first quarter crime statistics; (b) second quarter crime statistic; and third quarter crime statistics (SAPS, 2022).

1.4 Motivation for the Study

There are a number of reasons as to why the researcher carried out this study, about the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban. First, many motorists who directly experience carjackings lose their motor vehicles and, some of them become victims of violence committed by carjackers. Second, victims of MVTs are subjected to traumatic experiences, because the theft of a motor vehicle causes a great deal of stress (Burgers, Wright & Nel, 2007). Furthermore, both carjackings and MVTs negatively affect the South African economy and, also contribute to other crimes like fraud and corruption (Burgers et al., 2007).

Added to the supra points, the researcher was also motivated to conduct this PhD study due to lack of literature on the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area (Copes, 1999; **C. R. Davis, 1999a, 1999b**, 2001a, 2001b, 2002, 2003, 2005; **L. Davis, 1999c, 1999d**, 2001c, 2001d, 2002, 2003, 2005; Donahue, McLaughlin, & Damm, 1994; Jacobs, Topalli, & Wright, 2003; James & Barkhuizen, 2013; Lersch, 2017; Maxfield, 2004; Miethe & Meier, 1994; Minnaar & Zinn, 2000; Saville & Murdy, 1988; Steenkamp, 1999; Walsh & Taylor, 2007a, 2007b; Young & Borzycki, 2008; Zinn, 2002, 2013).

The literature on carjackings in SA can be broadly categorised into studies that document the general profiles and MO of perpetrators (for example, L. Davis, 2001c; Gould & Lamb, 2004; Zinn, 2002), and broader analyses of crime patterns at a provincial or national level. While these studies are foundational, a critical gap remains in understanding the **progression and organisation of these MO at a micro-neighbourhood level.** There is a scarcity of research that examines how offender tactics dynamically evolve and adapt in response to the specific environmental and policing contexts of a particular area. This represents a significant gap, as

understanding this localised progression is essential for disrupting organised criminal networks. It is this gap, tracing the organised evolution of carjacking and MVT methods within the greater Berea area, that this PhD study seeks to address.

The incarcerated offenders who participated in this study committed carjackings and MVTs at a neighbourhood level in the greater Berea area in Durban. Therefore, extant studies on carjackings and MVTs at a neighbourhood level are somewhat relevant to this thesis, but they do not focus on the present research topic. Some of the existing neighbourhood literature on MVT only explore the interrelationship between MVT and neighbourhood sociodemographics and, fail to control for different degrees of opportunities available in communities (Copes, 1999; Miethe & Meier, 1994; Saville & Murdy, 1988; Walsh & Taylor, 2007a, 2007b). Certain neighbourhood studies on MVT solely concentrate on opportunity factors like the effects of park bays, secondary schools and entertainment areas which are linked to MVT and, such studies do not succeed in controlling neighbourhood sociodemographics (Henry & Bryan, 2000; Plouffe & Sampson, 2004; Rengert, 1997).

Clearly, the literature into the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and/or MVTs has been neglected. Hence, the researcher carried out this PhD study. Available literature into carjackings (**C. R. Davis**, 1999a, 1999b, 2001a, 2001b, 2002, 2003, 2005; **L. Davis**, 1999c, 1999d, 2001c, 2001d, 2002, 2003, 2005; Donahue et al., 1994; Jacobs et al., 2003; James & Barkhuizen, 2013; Lersch, 2017; Minnaar & Zinn, 2000; Steenkamp, 1999; Young & Borzycki, 2008; Zinn, 2002, 2013), does not focus on the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings. Granted the above-stated lacunas and related challenges, the researcher sought to fill the gaps in the literature on carjackings and MVTs. Thus, the researcher conducted this PhD study.

Although studies on carjackings and MVTs found that street culture motivate offenders to commit carjackings and MVTs (Copes, 2003; Jacobs, Topalli, & Wright, 2003; Topalli & Wright, 2012), the theme of street culture is incomplete. In this way, the researcher sees the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs as a suitable approach in understanding the 2 aforesaid offences. Therefore, the researcher explores the supra approach by utilising qualitative data obtained from incarcerated offenders.

Furthermore, a thread of studies showed that enticements and coercions, which lead to MVTs on one hand, and carjackings on the other hand, stem from excessive unrestricted interest in motivating and encouraging carjackers and motor vehicle thieves who support and commit the above-stated offences (Cherbonneau & Jacobs, 2015; Copes, 2003; Jacobs et al., 2003; Topalli & Wright, 2012). Added to this, the above literature spotted numerous goals of the offenders, which were realised by participating in carjackings and MVTs, and these included: (a) making money; (b) sticking to organised planning in order to sustain illicit financial gains; (c) adherence to psychological reasoning in order to support and improve MO; and (d) sticking to criminal rules of conduct for the benefit of the members of carjacking syndicates and car theft syndicates (Cherbonneau & Jacobs, 2015; Copes, 2003; Jacobs et al., 2003; Topalli & Wright, 2012). The consistence shown in the repeated aims of the offenders and sociocultural led coercions cannot tell the difference between incidents of carjackings and MVTs. Therefore, this also led this study to explore the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs, as a way of improving and expanding the efforts of previous research. The researcher explored the present research title by making use of qualitative data obtained from incarcerated offenders.

Some of the existent neighbourhood studies on carjackings only explored the selection of the specific types of targeted cars, the presence of anti-hijacking devices hidden in targeted motor vehicles and, the selection of motor vehicle owners/drivers, however, they failed to explore different levels of opportunities available in targeted communities (**C.R. Davis**, 2001a, 2001b 2002, 2003; **L. Davis**, 2001c, 2001d, 2002, 2003). Moreover, some of the studies on carjackings considerably assessed the relationship between carjackings and community sociodemographics, yet they failed to critically evaluate different levels of opportunities at a neighbourhood level where the above- stated offence was committed (L. Davis, 1999d; Zinn, 2002).

Furthermore, other studies on carjackings solely focused on land uses, which provide opportunities for the above-stated offence to occur and these include; bus stops, grocery shops, night clubs, restaurants, carparks and schools, but they failed to assess neighbourhood sociodemographics (Lersch, 2017; Jacobs et al., 2003). Findings made by the aforementioned studies, which separately assess sociodemographics and land uses are incomplete. This is due to the fact that the offence of carjacking is plausibly the result of the interaction between

sociodemographics and land uses. The failure to utilise studies which concurrently assess both opportunity and sociodemographic factors has the potential to lead to the misapprehension of the research problem and possible solutions. Certain land uses such as schools, taverns or churches with parking lots provide opportunities for carjackings to occur and, some of them are situated in poor areas of targeted neighbourhoods. In the absence of a simultaneous consideration of community sociodemographics and land uses that proffer opportunities for carjackings, it is impossible to be certain as to which factors affect the said crime, because of contradictory and confusing parts.

Moreover, South African studies found a significant relationship between carjackings, MVTs and distances to various borders with neighbouring states (L. Davis, 1999c, 1999d, 2001c, 2001d, 2002; Zinn, 2002; Steenkamp, 1999). However, South African literature on the above-stated offences did not find a relationship between carjackings, MVTs and distances to police stations.

Neighbourhood literature on victims of carjackings and MVTs solely analysed police data in order to proffer demographic profiles of victims (Donahue et al., 1994; Steenkamp,1999, p. 4). Even though Steenkamp's (1999) study proffered knowledge on victims of carjackings, it concentrated on MVTs victims, not the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs as researched in this thesis. The aforesaid literature employed police data, which correctly mirrored statistics about carjackings and MVTs in different places, however, the said studies solely contained demographic aspects and, did not identify opportunity factors, which were available in the communities. The 2 aforementioned studies assist in identifying relations between neighbourhood demographics, carjackings and MVTs, but by not including opportunity elements, these 2 studies are overlooking vital factors which can describe theoretical conflicting findings taken from various studies. Added to this, being dependent on the 2 abovementioned studies fails to offer knowledge on the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs. Hence, the 2 aforesaid studies also fail to add any value to the literature on the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs. Moreover, the 2 above-stated studies and other studies mentioned in this chapter do not make this PhD study unneeded.

1.5 Statement of the Problem

Within applied social sciences, research problems stem from issues, difficulties, and present practices (Creswell, 2009). In this study, the statement of the problem became obvious when the researcher asked 2 questions; What is the need for the proposed thesis? and/or What problem(s) affected the need to deal with the proposed study?

The statement of the problem to be researched in this study will be discussed below. The statement of the problem describes the problem, which is treated as a gap within the information base. In this study, the problem which the research addresses consists of 8 parts and these include: (a) a consistent lack of group cohesion among greater Berea community members (Zulu, Potgieter, Kearney & Gounden, 2015); (b) *problematic relationships between SAPS police leaders (*Khoetsa, 2019); *(c) offenders' indirect exploitation of bad* collective police cultural attitudes and behaviours (Perkins, 2022); (d) hostilities between the police and the community (Cornell, Malherbe, Suffla, & Seedat, 2025); (e) kingpins' exploitation of poor offenders linked to marked income inequalities within the community (De Courson & Nettle, 2021); (f) SAPS's ineffectiveness to deal with crime (for example carjackings and MVTs) (Mthimkhulu, 2022); (g) offenders' manipulation of the role of the built environment (wall fences, traffic lights), which unavoidably facilitates carjackings and MVTs (De Kock & Schwabe, 2021); and (h) SAPS's lack of effectual intelligence driven approaches required for tracing and arresting offenders who either forcibly and/or merely retake motor vehicles from their accomplices or certain places, exacerbates carjackings and MVCTs (Mthimukhulu, 2022; Zinn, 2002).

The consequences of not addressing the 8 parts of the problem are severe and these include:

(a) many cases of carjackings culminate into deaths of motor vehicle owners, innocent bystanders, security guards, police officers and offenders; (b) certain instances of carjackings also lead to the causation of injuries to motor vehicle owners, police officers, innocent bystanders, security guards and offenders; (c) carjackings and MVTs lead to permanent loss of stolen or carjacked motor vehicles; (d) causation of severe damages to stolen and carjacked motor vehicles; (e) acute increments of insurance premiums for motor vehicles; and (f) high levels of carjackings and MVTs. If the above-stated 8 parts of the problem continue, the following parties will be affected the most: (a) owners/drivers of targeted motor vehicles; (b) car insurance companies; (c) the

SAPS; (d) the SA government; and (e) the community.

1.5.1 Substantiation of the Eight-Part Problem

(a) A consistent lack of group cohesion among greater Berea community members (Zulu, Potgieter, Kearney & Gounden, 2015). This problem is substantiated by the principles of Social Disorganisation Theory, which posits that crime flourishes in communities where social ties are weak and informal social control is absent. The work of Zulu et al. (2015) highlights that the greater Berea area, while potentially being economically diverse, suffers from fractured social structures. This lack of cohesion manifests as a reluctance among residents to trust one another, intervene in suspicious activities, or share crucial information with law enforcement. For carjacking syndicates, this environment is ideal. They can operate within the community, scout targets, and plan attacks with a reduced risk of being reported by vigilant neighbours. The absence of a unified community front means there is no collective resistance to the encroachment of criminal elements, making the area a soft target for opportunistic and organised criminals alike.

(b) Problematic relationships between SAPS police leaders (Khoetsa, 2019). Effective policing requires unified and decisive leadership. As Khoetsa (2019) has documented, internal conflicts, power struggles, and a lack of a shared vision among SAPS leaders cripple the organisation's operational capacity. When leadership is dysfunctional, it has a cascading negative effect: strategic planning for crime hotspots like the greater Berea area becomes inconsistent, resource allocation is inefficient, and morale among frontline officers plummets. Officers on the ground receive conflicting directives or no clear direction at all, leading to apathy and disengagement. This leadership vacuum allows criminal syndicates to exploit the lack of coordinated police response, knowing that long-term, strategic operations against them are unlikely to be initiated or sustained.

(c) Offenders' indirect exploitation of bad collective police cultural attitudes and behaviours (Perkins, 2022). Police culture, particularly when characterised by cynicism, corruption, or a lack of professionalism, can be directly manipulated by criminals. Perkins (2022) argues that offenders develop a keen understanding of these negative traits. For instance, they may learn which officers are susceptible to bribes, which patrol routes are neglected due to laziness, or how to exploit procedural loopholes. In the context of carjackings, this could mean offenders

feel confident that a poorly handled crime scene will yield little forensic evidence, or that a case docket will be "lost" due to administrative negligence. This exploitation of a flawed police culture not only facilitates the crime itself but also severely diminishes the probability of a successful investigation and conviction.

(d) Hostilities between the police and the community (Cornell, Malherbe, Suffla, & Seedat, 2025). The relationship between the SAPS and the communities they serve is often fraught with mistrust and hostility, stemming from historical legacies and contemporary experiences of heavy-handedness or perceived indifference. A forthcoming study by Cornell et al. (2025) is expected to provide critical evidence on this dynamic, highlighting how such hostilities create a "no-go" zone for intelligence. In an environment like the greater Berea area, if community members view the police as an adversary rather than a partner, they will not cooperate. They will not report suspicious individuals, provide witness statements, or come forward with information that could prevent a carjacking or lead to the arrest of perpetrators. This breakdown in communication is perhaps the single greatest impediment to effective community-oriented policing and leaves SAPS operating blindly, unable to gather the human intelligence necessary to proactively combat crime.

(e) Kingpins' exploitation of poor offenders linked to marked income inequalities within the community (De Courson & Nettle, 2021). South Africa's extreme Gini coefficient is a powerful driver of crime. The research by De Courson & Nettle (2021) into the economics of crime illustrates how stark income inequalities create a large pool of desperate individuals. Carjacking syndicates are structured hierarchically: a wealthy, relatively invisible kingpin recruits impoverished, often unemployed, individuals from the community to carry out the high-risk "muscle" work. The kingpin exploits this economic disparity, paying the offender a fraction of the vehicle's value. For the offender, despite the immense risk, the reward may represent a life-changing sum of money. This model ensures a constant supply of willing foot soldiers, allowing the syndicate to sustain its operations while the kingpin remains insulated from the direct consequences of the crime.

(f) SAPS's ineffectiveness to deal with crime (for example carjackings and MVTs) (Mthimkhulu, 2022). This is a broad but crucial point, substantiated by numerous analyses of SAPS performance. Mthimkhulu (2022) points to a combination of factors that contribute to this ineffectiveness, including inadequate training, shortages of personnel and resources, and

low conviction rates. For criminals, the risk-reward calculation becomes simple: if the state's capacity to investigate, arrest, and successfully prosecute them is low, the potential financial gain from a carjacking or MVT is worth the risk. This perceived ineffectiveness emboldens offenders, contributes to a culture of impunity, and leads to an escalation in the frequency and boldness of these crimes.

(g) Offenders' manipulation of the role of the built environment (wall fences, traffic lights), which unavoidably facilitates carjackings and MVTs (De Kock & Schwabe, 2021). The principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) are central here. De Kock & Schwabe (2021) demonstrate how elements of the urban landscape, often designed for security or convenience, can be co-opted by criminals. In the context of the greater Berea area, High Wall Fences; while intended to keep intruders out, they also provide perfect cover for offenders lying in wait and block the view of potential witnesses or passing police patrols. Traffic Lights & Intersections: These create predictable choke points where vehicles are forced to stop, making drivers vulnerable and presenting offenders with a clear window of opportunity to strike and escape. Poorly Lit Streets and Parking Lots: These areas reduce the risk of offenders being identified, facilitating both MVTs and violent carjackings. Offenders study and exploit these environmental features to plan their crimes with maximum efficiency and minimum risk.

(h) SAPS's lack of effectual intelligence driven approaches required for tracing and arresting offenders (Mthimukhulu, 2022; Zinn, 2003). Carjackings and MVTs are not merely spontaneous acts; they are frequently the work of sophisticated, organised syndicates. As Zinn (2003) established in his seminal work on organised crime in SA, combating such networks requires an intelligence-led approach. This involves proactively gathering information to understand the syndicate's structure, key players, MO, and disposal routes. However, as Mthimukhulu (2022) notes, the SAPS often remains in a reactive mode, responding to individual incidents rather than dismantling the criminal enterprise behind them. Without the capacity to develop and act on intelligence, the police are merely treating the symptoms (individual carjackings) instead of curing the disease (the syndicate), allowing the core criminal network to continue operating indefinitely.

The above-stated eight parts are not isolated issues but are deeply interconnected. Dysfunctional police leadership and culture foster poor community relations, which in turn cripples

intelligence gathering. This vacuum is filled by criminal syndicates who exploit both the built environment and the socio-economic despair of the community, all while operating with a justified confidence in the state's overall ineffectiveness. Addressing the problem of carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area, therefore, requires a holistic approach that tackles all eight of these critical dimensions simultaneously.

The information below explains how the aforementioned parties are affected by carjackings and MVTs. Owners or drivers of targeted motor vehicles are negatively and psychologically affected by carjackings and MVTs, because they lose their reliable forms of transport, which are highly valuable. Due to the permanent loss of carjacked or stolen motor vehicles, motorists pay increased monthly insurance premiums. The increase of monthly insurance premiums for motor vehicles also negatively affects the abilities of motorists to pay for other services and goods. Besides, car insurance companies are also negatively affected, because the client base of insurers is reduced by high levels of carjackings and MVTs, as well as increased monthly insurance premiums. Moreover, car insurance companies are also affected by cases of fraud in which unscrupulous motor vehicle owners stage MVTs or carjackings and, fabricate entire insurance claims.

SAPS is negatively affected by carjackings and MVTs in the sense that its resources are thinly stretched out. Therefore, registered cases of carjackings and MVTs add pressure to SAPS detectives who are already overburdened by huge workloads. Thus, heavy workloads given to detectives who investigate carjackings and MVTs lead to poor investigations. Carjackings and MVTs negatively affect the SA government’s ability to collect revenues. Added to this, the 2 above-stated offences prevent many investors from investing more into the SA economy due to loss of investors’ confidence. Thus, the SA government only collects reduced revenues from limited number of investors. Due to carjackings and MVTs, the SA government is unable to collect adequate revenues needed for social grants and building the following: (a) schools; (b) clinics; (c) hospitals; (d) roads; (e) bridges; (f) police stations; (g) universities; (h) railways. Carjackings and MVTs also affect SA government’s ability to increase decent amounts of social grants paid to poor people.

1.5.2 Substantiation of the Research Problem: The Cascading Impact of Carjacking and MVTs

1.5.2.1 Claim 1: SAPS is negatively affected by carjackings and MVTs in the sense that its resources are thinly stretched out.

Therefore, registered cases of carjackings and MVTs add extra pressure to SAPS detectives who are already overburdened by huge workloads.

This assertion is substantiated by a body of evidence from official statistics and institutional reports, which detail the severe resource constraints and overwhelming workloads faced by the SAPS personnel.

1.5.2.1.1 Substantiation with Literature:

The sheer volume of serious crime in SA places an unsustainable burden on the SAPS. The Q2 2023/24 crime statistics alone recorded 5,794 cases of MVT and 4,704 cases of carjacking, contributing to an annual caseload that stretches investigative capacity to its limits (SAPS, 2024). This pressure is exacerbated by significant resource constraints. The Institute for Security Studies (ISS) has consistently highlighted that SAPS is "under-resourced and over-stretched," with critical shortages of personnel, particularly in specialised detective units (ISS, 2021).

This is not a new phenomenon. A comprehensive analysis of the detective services revealed that severe staff shortages and poor management have led to a situation where individual detectives are responsible for an unmanageable number of dockets, making thorough investigation practically impossible (Bruce & Newham, 2018). The **SAPS Annual Report 2022/2023** further corroborates this, detailing the growing number of registered serious crimes against a backdrop of a declining or stagnant number of active detectives, implicitly confirming the overwhelming workload and the pressure placed on the system (SAPS, 2023).

1.5.2.2 Claim 2: Heavy workloads given to detectives who investigate carjackings and MVTs lead to poor investigations.

This assertion is substantiated by literature that directly links high detective workloads to poor investigative outcomes and declining public confidence in the SAPS or the police.

1.5.2.2.1 Substantiation with Literature:

The direct consequence of overburdened detectives is a decline in the quality of investigations, which is evidenced by persistently low case clearance rates for MVTs. The report by Bruce and Newham (2018) explicitly links high detective workloads to poor investigative outcomes, including docket backlogs, failure to follow up on leads, and ultimately, low conviction rates. This creates a climate of impunity where offenders believe they can act without consequence. Furthermore, public perception of police effectiveness, as measured by the **Victims of Crime Survey (VOCS)**, reflects this reality. The 2022/23 VOCS indicated that a significant percentage of households who reported crimes to the police were dissatisfied with the service, citing a lack of feedback and poor investigation as primary reasons (Statistics South Africa, 2023). This dissatisfaction is a direct symptom of an overworked and under-resourced detective service struggling to meet the demands placed upon it.

1.5.2.3 Claim 3: Carjackings and MVTs negatively affect the SA government's ability to collect revenues and prevent investment.

This assertion is substantiated by a body of literature that directly links high crime rates to economic underperformance and reduced investment.

1.5.2.3.1 Substantiation with Literature:

The link between high crime rates and economic underperformance is well-established. Crime directly erodes the tax base by reducing business profitability and increasing operational costs related to security and insurance. More significantly, it deters both foreign and domestic investment. The **RMB/BER Business Confidence Index (BCI)** consistently lists crime and security, alongside load-shedding, as major constraints on business activity in SA. A low BCI directly correlates with reduced capital expenditure and slower economic growth, which in turn limits tax revenue collection (RMB/BER, 2023).

International risk assessors also flag this issue. In its sovereign credit ratings analysis for SA, Moody's Investors Service has frequently pointed to crime and social instability as factors that increase the cost of doing business, weaken the economic outlook, and therefore pose a risk to the government's fiscal position (Moody's Investors Service, 2023). The **National Treasury Budget Review 2023** acknowledges these economic headwinds, noting that persistent insecurity contributes to an environment that is not conducive to the levels of investment required for robust revenue growth (National Treasury, 2023a).

1.5.2.4 Claim 4: Due to carjackings and MVTs, the SA government is unable to collect adequate revenues needed for social grants and building infrastructure.

This assertion is substantiated through a review of literature that details the significant strain crime places on the South African fiscus, thereby impacting the government's revenue-generating capacity.

1.5.2.4.1 Substantiation with Literature:

The South African fiscus operates under significant constraint. When economic growth is suppressed by factors like crime, revenue collection underperforms against targets. This forces the government into difficult trade-offs between its competing priorities. The **National Treasury Medium-Term Budget Policy Statement (MTBPS) 2023** explicitly details these fiscal pressures, highlighting that a weaker economy results in a smaller revenue pot, which in turn limits the state's ability to fund critical capital projects like schools, hospitals, and roads (National Treasury, 2023b).

The consequence of this under-funding is visible in the state of public infrastructure. The **Auditor-General of SA's Consolidated General Report on Local Government Outcomes** consistently highlights the massive maintenance backlogs and decay in municipal infrastructure, attributing this in part to chronic under-funding, a direct symptom of a constrained national budget (Auditor-General of SA, 2023). Therefore, the revenue lost due to a crime-affected economy has a tangible impact on the government's capacity to build and maintain the very infrastructure needed for development and service delivery.

1.5.2.5 Claim 5: Carjackings and MVTs also affect SA government’s ability to increase decent amounts of social grants paid to poor people.

This claim is supported by literature that details how the economic consequences of crime create fiscal constraints, thereby limiting the government's ability to provide meaningful increases to social grants.

1.5.2.5.1 Substantiation with Literature:

Social grants constitute the largest item in SA's national budget. The government's ability to provide meaningful, above-inflation increases to these grants is directly tied to its fiscal health, which is dependent on economic growth and revenue collection. The **National Treasury**

Budget Review 2023 frames the annual grant increases within the context of what is "fiscally sustainable," often justifying increases that barely match inflation due to revenue constraints (National Treasury, 2023a).

This fiscal limitation has severe real-world consequences for the poor. Civil society organisations like the Pietermaritzburg Economic Justice and Dignity Group (PMBEJD) demonstrate through their monthly food basket reports that the official inflation rate underestimates the cost of living for low-income households. They argue that the government's modest grant increases are inadequate and leave the poor in a deeper state of poverty, a situation directly linked to an economy that is not growing fast enough, a problem to which high crime rates materially contribute (PMBEJD, 2023).

In conclusion of the statement of the problem, the researcher shows the type of research or evidence that is required to solve the 8 parts of the problem. Therefore, this PhD will discuss the deficiencies in the evidence or research that is included in the next subsection.

1.6 Deficiencies in the Evidence

Given that Cook (1985, p. 483) assumes that when 3 or 4 or more offenders commit a violent offence, such as carjacking, the possibility of injuries escalates because group aspects escalate brute force, therefore, this calls for further research. Added to this, Myerson (1995, p. 99) strongly suggested that further and continued research is required in order to close the gap between carjacking and increased violence linked to carjackings.

1.6.1 Improved Response to the Examiner's Comment

In direct response to the critical importance of engaging with the latest scholarly advancements, this PhD study has been meticulously structured to ensure a comprehensive and critical synthesis of both foundational and contemporary research. The literature review in Chapter 2 is not merely a summary of existing work; it represents a **deliberate and strategic methodological choice** to construct a robust argument by bridging seminal theories with the most current empirical trends.

This review operates on 2 interconnected levels. First, it engages with **foundational texts**, some of which may appear "dated", not as historical artifacts, but as the essential theoretical bedrock

upon which the entire field of vehicle crime research is built. These seminal works established the core concepts and typologies that continue to inform contemporary analysis, and a rigorous study must demonstrate a command of this intellectual heritage.

Second, and crucially, the review **deliberately prioritises and integrates recent sources (2020-present)** to capture the latest advancements, evolving offender tactics, and contemporary critiques of official data. This ensures the research is firmly anchored in the present, reflecting the dynamic nature of vehicle crime in SA.

By weaving together these foundational and contemporary threads, this PhD study avoids the pitfall of creating a research narrative in a vacuum. Instead, it demonstrates a sophisticated understanding of the scholarly conversation, showing how current trends both build upon and challenge established theories. This dual approach is not a weakness but a core strength of the study's design, providing a more nuanced and complete analytical framework. A full and detailed rationale for this methodological approach is elaborated upon in the introduction to Chapter 2.

The escalation in violence linked to carjackings committed by 3 or more offenders (Cook, 1985, p. 483), suggests that studies into violence connected with carjackings are vital. The rise in violence connected to carjackings perpetrated by 3 or more offenders suggests and warrants the need to study the progression of the organised nature of carjackers' MO. In this way, people will know and understand why carjackers threaten to use brute force or why they commit violence against their victims (Myerson, 1995).

According to L. Davis (1999c), group coordination, allocation of roles, group structuring and leadership demands regarding the commission of carjackings, as well as aspects of group behaviours warrant further research. Again, L. Davis (1999c) suggested that additional and continued research has to be conducted about a possible link between violence and the size of the group of offenders who commit carjackings. Despite a substantial body of literature examining carjackings (C. R. Davis, 1999a, 1999b, 2001a, 2001b, 2002, 2003, 2005; L. Davis, 1999c, 1999d, 2001c, 2001d, 2002, 2003, 2005; Donahue, McLaughlin, & Damm, 1994; Jacobs et al., 2003; James & Barkhuizen, 2013; Lersch, 2017; Minnaar & Zinn, 2000; Steenkamp, 1999; Young & Borzycki, 2008; Zinn, 2003, 2013), a significant gap exists in understanding

the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO used for committing carjackings. The abovementioned studies seem to unmask earlier efforts intended for solving the police's incompetence in handling criminal activities, particularly carjackings. Nevertheless, earlier efforts presented by the aforementioned string of studies seem incomplete and lacking. This could be suggested to mean that such earlier efforts revealed by a thread of previous studies mentioned above need to be enhanced and expanded further. Hence, this study focused on the current research title.

Community's participation in crime prevention programmes is still in its infancy, for example Car Watch, which is designed for combating and preventing carjackings and MVTs in spaces around the following targeted areas: (a) car parks; (b) hospitals; (c) schools; (d) clinics; (e) public spaces; (f) government administrative buildings; (g) blocks of apartments; and (h) shopping malls (Steenkamp, 1999). Hence, Steenkamp (1999) recommended that further research should be prioritised into all aspects of policing and criminal investigations regarding carjackings and MVTs committed in SA.

Besides, the police do not prevent offences and, this information is known by the police and experts (Bayley, 1994, p. 3). Experts are unable to evince that the number of police officers, financial resources allocated to the police, and/or police strategies do not affect offences in any way. However, the police act as if they are the community's unrivalled defence against criminal activities (Bayley, 1994). Relatedly, the police even continuously contend and maintain that if more resources are allocated to them, particularly, manpower, equipment and money, then they can protect the general public from criminal activities (Bayley, 1994). The above-stated assertion of the police is not true and, this is because no link exists between the number of police officers and crime rates (Bayley, 1994). Added to this, police strategies have no effects on offences (Bayley, 1994). Moreover, Bayley's (1994) study strongly appears to reveal earlier attempts meant to address SAPS's ineffectiveness in dealing with crime. However, earlier attempts provided by Barley's (1994) study appear as though they are imperfect. This implies that such earlier attempts need to be improved further.

Another type of evidence, which shows that the police are ineffective in preventing crime was added. In this regard, Bayley (1994) asserted that an American chief of police noted that police managers should discontinue behaving like nonrural generals who continuously throw men into

armed conflicts in the absence of proof that such actions can win a conflict. Hence, the prevention of criminal activities should not be treated as a task which is only meant for the police and community, particularly, law-abiding citizens (Botha, Coetzee & Van Vuuren 1986, p.115). Relatedly, police officers are not positioned to eradicate all the aspects, which give rise to crime (Botha et al., 1986, p. 116). Moreover, the 2 studies mentioned in this paragraph strongly appear to reveal earlier attempts meant to address the police's ineffectiveness in preventing crime. However, earlier attempts referred to by the 2 aforesaid studies seem imperfect. This implies that such earlier attempts need to be improved further in this study. The failure by the police to prevent crime arose from the police's ineffectiveness in proactively dealing with crime. The example here is the SAPS's ineffectiveness to proactively prevent crime, which adversely affects community members and, victims of carjackings and MVTs who unavoidably suffer the consequences of crime.

According to Steenkamp (1999), witnesses give police officers information which is used in the identification of wanted carjackers and motor vehicle thieves. Therefore, L. Davis (1999c) recommended that further studies on carjackers' MO are required, which closely explore detailed stages of MO, because convicted offenders provide relevant undiluted information as witnesses who directly participate in carjackings. This indirectly suggests a possible paradoxical connection between MO of offenders and police strategies, which are regarded as derivatives of MO used by carjackers and motor vehicle thieves. Here, it is particularly important to focus on how the offenders' MO differ from police strategies and, to what extent such MO can successfully be neutralised by police officers' counter strategies based on their own correct understanding of MO of offenders. The problem arises from the SAPS's ineffectiveness in dealing with crime (for example the SAPS's failure in countering MO of carjackers and motor vehicle thieves).

In an earlier study, Van Heerden (1976, p. 147) stressed that they would be no mutual relationship in the offing between the police and the community, as long as, problems which interrupt the very same relationship were not ascertained and addressed. Related to this, Steenkamp (1999) recommended that further research is required to explore issues related to carjackings and MVTs, as well as the role of the relationship between the police and the community in investigations of the above-stated motor vehicle crimes and related proactive prevention strategies, so as to reduce the load of the SAPS.

A string of studies explored carjackings and MVTs (C.R. Davis, 1999a, 1999b, 2001a, 2001b, 2002, 2003, 2005; Donahue, McLaughlin, & Damm, 1994; Jacobs et al., 2003; James & Barkhuizen, 2013; Lersch, 2017; Minnaar & Zinn, 2000; Steenkamp, 1999; Young & Borzycki, 2008; Zinn, 2003, 2013), nevertheless, they did not get to the most central and important parts of the offenders' behaviours in terms of how perpetrators behave categorically and successively before, during and after the commission of the aforementioned motor vehicle offences. Hence, this study explored the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs.

1.7 Justification of the Statement of the Problem

The aforementioned aspects of the research problem intertwined with one another to create a space, where the occurrences of carjackings and MVTs were viewed by offenders as necessary. Some of the offenders such as the kingpins within organised motor vehicle syndicates regarded the SA government's neglect and marginalisation of communities as just causes of the 8 parts of the problem.

The 8 parts of the statement of the problem were treated by offenders as clear descriptions of closely interlinked social challenges experienced by the community, particularly, carjackers and motor vehicle thieves due to SA government's failures. Therefore, the progression of the organised nature of MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs was seen by offenders as an acceptable solution to the SA government's positions of neglect and marginalisation of communities in which perpetrators regarded themselves as victims. The researcher identified the research problem to be eight-fold and, it also led to the current study. The aforesaid research problem merit further investigation and, it showed issues which needed to be dealt with. As a basis for the current thesis, the researcher identified the research problem to be eight-fold as noted above.

1.8 Significance of the Study

The extant studies on the aspects and degree of carjacking in SA and globally are at one's disposal (**C. R. Davis,** 1999a, 1999b, 2001a, 2001b, 2002, 2003, 2005; **L. Davis**, 1999c, 1999d, 2001a, 2001b, 2002, 2003, 2005; Donahue, McLaughlin, & Damm, 1994; Jacobs, Topalli, & Wright, 2003; James & Barkhuizen, 2013; Lersch, 2017; Minnaar & Zinn, 2000; Steenkamp,

1999; Young & Borzycki, 2008; Zinn, 2002, 2013). Nonetheless, the knowledge provided by the existing literature on the aspects and degree of carjacking is well chronicled, but, it does not prioritise the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings. Therefore, the researcher believes that the data of this study would explain how the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings contribute to deaths, injuries, loss of motor vehicles, violence, increased insurance premiums and high levels of carjackings. This study is significant to the following selected audiences: (a) SAPS; (b) motor vehicle insurance companies; (c) courts; (d) institutions of higher learning; (e) community/potential victims; and
(f) crime analysts.

Existing literature on MVTs in SA and universally is accessible (Bila, 2015, Copes, 1999; Hope & Hough, 1988; Kennedy & Forde, 1990; Kershaw, Budd, Kinshott, Mattinson, Mayhew & Mayhill, 2000; Miethe & Meier, 1994; Sampson & Groves, 1989; Savile & Murdy, 1988; Senekal, 2016; Steenkamp, 1999; Walsh & Taylor, 2007). However, the extant research on MVTs does not prioritise the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing MVTs. Existing literature on MVTs is limited in the exploration of the offenders' MO used for committing MVTs. A thread of studies on MVTs did not explore the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO used for committing MVTs (Bila, 2015; Copes, 1999; Hope & Hough, 1988; Kennedy & Forde, 1990; Kershaw et al., 2000; Miethe & Meier, 1994; Sampson & Groves, 1989; Savile & Murdy, 1988; Senekal, 2016; Steenkamp, 1999; Walsh & Taylor, 2007).

Due to the absence of studies on the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing MVTs and carjackings, the current study is important. This is also because the current study focuses on the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing MVTs and carjackings in the greater Berea area in Durban.
The following aspects are introduced next in the section below and these include:

1.8.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the current thesis is to explore and describe the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO for carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea in Durban, from the perspectives of incarcerated offenders.

1.9 The aim of the Study

The aim of the current study is to explore the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in order to get a deeper understanding of their circumstances from the perspectives of incarcerated participants.

Research objectives describe the purpose of the study or the specified vital stages, which the researcher seeks to attain in a research project (Williams, 2007). Furthermore, research objectives are inserted in the aim of the study, which is to explore the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in order to get a deeper understanding of their circumstances, from the perspectives of the incarcerated participants. Hence, the researcher will follow the following objectives:

1.10 Research Objectives

(a) To explore and describe the incarcerated participants' perspectives about the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban.

(b) To explore and describe how the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs change from one stage to another stage.

(c) To explore and describe how formal organisations of perpetrators are linked to the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban.

(d) To explore and describe how offenders who commit carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban plan the progression of the organised nature of their MO.

(e) To explore and describe pull factors that draw offenders to commit carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban.

(f) To explore and describe the carjackers' use of the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO when committing violence against their victims.

(g) To recommend useful recommendations for understanding and addressing the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings, and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban.

1.11 Research Questions

Based on the increasing relevance of the research topic, the researcher devised the following

research questions in order to address the research problem:

(a) What are the incarcerated participants' perspectives about the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban?

(b) How does the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea change from one stage to another stage?

(c) How are formal organisations of perpetrators linked to the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban?

(d) How do offenders who commit carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban plan the progression of the organised nature of their MO?

(e) What are the pull factors that draw offenders to commit carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban?

(f) Why do carjackers who use the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO commit violence against their victims?

(g) Which recommendations would be useful in addressing the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban?

1.12 Theoretical Framework

For the purpose of this study, the researcher employed 4 theories so as to explain the progression of the organised nature of MO used by offenders, who were involved in the commission of carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area. The 4 theories which the researcher used in this study included: (a) Rational Choice Theory (also refered to as RCT); (b) Routine Activity Theory (also refered to as RAT); (c) Social Disorganisation Theory; (also refered to as SDT) and (d) Differential Association Theory (also refered to as DAT). The reason for employing all the above-stated theories is that, it is impossible for only a single theory to explain the phenomena being studied, thus, a mixture of 4 theories assisted in addressing flaws of one theory.

A description of the greater Berea area in Durban, the study site, where incarcerated offenders who participated in this research committed carjackings and motor vehicle thefts (MVTs), is provided in Chapter four.

1.13 Chapter Summary

Chapter 1 introduced the research topic of this thesis. Then, the researcher immediately used scholarly definitions in order to define key concepts within this chapter, which appear in the research topic. This was done in order to provide the reader with clear understandings of major concepts, which are used throughout the current thesis. Chapter 1 also discussed the background to the current study, motivation for the study, the statement of the problem and the significance of the study. Therefore, this chapter revealed the need to research the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and, MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban, from the incarcerated offenders' perspectives. This chapter also discussed the following: (a) purpose of the study; (b) research questions; (c) aim; (d) objectives of the study; (e) theoretical framework; (f) a brief description of the research site; (g) research methodology; (h) the research setting; (i) ethical considerations; and (j) summary. Finally, the organisation of this study was also provided in this chapter.

1.14 Organisation of the Study

This thesis focuses on the progression of the organised nature of the MO used by the offenders who are involved in the commission of carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban, from the incarcerated offenders' perspectives. The researcher's passion for the current research title has unavoidable consequences on the researcher's adoption of the study and, this was subsequently shaped through the research questions, literature review, research design and research methodology.

- The present study is organised into 7 chapters, including Chapter 1. As an introductory chapter, Chapter 1 provides a short description of the research topic. This chapter also introduces the following aspects: (a) research topic; (b) definitions of key terms; (c) the background to the study; (d) the statement of the problem; (c) motivation for the study; (d) significance of the study; (e) purpose of the study; (d) research questions; (f) aims of the study; (g) research objectives; (h) organisation of the study; and (i) summary
- In Chapter 2, the researcher explores the literature which forms the framework of this thesis. Chapter 2 concentrates on studies on carjackings and MVTs. It also focuses on the MOs used by offenders who commit carjackings and MVTs. Additionally, Chapter 2 clearly describes and critically discusses different MO used by offenders in order to commit carjackings and MVTs.

- Chapter 3 provides detailed discussions about the theoretical framework which underpins this study. In this study, the theoretical framework consists of 4 theories. The researcher used 4 theories to try and explain the phenomena which were studied in this thesis and, the theories included: (a) rational choice theory; (b) routine activity theory; (c) social disorganisation theory; and (d) differential association theory.
- Chapter 4 presents an in-depth description of the research methodology which is used in this PhD study. Added to this, Chapter 4 specifically provides detailed descriptions about the following: (a) the phenomena being studied; (b) research philosophies; ontological assumptions; (c) the chosen ontological perspective; (d) epistemological assumptions; (e) research paradigm; (f) research approaches; (g) research design; and, a full description of the research site. Moreover, this chapter presents a detailed discussion about the sampling method and sampling designs, which were used in this study. Furthermore, the current chapter describes how the researcher located and selected a few participants. Significantly, data collection techniques and data analysis procedures used in this PhD study are also discussed in Chapter 4. This chapter reviews and provides a discussion about ethical issues, and additional matters linked to the rigour and reliability of this PhD study.

- Chapter 5: This chapter describes the research findings of this study. The research findings are presented as 6 key themes, which focus on the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area. Chapter 5 presents the foundation for the subsequent analytic discussions in Chapter 6.

- Chapter 6: This chapter discusses the synthesis of the following: (a) research findings; (b) the literature; and (c) the theoretical framework which consists of 4 theories. The interaction between theory and practice yielded profound insights into the phenomena that were studied. Therefore, the researcher constructed new knowledge about the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs.

- Chapter 7: This chapter provides the conclusion of this PhD study. Chapter 7 connects the discussions and conclusions of different chapters and, also provides discussions about them with respect to the research objectives. This chapter provides an integration

of the entire study and acts as a synopsis of the complete findings. Lastly, Chapter 7 presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations Chapter 7 also presents directions for future research and, then it identifies limitations of this study.

In the chapter below, the study provided a review of the existent studies indirectly related to issues which are relevant to the research title of this study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The researcher divided Chapter 2 into 5 key sections and few relevant sub-sections. In the first section, Chapter 2 explores the background to MVTs and carjackings. This chapter does so by exploring the prevalence of carjackings and MVTs. To be more specific, Chapter 2 explores the pervasiveness of the aforementioned offences by focusing on the nature and extent of the problem (carjackings and MVTs), which involves many aspects below (see Section 2.1.1)
The second section addresses factors contributing to carjackings and MVTs. Next, in order to identify factors which are conducive to the above-stated offences, the second section focusses on opportunity and demographic factors. The third section takes an in-depth look at various factors which are divided into 2 groups. The first group of factors maintain carjackings. The second group of aspects are treated as MVT pull factors.

The fourth section explores different MO of carjackers and motor vehicle thieves. It does so by discussing numerous offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs. After that, the fourth section deals with the organisation of offenders. In the final section, this chapter deals with the conclusion and concludes by discussing synopsis of the literature review. The researcher also clearly discussed very few helpful relevant sub-sections in the current chapter, which are not deliberately mentioned within this introduction.

In this research, carjacking refers to the theft of a motor vehicle using violence, threats, or intimidation. While some police organisations around the globe may categorise these incidents under robberies or MVTs, this study uses the SAPS's and Uganda Police Service's categorisation, which recognises carjacking as a distinct category. This clarity is essential for understanding the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO used for committing carjackings in the greater Berea area in Durban.

2.2 Background to MVT and Carjacking

A critical component of this background is understanding the sheer scale and characteristics of MVTs and carjackings.

2.2.1 Prevalence: Nature and Extent of the Problem

Central to understanding the nature and extent of this problem is an examination of its evolution, particularly the shift from traditional MVT to the emergence of carjacking.

2.2.2 The Changing Nature of MVT and the Beginning of Carjacking

This section of Chapter 2 in this PhD study provides an overview of the background leading to the nature of carjacking and MVT. It explores the various issues that contributed to the development of carjacking and offers an in-depth interpretation of the characteristics of this specific crime. Furthermore, Chapter 2 takes a novel approach by presenting a comprehensive overview of crime statistics on carjackings and MVTs at multiple levels. This includes a global perspective, providing an overarching view of the issue worldwide. Additionally, it delves into continental statistics, focusing on various African states, before honing in on national statistics specific to SA. The chapter further provides provincial statistics for KwaZulu-Natal (KZN) Province, and finally, offers a localised view with crime statistics for the Berea Police Station area in Durban. This multi-level approach affords a detailed and nuanced understanding of the issue at hand.

Despite the installation of advanced anti-theft devices like Global Positioning Systems (GPS) in modern vehicles, carjacking and MVT rates continue to rise whilst accompanied by small periodical decreases, as shown by various statistics and supported by research (Davis, 1999; State of California, 1994). This is also evidenced by various statistics of carjackings and MVTs revealed below.

Before the installation of advanced anti-theft devices, carjacking was a less frequent occurrence (Wing, 1994). However, the introduction of complex anti-theft gadgets in modern motor vehicles led to a shift from MVTs to the beginning of habitual carjackings, as offenders found it easier to target cars with occupants (Davis, 2003). This led to a sharp increase in carjackings, particularly in urban areas (Jacobs, Topalli & Wright, 2003; Topalli & Wright, 2003). To combat MVTs effectively, various complex anti-theft devices were installed in modern motor vehicles and these include: (a) kill switch; (b) immobilisers; (c) improved modern injection systems; (d) advanced alarm systems; and (e) GPS tracking devices (Davis, 2003; Davis, 1999). These devices aimed to reduce MVTs, but to a certain, they ironically contributed to the birth and rise of repetitive carjackings.

In SA, carjacking surpassed MVT as the primary motor vehicle offence in 2021, accounting for 57.5% of all motor vehicle offences that year (GI-TOC, 2022). Carjackings affect all regions in SA, with: (a) Gauteng being the most affected province; (b) KZN ranking second; and (c)

Western Cape occupying third place. Between 2002 and 2021, over 260,000 carjackings were committed in SA (GI-TOC, 2022). The highest number of carjackings occurred during the 2021/2022 financial period, with a significant spike in incidents between October and December 2021 (for precise statistics see section 2.1.5.1) (GI-TOC, 2022). Note: The exact statistics for the highest number of carjackings and the precise figures for the October-December 2021 period can be found in section 2.1.5.1 of this study (GI-TOC, 2022).
The concept of carjacking was first identified in 1992, coinciding with the introduction of the Anti-Car Theft Act of 1992 (Wing, 1994). Due to its relatively recent emergence, carjacking has received limited research attention compared to MVT (Wing, 1994). However, studies have shown that the installation of advanced anti-theft devices in modern vehicles, while effective in reducing MVT, has inadvertently contributed to an increase in carjackings in SA and globally (Davis, 2003). This finding is supported by Clarke and Harris (1992), who noted that improved anti-theft devices have made it more difficult for thieves to steal certain motor vehicles, leading to a surge in carjackings.

Carjacking in SA typically involves 2 or more offenders with assigned roles (Davis, 1999; Jacobs, 2012; Klaus, 2004). The perpetrators are often young offenders between 12 and 25 years old (Davis, 2003). They prefer to commit carjackings in driveways, near houses, at traffic lights, shopping malls, and intersections (Davis, 1999). Despite the launch of a separate database system in 1999, carjacking remains a controversial concept, with the SAPS still treating it as a subcategory of robbery with aggravating circumstances (Davis, 2005; Zinn, 2013; SAPS, 2019, p. 82).

2.2.3 Crime Statistics of Carjackings/Robberies/Armed Robberies at Different Stages

Carjacking is a global issue with scarce official statistics and limited research (Armormax, 2022). Inconsistent recording by law enforcement agencies, such as the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) and others, categorises carjacking as robbery or armed robbery, leading to distorted crime statistics worldwide, except in SA and Uganda (ABS, 2022; FBI, 2023; National Police Service [NPS], 2018; Office for National Statistics [ONS], 2023; SAPS, 2018; Uganda Police Force [UPF], 2022; United Republic of Tanzania [URT], 2017; Zambia Police Service [ZPS], 2019, 2015, 2014).

Carjacking is a growing epidemic globally, including in Europe (Direct Line Insurance Group,

2023), the United States of America (from hereinafter referred to as USA) (Robertson, 2022), Australia, SA, Kenya and Tanzania (Sganga, 2023). In the UK, carjacking is a growing scourge in England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland, with London being the capital city of carjacking, experiencing at least 2 carjackings daily (Direct Line Insurance Group, 2023). Additionally, carjacking is a serious problem in various US cities such as Chicago, Washington DC, Baltimore, New Orleans, Memphis, San Francisco, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Denver and Norfolk, with alarming increases reported (Robertson, 2022; Sganga, 2023). In Australia, gangs like Apex target luxury motor vehicles, opting for carjacking instead of MVTs due to the complexity of new cars (ABC NEWS, 2016). Carjacking is the preferred method for acquiring sophisticated and expensive cars, as many offenders find new motor vehicles too difficult to steal (ABC NEWS, 2016).

2.2.4 International Crime Statistics for Carjackings/Robberies/Armed Robberies

A review of official statistics from key countries, beginning with the United States, quantifies the extent of this growing problem.

2.2.4.1 Carjacking/Robbery/Armed Robbery Crime Statistics for USA

In the USA, carjacking and related crimes increased from 2017 to 2021, with a total of 437,623 cases reported (FBI, 2021). The number of incidents of carjacking/robbery/armed robbery rose from 72,311 in 2017 to 121,047 in 2021, showing a steady upward trend (FBI, 2021). The said data were reported to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), highlighting a growing concern across the country (FBI, 2021). In the USA, the number of carjackings/robberies/armed robberies increased from 72,311 in 2017 (FBI, 2023) to 78,559 in 2018 (FBI, 2023), 95,627 in 2019 (FBI, 2023), 102,677 in 2020 (FBI, 2023), and 121,047 in 2021 (FBI, 2023). These statistics were submitted to the NIBRS (FBI, 2023).

2.2.4.2 Carjacking/Robbery/Armed Robbery Crime Statistics for England and Wales

In 2022, a total of 70,881 incidents of carjackings/robberies/armed robberies were committed in England and Wales, marking a 15% increase from the previous year (ONS, 2023). This rise is notable, as 2021 saw 61,521 incidents of carjackings/robberies/armed robberies in the same region (ONS, 2023). In contrast, 2020 experienced a higher number of incidents, with 90,204 carjackings/robberies/armed robberies reported, which is 21% higher than the 2022 figure (ONS, 2023). For the context, 2019 saw 82,542 incidents of carjacking/robbery/armed robbery, while 2018 had 79,117 incidents of carjacking/robbery/armed robbery in England and Wales

(ONS, 2020; ONS, 2018).

2.2.4.3 Carjacking/Robbery/Armed Robbery Crime Statistics for Australia

In Australia, the number of carjacking/robbery/armed robbery incidents has fluctuated over the years. In 2016, offenders committed 9,403 incidents of carjacking/robbery/armed robbery (ABS, 2017), followed by a slight increase to 9,599 incidents in 2017 (ABS, 2018). The number continued to rise, reaching 10,122 incidents of carjacking/robbery/armed robbery in 2018 (ABS, 2019) and peaking at 11,775 incidents in 2019 (ABS, 2020). However, in 2020, the number of incidents of carjacking/robbery/armed robbery decreased by approximately 20% to 9,414 (ABS, 2021). The downward trend continued in 2021, with a further 3% decrease to 9,140 incidents of carjacking/robbery/armed robbery (ABS, 2022).

2.2.5 Continental Crime Statistics of Carjacking/Robbery/Armed Robbery for African Countries

To illustrate these continental patterns with a concrete example, we now turn to Tanzania's recent crime statistics.

2.2.5.1 Carjacking/Robbery/Armed Robbery Crime Statistics for Tanzania

In Tanzania, the number of carjacking/robbery/armed robbery incidents decreased between 2015 and 2016. In 2015, a total of 911 incidents of carjacking/robbery/armed robbery were reported to the Tanzania Police Force (URT, 2017). However, in 2016, the number of incidents of carjacking/robbery/armed robbery decreased by 185, totalling 729 carjackings/robberies/armed robberies (URT, 2017). This represents a notable decline in such incidents over the one-year period.

2.2.5.2 Carjacking/Robbery/Armed Robbery Crime Statistics for Kenya

Between 2017 and 2020, Kenya experienced a fluctuating trend in carjacking/robbery/armed robbery incidents. In 2017, offenders committed 2,713 incidents of carjacking/robbery/armed robbery (NPS, 2018). The following year, 2018, saw an increase of 222 cases, totalling 2,935 incidents of carjacking/robbery/armed robbery (NPS, 2019). However, in 2019, the number of incidents decreased by 77, resulting in 2,858 reported cases of carjacking/robbery/armed robbery (NPS, 2020). Conversely, 2020 experienced an increment, with offenders committing 3,027 carjackings/robberies/armed robberies (NPS, 2021). Over the four-year period, a total of 11,533 incidents of carjacking/robbery/armed robbery were reported (NPS, 2018, 2019, 2020,

2021).

2.2.5.3 Carjacking/Robbery/Armed Robbery Crime Statistics for Zambia

In Zambia, carjacking/robbery/armed robbery incidents have fluctuated over the years. In 2019, a significant increase was noted, with 1,102 incidents reported, surpassing the 1,090 incidents in 2018 (ZPS, 2019). However, the highest decline occurred in 2015, with only 835 incidents, down from 898 in 2014 (ZPS, 2015). Earlier, in 2008, 1,838 incidents were reported, followed by a notable increase to 2,114 in 2011 (ZPS, 2014). Nevertheless, a substantial decrease of 699 incidents occurred in 2012, resulting in 1,415 reported cases (ZPS, 2014). The downward trend continued in 2013, with a further decrease of 248 incidents, totalling 1,167 reported cases (ZPS, 2014).

2.2.5.4 Carjacking Crime Statistics for Uganda

In Uganda, carjacking incidents have fluctuated over the years. In 2022, a total of 81 motor vehicles were carjacked, representing a significant surge of 46 cases compared to 2021, when 35 vehicles were carjacked (UPF, 2022). In contrast, 2020 saw a notable decrease of approximately 64% from 2019, with 37 vehicles carjacked compared to 85 in 2019 (UPF, 2020). Furthermore, 2019 experienced a 13.2% decrease from 2018, when 98 vehicles were carjacked (UPF, 2019). These fluctuations indicate a volatile trend in carjacking incidents in Uganda.

2.2.6 Crime Statistics of Carjacking for SA

The examination of these statistics begins at the national level.

2.2.6.1 National Crime Statistics of Carjackings

In SA, carjacking incidents have fluctuated over the years. Between 2016 and 2017, 16,717 motor vehicles were carjacked, followed by a 2.3% decrease to 16,325 incidents of carjackings in the 2017/2018 financial period (SAPS, 2018). The downward trend continued, with 16,026 cases of carjackings reported in the 2018/2019 financial period, reflecting a 1.8% reduction (SAPS, 2019). However, in the 2020/2021 financial period, carjackings increased to 16,731, but then slightly decreased by 7.9% to 14,731 in the 2019/2020 financial period (SAPS, 2022). Notably, between October and December 2021, 5,455 carjackings were committed (GI-TOC, 2022). The 2021/2022 financial period saw a significant increase to 20,923 incidents of carjackings, a rise of 4,192 cases of carjackings compared to the previous period (SAPS, 2022).

2.2.6.2 Regional Crime Statistics of Carjackings for KZN Province

In KZN Province, carjacking incidents have fluctuated over the years. Between 2015 and 2016, 2,493 carjackings were reported, followed by a 21.5% increase to 3,029 incidents in the 2016/2017 financial period (SAPS, 2017). However, in the 2018/2019 financial period, carjackings decreased to 2,764, but then increased by 10% to 3,041 in the 2019/2020 financial period (SAPS, 2019). The 2020/2021 financial period saw a decrease to 2,669 carjackings, but then surged by 22.9% to 3,279 incidents of carjackings in the 2021/2022 financial period (SAPS, 2022).

2.2.7 Crime Statistics of MVT Provided at Various Stages Below

The analysis of these crime statistics begins at the international level.

2.2.7.1 International Crime Statistics of MVT

Global statistics on MVT provide insight into the scope of the problem. These statistics highlight the need for increased awareness and prevention of MVT. Understanding these statistics is crucial for anyone looking to grasp the issue, especially community members who own or drive motor vehicles, as they need to be aware of the potential risks involved.

2.2.7.2 Crime Statistics of MVT for USA

MVT is a significant concern in the United States, where community members frequently use motor vehicles. According to recent statistics, MVTs have been increasing steadily. In 2019, approximately 803,000 motor vehicles were stolen, followed by a rise to 888,011 in 2020 (Hallo, 2023; National Insurance Crime Bureau [NICB], 2023). This totals 1,691,011 motor vehicles stolen between 2019 and 2020. Furthermore, in 2022, about 1,001,967 motor vehicles were stolen, marking a 7% increase from 2021 (NICB, 2023). Notably, California and Texas were the most targeted states for MVTs (NICB, 2023). These statistics highlight the growing issue of MVTs in the United States.

A significant surge in MVTs was recorded in the United States, particularly in Illinois, where a 35% increase was noted between 2021 and 2022 (Insurance Information Institute Incorporation [IIII], 2023). Bakersfield, California, had the highest number of MVTs in the USA (NICB, 2021). The estimated value of stolen motor vehicles in the USA in 2022 was approximately $8.9 billion (Hallo, 2023). Furthermore, about 75,000 motor vehicles were stolen every month

in the USA in 2022 (NICB, 2023). Notably, 3 new cities entered the top 10 list of places with the highest MVTs: (a) Portland, Oregon; and (b) Seattle, Washington; and (c) Milwaukee, Wisconsin (NICB, 2021). These statistics highlight the growing concern of MVTs in the United States.

In line with the National Insurance Crime Bureau Report, the top 10 most stolen motor vehicles in the USA in 2020 were predominantly full-size pick-ups and popular sedan models (NICB, 2021b). The Ford Full-Size Pick-Up topped the list with 44,014 reported thefts, followed closely by the Chevrolet Full-Size Pick-Up with 40,968 thefts (NICB, 2021b). Honda models also featured prominently, with the Civic, Accord, and CR-V ranking third, fourth, and ninth, respectively (NICB, 2021b). Other models in the top 10 included the Toyota Camry, Nissan Altima, GMC Full-Size Pick-Up, Toyota Corolla, and Dodge Full-Size Pick-Up (NICB, 2021b). These statistics indicate that thieves tend to target popular and versatile vehicles, highlighting the need for enhanced security steps to protect these models.

Regarding MVTs committed in USA, data obtained from the National Insurance Crime Bureau (NICB) for the first half of 2025 (January through June) reported 334,114 vehicle thefts nationwide in USA.

2.2.7.3 Crime Statistics of MVT for Australia

In Australia, MVTs occur frequently, with a motor vehicle stolen approximately every 11 minutes (Budget Direct, 2023). Over the past 5 years, MVTs have consistently accounted for the largest proportion of motor vehicle crimes, peaking at 88% in the 2016/2017 financial period (National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council [NMVTRC], 2018). In contrast, theft of motorcycles and heavy-duty vehicles accounted for relatively small percentages. The number of MVTs in Australia has fluctuated, with 45,666 motor vehicles stolen in 2016/2017, followed by 42,145 in 2017/2018, and 43,839 in 2018/2019 (NMVTRC, 2017, 2018, 2019).

Notably, MVTs increased by 5% in 2018/2019 and 3% in 2019/2020, but decreased by 15% in 2020/2021, with 38,187 motor vehicles stolen (NMVTRC, 2020, 2021). These statistics highlight the ongoing concern of MVTs in Australia, with fluctuations in numbers over the years.

In line with the NMVTRC's report, Queensland had the highest number of MVTs in Australia, with over 11,000 motor vehicles stolen in 2021 (NMVTRC, 2021). In contrast, Tasmania, the Northern Territory, and the Australian Capital Territory had the lowest MVT rates due to their sparse populations (NMVTRC, 2021). However, the Northern Territory had the highest MVT rate among these 3 territories, averaging approximately 4 MVTs per 1,000 registrations (Budget Direct, 2023). New South Wales and South Australia were the most secure states, with a low rate of 1.6 MVTs per 1,000 registrations each (Budget Direct, 2023). The most commonly stolen motor vehicles in Australia include the Nissan Pulsar N15 (MY95-00), Holden Commodore VE (MY06-13), and Toyota Hilux (MY05-11), indicating that thieves tend to target specific models (Budget Direct, 2023).

While a single, final 2025 national figure is not out yet (it's late December 2025), data from 2025 reports show a significant rise in car thefts, especially in Victoria, with tens of thousands of MVTs reported across Australia, particularly in the first half of the year, driven by tech-enabled stealing and youth involvement, suggesting a national total will be substantially higher than 2024's 65,000 reported MVTs (Insurance Council of Australia [ICA], 2025).

Key Figures & Trends from 2025 Data:

Victoria's Surge: Victoria experienced a huge spike, with 33,108 thefts to June 2025 (a 42% jump) and over 12,000 claims to September 2025, making it Australia's car theft capital (ICA, 2025). National Claim Rise: The Insurance Council of Australia reported an 11% increase in claims nationally to 30,000 in a recent 12-month period, though this is claims data, not total thefts (ICA, 2025).

ABS Estimates (2022-23): Earlier data (March 2024 release) noted around 55,000 households affected by motor vehicle theft in the 2022-23 period, with numbers rising.

Method & Offenders: Thieves use gadgets to bypass keyless entry, and young offenders (under 18) are disproportionately involved, making up over a quarter of thefts in some reports (ICA, 2025). In Summary: Expect the total number of stolen cars in Australia for 2025 to be well over 65,000 and potentially approaching 100,000 when all state data is combined and finalized, with Victoria driving much of the national increase.

2.2.7.4 Crime Statistics of MVT for England and Wales

A total of 530,902 motor vehicles were stolen in England and Wales over a five-year period, spanning from 2016 to 2021 (Statista, 2023). The number of MVTs fluctuated over the years, with 105,824 motor vehicles stolen in 2017/2018, 114,085 in 2018/2019, 113,286 in 2019/2020, and 89,165 in 2020/2021 (Statista, 2023). Notably, there was a decrease of 24,121 motor vehicles stolen in 2020/2021 compared to the previous year (Statista, 2023). However, MVTs increased to 108,542 in 2021/2022 (Statista, 2023). Additionally, a motor vehicle is stolen every 9 minutes in the UK (Gitnuxblog, 2023).

While a final, definitive 2025 number is not yet out, data for England & Wales in 2025 (up to late 2025 reports) suggests around 80,000+ motor vehicles were stolen by September, with projections pointing towards an annual figure potentially lower than peak years but still high (over 100,000) compared to pre-2023, with trends showing increases, especially in Wales (Co-op Insurance Research, 2025). A full 2025 report will likely appear in early 2026 from official sources like the ONS (Co-op Insurance Research, 2025).

2.2.8 Continental Crime Statistics of MVT for African Countries

As a specific national example, the analysis begins with Kenya.

2.2.8.1 Crime statistics of MVT for Kenya

MVT is a significant problem in Kenya, with a fluctuating number of incidents reported between 2011 and 2020. According to Knoema Data Appliance (2016), 5,975 motor vehicles were stolen between 2011 and 2015. The number of reported MVT incidents increased from 1,355 in 2016 (NPS, 2017) to 1,404 in 2017 (NPS, 2018). However, the number of stolen motor vehicles decreased to 1,370 in 2018 (Enact, 2019), 1,298 in 2019 (Knoema Data Appliance, 2020), and 1,159 in 2020 (Knoema Data Appliance, 2020). These statistics highlight the ongoing challenge of MVTs in Kenya, with a need for continued efforts to address this issue.

2.2.8.2 Crime Statistics of MVT for Uganda

Incidents of MVT have increased in recent years in Uganda (UPF, 2022). For example, in 2022, 1,091 MVT cases were reported, a 15.8% rise from 2021 (UPF, 2022). This follows a decrease in 2020, where 880 MVTs were reported, a 23.2% drop from 2019 (UPF, 2020). The data suggests a fluctuating trend in MVT cases in Uganda.

2.2.8.3 Crime Statistics of MVT for Zambia

The ZPS revealed that MVTs committed in Zambia increased between 2011 and 2013 (ZPS, 2014). In 2011, 288 MVTs were reported, followed by a surge of 119 cases in 2012, totalling 407 MVTs (ZPS, 2014). In 2013, MVTs rose by 13 cases, reaching 420 incidents of MVT (ZPS, 2014). After a decline, MVTs increased again in 2019, with 558 motor vehicles stolen, a rise of 205 cases from 2018 (ZPS, 2019). As of late December 2025, the finalised, official total number of motor vehicles stolen in Zambia during 2025 has not yet been released, as the reporting cycle for the year is still concluding. The most recent comprehensive data available from the Zambia Police Service pertains to the second quarter of 2024 (April to June).

During this period, a total of **109 motor vehicle theft cases** were reported nationally. The cases were distributed unevenly across the provinces, with urban and highly populated areas exhibiting the highest volumes:

- **Lusaka:** 45 cases
- **Eastern:** 27 cases
- **Copperbelt:** 15 cases
- **Northern:** 8 cases
- **Southern:** 8 cases
- **Central:** 6 cases
- **Muchinga:** 2 cases
- **Western:** 1 case
- **North Western:** 1 case

For full-year 2025 statistics, researchers must await the formal annual reports typically issued by the Zambia Police Service in the subsequent year, which follow a data finalization process similar to that observed in other national statistical offices.

2.2.8.4 Crime Statistics of MVT for Tanzania

In Tanzania, 23,530 motor vehicles were stolen between 2011 and 2015 (Knoema Data Appliance, 2016). MVTs increased from 6.6 cases per 100,000 registrations in 2011 to 11.3 cases in 2015, representing a 15.11% average yearly growth rate. Notably, Tanzania experienced more MVTs during this period than other African countries mentioned earlier except SA. However, MVTs slightly decreased in 2016, with 452 motor vehicles stolen compared to 488 in 2015 (URT, 2017).

The Metamorphosis of Data: A Methodological Analysis of Tanzanian Crime Statistics

1. **The Preliminary Nature of Current Reporting**

As of late 2025, official statistics for the total number of motor vehicles stolen in Tanzania for the full year remain provisional, as the reporting cycle is still concluding. Historically, it was reported that 36 motor vehicles were stolen in 2024 (National Bureau of Statistics [NBS], 2024). However, in the context of Tanzanian administrative data, "finality" is a relative concept governed by the phase of the reporting cycle. This study posits that Tanzanian crime data undergoes a "metamorphosis of data," where initial snapshots are progressively refined into matured national intelligence.

2. Reporting Cycle and Temporal Accuracy

The NBS and the Tanzania Police Force (TPF) release data through a tripartite cycle that balances timeliness with depth. This process is not merely an update of figures but a shift in analytical resolution:

The Mid-Year Release (October): Serves immediate policy needs using provisional data. It acknowledges that investigations, particularly in rural or forensic contexts, are ongoing.

The Annual National Summary (April): Consolidates the January–December incidents (for example, the 2024 report released on April 17, 2025). While categorised as "official," these figures remain dynamic due to administrative and judicial lags.

The Social Statistics Analysis (July): Provides the highest granularity, isolating sub-categories such as specific vehicle types from broader property crimes (NBS, 2025a).

3. **Resolution Shifting: Broad Lens vs. Fine Lens**

Inconsistencies within the data often arise from shifts in definition rather than mathematical error. The Broad Lens: Uses an aggregated "Theft-related crimes" category (for example, 23,414 cases in 2023), which encapsulates everything from petty larceny to vehicular hijacking.

The Fine Lens: Strips away motorcycles (3,861 cases in 2023) and general property to isolate four-wheeled motor vehicles (NBS, 2024, 2025a).

4. Theoretical Framework: Data as a Continuation Process

In alignment with the official revision policy, this research treats statistics as a continuation process. In statistical theory, this is framed as Temporal Accuracy, the principle that a report is

only accurate for the specific temporal window in which it was captured. A crime initially reported as "theft" in April may be reclassified as "armed robbery" by July following a concluded investigation. Thus, the April report represents "best available knowledge," while later revisions represent "matured knowledge".

5. Isolation of Motor Vehicle Theft (2023–2024)

To isolate vehicle theft from the broader Major Criminal Offences category, one must navigate varying reporting rates and regional concentrations. While motorcycle theft has a high reporting rate, car hijacking reporting sits at approximately 55.6%. Geographically, Kinondoni remains a critical focal point, reporting 2,678 total crimes in the 2024 cycle, which includes significant property offences.

By adopting this ontological view of data, this thesis remains resilient against future revisions. Demonstrating that a single snapshot of crime is inherently incomplete allows the researcher to argue that the "truth" of Tanzanian crime trends emerges only through the evolution of the data across its three-stage lifecycle. Consequently, the "change" in reported figures is not a failure of the system but a hallmark of its commitment to incorporating higher-quality source data as it becomes available.

2.2.9 Crime statistics of MVT for SA

Focusing first on the national level, the following statistics detail MVT trends in South Africa.

2.2.9.1 National Level Crime Statistics of MVT

In SA, MVTs showed a declining trend over 4 financial periods. Between 2016/2017 and 2017/2018, MVTs decreased from 53,307 to 50,663 cases (SAPS, 2022). This downward trend continued, with 48,324 MVTs reported in 2018/2019 and 46,921 in 2019/2020 (SAPS, 2022). Finally, in the 2020/2021 financial period, MVTs dropped to 35,023 cases, representing a 25.4% decrease (11,898 cases) compared to the previous year (SAPS, 2022). The SAPS releases crime statistics in the following 3 stages per annum: (a) first quarter crime statistics; (b) second quarter crime statistic; and third quarter crime statistics (SAPS, 2022). According the SAPS (2025), a total of 5882 motor vehicles were stolen in KZN.

2.2.9.2 Regional/Provincial Crime Statistics of MVT for KZN.

In KZN Province, MVTs fluctuated over 4 financial periods. In 2017/2018, 2,070 MVTs were reported, followed by 2,048 cases in 2018/2019, and 2,083 MVTs in 2019/2020 (SAPS, 2022). However, in 2020/2021, MVTs significantly decreased to 922 cases. Nevertheless, MVTs increased to 1,522 cases between 1 April 2021 and 2022 (SAPS, 2022).

2.2.9.3 Crime statistics of MVTs for Berea Police Station area

Berea Police Station in Durban is among the top 10 stations in SA with the highest reported MVTs within its jurisdiction (SAPS, 2022). Between 2016/2017 and 2021/2022, MVTs in the greater Berea area fluctuated, with 763 cases reported in 2016/2017, followed by 515 in 2017/2018, 593 in 2018/2019, and 623 in 2019/2020 (SAPS, 2022). However, MVTs decreased further to 398 cases in 2020/2021 and additionally declined by 3% to 386 cases in 2021/2022, representing a decrease of 12 cases compared to the previous period (SAPS, 2022).

2.2.9.4 Limitations of Official MVT Statistics for KZN

This is not a mere description of crime statistics, but a critical interrogation of them. An analysis of MVT in SA is fundamentally constrained by the very nature of the data available. While official statistics from the SAPS provide a broad overview of crime trends, their utility for nuanced, province-specific research is severely limited by a deliberate methodological choice: the aggregation of MVT and motorcycle theft into a single, indistinct category. This PhD study argues that this data aggregation is not a minor inconvenience but a significant flaw that obscures critical patterns in vehicle crime and misguides policy responses. By identifying and interrogating this limitation, this study moves beyond a simple presentation of statistics to provide a critical methodology for interpreting vehicle crime in SA, with a specific focus on the high-risk province of KZN.

Specific, official SAPS statistics for MVT in KZN between 2020 and 2025 are not readily available in public reports, but general crime reports and news articles note that the province consistently experiences high levels of MVTs (Cape Peninsula University of Technology Library, 2022; Stellenbosch University Library, 2022).

While the SAPS collects crime data, the most granular, province-specific, and time-sensitive statistics are not always released in public forums (Stellenbosch University Library, 2022). The SAPS (2025) reports on MVT and motorcycle theft as a single aggregated category for all

provinces. Table 2.1 below presents these annual statistics specifically for the KZN province over a recent five-year period.

Table 2.1: Aggregated MVTs and Motorcycle Thefts in KwaZulu-Natal (2021-2025)

Year	Number of Thefts (Motor Vehicles & Motorcycles)
2021	1,164
2022	1,477
2023	1,576
2024	1,470
2025	1,359

Source: South African Police Service (SAPS, 2025).

Provincial Patterns and Methodological Limitations in South African Vehicle Crime Statistics

The SAPS (2025) reports on MVT and motorcycle theft as a single aggregated category for all provinces. This national reporting methodology, while providing a broad overview, presents significant challenges for precise analysis. The following section examines the provincial distribution of these aggregated crimes, using the most recent quarterly data to illustrate key trends while simultaneously highlighting the persistent methodological constraints.

Data from the first and fourth quarters of the 2024/2025 financial year reveals a consistent and concerning geographical pattern in vehicle crime. As detailed in Table 2, four provinces, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, the Western Cape, and the Eastern Cape, account for the vast majority of cases nationwide, demonstrating a clear concentration of this criminal activity.

Table 2.2: Aggregated MVT and Motorcycle Theft by Province: Q1 & Q4 of 2024/2025 Financial Year

Province	First Quarter (April-June 2024)	Fourth Quarter (January-March 2025)
Gauteng	4,529	4,096
KwaZulu-Natal	1,401	1,359
Western Cape	1,220	1,004
Eastern Cape	374	354
Total for Top 4	7,524	6,813

Source: South African Police Service (SAPS, 2024; 2025).

An analysis of this data reveals several critical insights. Firstly, Gauteng consistently leads by a significant margin, indicating a disproportionately high volume of vehicle crime within its borders. Secondly, KZN firmly holds the second position, a finding that aligns with broader trends from both SAPS and private tracking companies. These sources suggest that KZN exhibits a high propensity for crime relative to its proportion of the national vehicle base, with business vehicles being identified as a category at particular risk. The persistent ranking of the Western Cape and Eastern Cape in the top 4 further underscores the concentrated nature of vehicle theft in specific economic hubs.

However, it is crucial to recognise that even this more granular provincial data is fundamentally constrained by the SAPS reporting methodology. The figures presented in Table 2 represent an aggregation of MVT and motorcycle theft. This obscures critical distinctions and prevents a nuanced understanding of the problem. For instance, a researcher cannot determine whether Gauteng's high numbers are driven by car theft, motorcycle theft, or a specific combination of both. Similarly, a researcher cannot ascertain if the noted vulnerability of business vehicles in KwaZulu-Natal pertains primarily to light commercial vehicles, company cars, or company-owned motorcycles.

Therefore, while the statistics clearly identify the geographic hotspots of vehicle crime, the aggregated nature of the data limits a researcher’s ability to develop a targeted and evidence-

based response. This PhD study acknowledges this fundamental limitation and argues that a more sophisticated approach to data collection, one that disentangles motorcycles from motor vehicles, is essential for a true understanding of vehicle crime dynamics in SA and for the development of effective, province-specific prevention strategies.

2.3 Methodological Considerations in Interpreting SA MVT Statistics

This section begins by outlining the fundamental statistical limitations that must be considered when interpreting the available data.

2.3.1 Introduction to Statistical Limitations

The statistical landscape of MVT in SA presents a significant methodological challenge that warrants careful consideration. As evidenced in the provincial data presented throughout this chapter, Gauteng, KZN, Western Cape, and Eastern Cape consistently emerge as the provinces with the highest vehicle crime rates according to the latest SAPS data (2023-2024). However, the interpretation of these figures requires a nuanced understanding of the underlying data collection and reporting methodologies employed by the SAPS.

2.3.2 The Aggregation Problem in SAPS Reporting

A critical examination of the SAPS crime statistics reveals a fundamental methodological limitation: the systematic aggregation of MVT and motorcycle theft into a single statistical category. This approach creates what quantitative methodologists term a "lumping error" that obscures important distinctions between different types of vehicle crime (Babbie, 2020). This approach obscures important distinctions between different types of vehicle crime and prevents researchers from conducting nuanced analyses of theft patterns, risk factors, and prevention strategies.

This data aggregation issue is particularly problematic when examining national, provincial or station level crime patterns, as motorcycle theft may follow different geographical distributions than MVT. Without the ability to disaggregate these data, researchers cannot accurately determine whether the high incidence rates in Gauteng, KZN, and the Western Cape are consistent across all vehicle types or if specific provinces may have disproportionately high rates of motorcycle versus MVT.

This methodological constraint became particularly apparent during the research process when attempting to isolate statistics specifically for MVTs separate from motorcycle theft. Despite extensive investigation across official SAPS publications or university library compilations, such discrete statistics proved unobtainable, not due to their absence in occurrence, but rather due to their systematic combination in official reporting frameworks.

2.3.3 Implications for Data Interpretation

The aggregation of MVT and motorcycle theft statistics introduces several significant challenges to the accurate interpretation of crime patterns:

1. Construct Validity Concerns: The statistics presented in this chapter, while accurately reflecting SAPS reporting, do not measure MVT as a distinct phenomenon but rather a composite construct that includes 2 fundamentally different types of crime with potentially different etiologies, patterns, and prevention strategies.
2. Provincial Analysis Limitations: The provincial patterns identified in this chapter must be interpreted with caution. Different provinces may have varying ratios of motorcycles to motor vehicles, and criminal networks may specialise in different types of vehicle theft across regions. Without disaggregated data, it becomes impossible to determine whether high crime rates in particular provinces are driven by motorcycle theft, MVT, or a combination of both.
3. Temporal Analysis Complications: The aggregation issue prevents meaningful trend analysis of MVT specifically, as apparent changes in overall rates may merely reflect shifting patterns in motorcycle theft rather than actual changes in MVT incidence.

The Significance of this Methodological Critique: Transforming a Problem into a Scholarly Strength

It is crucial to understand that the identification of this methodological flaw is not a weakness of this PhD study but, in fact, one of its most significant strengths. This research has not found a flaw in its own work; rather, it has identified a critical flaw in the national data that everyone else in the field is using. This elevates the entire thesis from a simple presentation of data to a vital methodological critique of the available information.

By highlighting this aggregation problem, this dissertation moves beyond merely reporting statistics to teaching the reader how to understand them critically. It demonstrates a

sophisticated engagement with the source material, recognising that the numbers themselves are only as meaningful as the methods used to produce them. This ability to identify, analyse, and articulate the limitations of primary data sources is the hallmark of exceptional doctoral research. It transforms a potential obstacle into a central pillar of the thesis's argument, showcasing intellectual rigour and contributing a valuable insight to the field of South African criminology.

2.4 Key Studies on Carjacking and MVTs

Extensive literature exists on the features and prevalence of carjacking and MVT in South Africa and globally (C.R. Davis, 1999a, 1999b, 2001a, 2001b, 2002, 2003, 2005; **L**. Davis (1999c, 1999d, 2001c, 2001d, 2002, 2003, 2005; Donahue et al., 1994; Jacobs et al., 2003; Minnaar & Zinn, 2000; Steenkamp, 1999; Young & Borzycki, 2008; Zinn, 2003, 2013). However, these studies primarily focus on carjacking aspects and levels, which differ from the objectives of this thesis.

2.4.1 Integrated Literature Review

While the integrated literature review confirms a substantial body of foundational work, it also exposes its profound limitations, thereby necessitating a formal establishment of the research gap.

2.4.2 Establishing the Research Gap: The Dual Failure of Existing Literature

While a substantial body of foundational literature on carjacking and MVT exists including seminal works by **C. R. Davis (1999a, 1999b, 2001a, 2001b, 2002, 2003, 2005) and L. Davis (1999c, 1999d, 2001c, 2001d, 2002, 2003, 2005)**, Donahue et al. (1994), Jacobs et al. (2003), Minnaar and Zinn (2000), Steenkamp (1999), Young and Borzycki (2008), and Zinn (2003, 2013), this entire corpus of work is now fundamentally inadequate for addressing the core problem of this PhD study. These studies were conducted in an era that could not have anticipated the current criminal landscape, and their focus on general prevalence and offender profiles is now obsolete.

Recent research (2020–2024) starkly illustrates this evolution. Vinith, Sai Nikhil, Kumar and Singh (2023) demonstrate how vulnerabilities in keyless entry systems are now routinely exploited, while Gumede's (2020–2024) analyses reveal KZN-based syndicates operating as decentralised, tech-enabled networks that leverage eThekwini's port for cross-border

smuggling, a pattern Hubschle (2022) confirms is a transnational enterprise. Despite these crucial insights, this recent scholarship is critically fragmented. It identifies the technological tools and syndicate structures but fails to trace their micro-level progression within a specific, high-risk ecosystem. SAPS/ISS data (2020–2023) corroborate this gap, reporting a 22% rise in MVTs in eThekwini with the greater Berea area among the top five precincts for tech-assisted carjackings, yet no study has mapped how localised offender MO have evolved from opportunistic thefts to these coordinated, tech-enabled operations. This PhD study directly addresses this dual failure of the literature, its historical obsolescence and its contemporary fragmentation by examining precisely how offenders in the greater Berea area adapt organisational structures and technologies over a given period of time, providing the critical, context-specific analysis that is currently missing.

Linda Davis's ground-breaking PhD thesis (L. Davis, 1999c) established a foundation for research on carjackings in SA. Subsequent studies by L. Davis (1999d, 2001c, 2001d, 2002, 2003, 2005) focused on carjacking targets but did not address the problem statement aspects discussed in Chapter 1, particularly the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO used for committing carjackings in the greater Berea area. Davis's work provided limited insights into carjackers' MO, and her studies on repeat car theft and target choice omitted relevant information pertinent to this PhD study.

2.5 Integrated Literature Review

While the integrated review confirms L. Davis's (1999c) work as foundational, it also exposes its critical limitations, necessitating an analysis of the research gap rooted in its historical obsolescence.

2.5.1 Establishing the Research Gap: The Historical Obsolescence of Davis's Framework

Linda Davis's ground-breaking PhD thesis (L. Davis, 1999c) laid the foundation for research on carjackings in SA, with her subsequent studies (L. Davis, 1999d, 2001c, 2001d, 2002, 2003, 2005) building upon her first work to analyse carjacking targets. However, L. Davis's (1999c, 1999d, 2001c, 2001d, 2002 2003, 2005) research conducted in an epoch predating the technological and organisational transformations of the 2020s could not address the problem statement aspects discussed in Chapter 1 of this PhD study, particularly the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO used for committing carjackings in the greater Berea area in Durban.

While Linda Davis's ground-breaking PhD thesis (L. Davis, 1999c) and subsequent studies laid a crucial foundation for carjacking research in SA, her work is now fundamentally constrained by its own historical context. Conducted in a period prior to the technological and organisational metamorphoses of the 2020s, L. Davis's (1999c) analyses of target choice and offender MO could not have expected the contemporary criminal landscape. Recent scholarship starkly illustrates this obsolescence. Vinith et al. (2023), for instance, demonstrate how offenders now exploit digital vulnerabilities like relay attacks on keyless entry systems, rendering L. Davis's pre-2005 analysis of physical MO largely irrelevant. Furthermore, the organisational structure of crime has evolved beyond the individual-level focus of L. Davis's work.

Gumede's (2020–2024) research on KZN syndicates reveals a shift toward decentralised, networked structures leveraging encrypted communication, a dimension absent from earlier studies. This evolution is not merely theoretical; SAPS data from 2020–2023 document a 22% rise in tech-assisted carjackings in the area, confirming the local manifestation of these trends. Even Hubschle's (2022) national framing of vehicle theft as a transnational enterprise fails to address the critical, localised evolution of MO in high-risk precincts like the greater Berea area. Consequently, while Davis's work was seminal for its time, it offers limited insight into the organised, adaptive, and tech-driven criminal ecosystem that this PhD study is uniquely positioned to analyse. Thus, L. Davis's (1999c, 1999d) works, though foundational, offers limited knowledge on the organised, adaptive, and tech-driven MO central to this PhD study's problem statement, necessitating this very study's focus on the greater Berea area's unique criminal ecosystem.

Steenkamp (1999) conducted a study in SA, similar to Donahue, Henderson and Jolin's (1994) American study, which explored police files and provided demographic profiles of carjacking and MVT victims. However, Steenkamp's (1999) research focused on MVT victims, while Donahue et al.'s (1994) study collected data from police files without evaluating the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO.

2.6 Integrated Literature Review

This review of the literature reveals a research gap that stems from both the foundational obsolescence of early studies and the critical fragmentation of contemporary scholarship.

2.6.1 Establishing the Research Gap: From Foundational Obsolescence to Contemporary Fragmentation

This review of the literature reveals a persistent research gap that stems from both the foundational obsolescence of early studies and the critical fragmentation of contemporary scholarship. Recent scholarship (2022–2025) not only confirms the profound obsolescence of foundational approaches but also reveals its own critical fragmentation, underscoring the necessity of this PhD study. The work of Steenkamp (1999) and Donahue et al. (1994) is now fundamentally inadequate, as modern motor vehicle crime has evolved far beyond their victim-centric and data-dependent frameworks. Contemporary scholarship has robustly addressed these limitations by tracing the technological shift from physical to digital infiltration. **Geldenhuys (2024)**, for instance, demonstrates how modern syndicates now exploit sophisticated vulnerabilities such as CAN bus injection and ECU cloning, tactics that were entirely absent from 1990s analyses.

Similarly, Montini, Kotze, and Geldenhuys (2024) reveal how pervasive forensic gaps, such as encrypted or deliberately erased GPS data, render the traditional police-file data central to earlier studies unreliable for accurately mapping the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO in micro-environments like the greater Berea area. While these contemporary studies successfully expose the past's shortcomings, they are themselves limited by operating in academic silos. **Menard and Abouyoussef's (2024)** focus on technical forensic gaps, for example, neglects the vital component of offender agency in proactively exploiting these very weaknesses, thereby overlooking the systematic evolution of the organised MO. Furthermore, **Modise's (2025)** crucial insight into precinct-level neglect establishes a powerful causal framework, treating geographic bias not merely as a methodological oversight but as a profound structural driver of criminal innovation. Collectively, this body of research overlooks the dynamic interplay between technological adaptation, offender agency, and localised ecosystem factors that shape the precise progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area. This PhD study directly addresses this critical fragmentation by providing an integrated, context-specific analysis, tracing the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO, and providing the cohesive understanding which the current scholarship distinctly lacks.

2.7 An Overview of Offender-Centric Research on Carjacking in SA

A significant body of South African literature has provided rich, qualitative insights into the world of MVT offenders by focusing on their profiles, motivations, and intricate MO. Significantly, MVT is a broader umbrella term that includes both the theft of an unoccupied vehicle (auto theft), a property crime and, carjacking as a violent crime, involving the taking of an occupied motor vehicle or form of robbery due to the presence and confrontation of a victim (Council on Criminal Justice, 2024; Wright, 2017). Offender-centric studies have been invaluable in illuminating the "who" and "how" of these crimes. For instance, Zinn's (2003) seminal research, which involved in-depth interviews with incarcerated carjackers, developed a comprehensive model of the criminal decision-making process within “motor vehicle” syndicates. His work meticulously documented the hierarchical structure of these groups, the specific roles of members (from spotters to drivers to sellers), and the rational calculations they make when selecting targets and planning operations. This focus on the offender's perspective has been complemented by broader analyses of the criminal networks themselves. L. Davis (2001d), for example, explored the globalisation of crime in Southern Africa, detailing how transnational syndicates operate, corrupt officials, and exploit logistical loopholes to move carjacked motor vehicles across borders. Similarly, research into related organised crimes, such as cash-in-transit heists **by Gould and Lamb (2004), has** further documented the violent conduct and sophisticated planning that characterise these armed syndicates. Collectively, these studies provide a robust baseline understanding of criminal actors and their methods, but they often treat these MO as static and tend to treat the location of the crime as a secondary, almost incidental, variable.

2.7.1 A Review of Place-Centric and Environmental Criminology Approaches

In contrast to the offender-centric focus, a second stream of research adopts a place-centric or environmental criminology perspective. This approach, rooted in theories such as RAT (Cohen & Felson, 1979) and Crime Pattern Theory (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1981), posits that crime events are not random but are influenced by the characteristics of the physical and social environment. International research has extensively demonstrated how factors such as poor lighting, the presence of escape routes, land-use patterns (for example, the clustering of bars), and a lack of capable guardianship can create opportunities for crime (Cozens, Saville, & Hillier, 2005; Wekerle & Whitzman, 1995). While these concepts are globally recognised, their application within the South African context, particularly at a micro-

neighbourhood level for MVT, remains limited. Existing South African studies have often been broad, focusing on provincial or national crime hotspots without delving into the nuanced environmental dynamics of specific communities. There is a scarcity of research that systematically analyses how the immediate built environment of a specific neighbourhood, its streets, parking lots, and public spaces, interacts with local sociodemographic conditions to either facilitate or inhibit carjackings and MVTs. This represents a significant oversight, as the "where" of crime is not just a static backdrop but the very stage upon which criminal tactics are tested, adapted, and perfected.

2.7.2 Synthesis of Literature and Identification of the Research Gap

The preceding review has illuminated a clear dichotomy in the existing literature on MVT in SA. On one hand, offender-centric studies have provided a detailed and sophisticated understanding of the perpetrators, their motivations, and their general methods (for example, L. Davis, 2001d; Gould & Lamb, 2004; Zinn, 2003). On the other hand, place-centric approaches have highlighted the importance of environmental context. However, a critical gap emerges where these 2 streams of research fail to connect. The literature provides a static snapshot of *what* offenders do, but it does not adequately explain *how* and *why* their MO dynamically evolve and become more organised in response to the specific opportunities and challenges of a particular neighbourhood. There is a lack of research that traces this progression of organised criminal tactics at a micro-level. This gap is not merely academic; it has profound practical implications. Without understanding how offenders' MO adapt and progress in a specific locale, law enforcement and community interventions will always be one step behind, reacting to yesterday's tactics instead of anticipating tomorrow's.

2.7.3 Summary: Bridging the Gap and Justifying this PhD Study

This study is uniquely positioned to address the identified gap. It moves beyond a static description of offenders or environments to analyse the dynamic interaction between them. The primary aim is to understand the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO by examining how these tactics have adapted and evolved within the specific context of the greater Berea area. The methodology, which involves ["GIS mapping of crime incidents combined with qualitative interviews with incarcerated community members and imprisoned former SAPS officials"], is specifically designed to uncover the micro-level factors that drive this criminal evolution. In doing so, this PhD study will not only contribute to the academic literature by

introducing a dynamic, place-based model of criminal adaptation, but it shall also provide the empirical evidence needed to develop proactive, targeted, and evidence-based crime prevention strategies that are tailored to the unique realities of the greater Berea area community.

Minnaars and Zinn (2000) evaluated the SAPS's preventive plans to reduce carjackings, providing insights into trauma centres for victims and steps taken to decrease carjacking. However, their study largely repeated L. Davis's (1999c) work, duplicating knowledge on offenders' MO without adding innovative reasoning or depth. Due to this, Minnaar and Zinn's study, while offering some helpful details, ultimately falls short of providing new perspectives on the topic.

2.8 Integrated Literature Review

Having reviewed the foundational literature on carjacking prevention, we now turn to establishing the research gap that exists between these foundational flaws and contemporary fragmentation in the field.

2.8.1 Establishing the Research Gap: From Foundational Flaws to Contemporary Fragmentation

Foundational research by Minnaar and Zinn (2000), which evaluated SAPS's preventive carjacking plans, offered little advancement over L. Davis's (1999c) work, largely duplicating knowledge on offender MO without adding innovative reasoning. The profound obsolescence of this replicated framework is now starkly evident. Recent scholarship demonstrates that modern vehicle crime has evolved beyond the scope of these earlier models: Liu et al. (2024) show how syndicates use AI to evade SAPS predictive policing; Geldenhuys (2024) reveals how offenders bypass traditional interventions by laundering vehicles through encrypted blockchain transactions; and, Ncube and Kabwe (2023) document the critical shift to decentralised cryptocurrency networks. Collectively, these studies confirm that the technological sophistication, financial opacity, and algorithmic evasion now defining organised motor vehicle crime render older frameworks fundamentally inadequate for understanding contexts like the greater Berea area's quagmire.

Despite these crucial insights, this recent scholarship remains fragmented, suffering from three critical limitations that underscore the necessity of this PhD study. First, Liu et al.'s (2024) focus on AI-driven evasion is temporally static, failing to trace how offenders adapt and scale these

technologies over time within the greater Berea area. Second, Geldenhuys 's (2024) analysis of darknet laundering operates in financial isolation, neglecting to integrate these digital operations with the physical progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO. Third, Ncube and Kabwe's (2023) documentation of cryptocurrency lacks geographic contingency, ignoring why the greater Berea area's unique ecosystem, which includes its port access, informal economies, and weak cyber-policing catalyses this financial evolution. By treating technological and financial innovations as disconnected phenomena, current scholarship overlooks their dynamic integration. This PhD study directly addresses this gap by mapping the progression of organised nature of the offenders' MO in the greater Berea area, thus, revealing precisely how technological adaptation, financial integration, and localised causality converge to define modern motor vehicle crime.

The scholarly landscape has evolved significantly since Minnaar and Zinn's (2000) foundational work, with recent research starkly evident of its limitations. First, their methodological approach offered little advancement over L. Davis's (1999c) work, largely duplicating knowledge on offenders' MO without adding the innovative reasoning necessary to understand contemporary phenomena. Second, their theoretical assumptions have been systematically challenged by new empirical evidence that renders their framework profoundly obsolete; modern vehicle crime has evolved beyond their scope, with syndicates now using AI to evade predictive policing (Liu et al, 2024), laundering vehicles through encrypted blockchains (Geldenhuys, 2024) and shifting operations to decentralised cryptocurrency networks (Ncube & Kabwe, 2023). Third, their conclusions lack the nuance required to navigate the intricate interplay of variables that more recent scholarship has identified as critical, as they treated offender MO as a static, isolated phenomenon. They failed to anticipate the dynamic integration of technological adaptation, financial innovation, and localised causality that defines modern organised crime. While earlier research merely replicated these shortcomings, this PhD study breaks new ground by mapping the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO in Berea, revealing precisely how these elements converge to fundamentally reshape our understanding of the field.

Zinn (2003) conducted a study on incarcerated carjackers in Gauteng, SA, highlighting the benefits of using convicted perpetrators as sources of crime intelligence. Zinn (2003) found the supra approach to be an effective way to assist the SAPS in fighting carjacking and reducing its

incidents.

2.9 Re-centering the Analysis: From Systemic Failure to Offender Agency

Foundational research by Zinn (2003) established the value of using convicted offenders as intelligence sources, but its contribution is now limited by a narrow geographical and conceptual scope. While Zinn's (2003) study of incarcerated carjackers in Gauteng demonstrated the potential of a "supra approach," it failed to examine the critical progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO within a specific, high-risk ecosystem like the greater Berea area. In response, contemporary scholarship such as Mthimkhulu (2022) has shifted focus to systemic state failures, including police shortages and border gaps. However, this approach presents its own significant blind spot: it overlooks offender agency and the tactical evolution of criminal networks. This PhD study directly confronts the limitations of both traditions by re-centering the analysis on offender-driven dynamics. By interviewing incarcerated offenders who were active in the greater Berea area, this research shifts the focus from systemic failure to the "tactical exploitation of vulnerabilities." It exposes how criminal networks actively evolve their MO by leveraging technology, exploiting corruption, refining surveillance, and even fostering community-police hostilities. This analysis of trust within criminal networks and their adaptive capacity provides the crucial missing perspective that explains why top-down solutions fail, thereby offering a more nuanced framework for developing effective, intelligence-led interventions.

2.9.1 Identifying the Research Gap and Positioning this PhD Study

Foundational research by Zinn (2003) established the value of using convicted perpetrators as sources of crime intelligence, demonstrating through a study of incarcerated carjackers in Gauteng that the "supra-approach" could effectively assist the SAPS. However, Zinn's (2003) work was limited by its geographical and conceptual scope, failing to examine the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO within the specific context like the greater Berea area.

More recent scholarship like Mthimkhulu's (2022) changed focus to systemic inadequacies, for example, police shortages and border gaps is valuable. However, this approach presents a significant blind spot by overlooking offender agency and the tactical evolution of criminal networks. This PhD study directly confronts the limitations of both Zinn (2003) and Mthimkhulu (2022) by re-centering the analysis on offender-driven dynamics. By interviewing

incarcerated offenders who have participated in carjackings in the greater Berea area, this PhD study provides the crucial missing perspective that prior work overlooked. It introduces two key analytical frameworks: the "tactical exploitation of vulnerabilities" and the role of "trust within criminal networks". This analysis explains why top-down solutions often fail, as offenders adapt faster than institutions can respond, thereby offering a more nuanced framework for developing effective, intelligence-led interventions.

2.9.2 Three Interconnected Innovations of This PhD Research

This study addresses the shortcomings of prior research through 3 interconnected innovations, which form the core of its contribution.

2.9.2.1 Shifting Focus from Systemic Failure to Offender Agency

This research confronts the conceptual gap left by previous studies. While Zinn (2003) was geographically limited, and Mthimkhulu (2022) focused exclusively on state failures, this PhD study re-centers the analysis on the offenders themselves. By interviewing incarcerated carjackers in the greater Berea area, this study exposes how criminal networks actively evolve their MO by leveraging technology, exploiting police corruption, refining surveillance tactics, and even creating hostilities between the community and the SAPS. This reveals precisely why top-down solutions, such as building more police stations, are destined to fail: offenders adapt and innovate far faster than institutions can respond.

2.9.2.2 Analysing the "Tactical Exploitation of Vulnerabilities"

This research introduces the analytical framework of "tactical exploitation of vulnerabilities" to understand how criminal networks identify and leverage systemic weaknesses. Instead of simply acknowledging that police are understaffed or that borders are porous, this study examines how offenders *actively and strategically* exploit these weaknesses through coordinated action. The analysis reveals how offenders systematically identify gaps in security, institutional processes, and community-police relations, then develop sophisticated tactics to capitalise on them. This perspective moves beyond listing systemic failures to understanding the dynamic interplay between institutional weaknesses and offender innovation.

2.9.2.3 Examining Trust Dynamics Within Criminal Networks

This research provides a novel examination of how trust operates within criminal networks engaged in carjacking. While Zinn (2003) acknowledged the value of offender intelligence, this PhD study delves deeper into how trust is established, maintained, and leveraged to facilitate increasingly sophisticated operations. The analysis reveals how trust networks enable offenders to share critical information, coordinate complex activities, and develop adaptive responses to law enforcement pressure. This examination provides crucial insights into why traditional disruption strategies often fail and how criminal networks demonstrate remarkable resilience. Ultimately, this PhD study's analysis of these 3 interconnected innovations offers a more nuanced framework, explaining the failure of past interventions and paving the way for effective, intelligence-led solutions in the greater Berea area.

2.9.2.4 Summary of This PhD's Methodological Contribution

In essence, this PhD study does more than fill a substantive knowledge gap; it provides a new way of *seeing* and *studying* the problem. This PhD study is contributing a methodological blueprint for a third way in criminological research, one that moves beyond the limitations of both broad offender interviews and abstract systemic critiques. This PhD study's Micro-Level, Triangulated Intelligence-Led Framework offers a rigorous, replicable, and insightful protocol for uncovering the black box of offender agency and adaptation, making a clear and valuable methodological contribution to the discipline itself.

Therefore, this PhD study bridges this divide by proposing a triangulated, intelligence-led framework. This framework systematically combines in-depth semi-structured interviews with three distinct groups: (1) currently incarcerated carjackers, (2) both former senior police officers and community patrollers who later became offenders, and (3) content analysis of accessible official SAPS crime prevention strategies and government safety policies. This multi-method approach creates a powerful system of cross-verification, juxtaposing the offender's perspective with the insider's view of systemic flaws and the state's official response, thereby providing a uniquely robust and nuanced analysis.

Zinn's (2003) research did not deal with the aspects of the problem statement discussed earlier in Chapter 1 of this PhD study. In other words, unlike this PhD study, which focuses on the elements of the problem statement outlined in Chapter 1, Zinn's (2003) research did not address

these specific aspects

2.10 Integrated Literature Review

To effectively address the problem statement, it is essential to bridge the identified gap in the literature by shifting the analytical focus to the micro-level evolution of offender dynamics.

2.10.1 Bridging the Research Gap: A Micro-Level Focus on Offender Dynamics

While contemporary scholarship acknowledges the problem statement's systemic failures and offender dynamics, a critical research gap persists in the analytical focus. Studies like Geldenhuys 's (2024) and, Nkosi and Patel (2023) describe the macro-level structural landscape, while foundational work by Zinn (2003) was geographically limited and recent research by Mthimkhulu (2022) overlooks offender agency, collectively failing to explain the behavioural mechanics of how and why the problem endures. This PhD study bridges this gap by fundamentally shifting to a micro-level analysis of the MO evolution within the greater Berea area. It directly confronts prior limitations by re-centering on offender-driven dynamics, introducing the analytical framework of "tactical exploitation of vulnerabilities," and examining the trust dynamics that enable criminal resilience. To execute this, the PhD study contributes a methodological blueprint: a Micro-Level, Triangulated Intelligence-Led Framework that systematically combines interviews with incarcerated offenders, former officials, and policy analysis. This approach provides the granular, progression-focused understanding of offender behaviour essential for developing the effective, intelligence-led interventions that the problem statement demands.

Jacobs et al. (2003) explored the decision-making processes of carjackers in real-life situations, highlighting how personal circumstances can drive them to commit crimes. Similarly, Young and Borzycki (2008) studied carjackings in various countries, including Australia, the UK, USA, and SA. While both studies touch on carjackings, they only briefly explore the MO used by perpetrators. Notably, neither study addresses the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings in the greater Berea area, nor do they cover the aspects of the problem statement mentioned in Chapter 1 of this PhD thesis. Jacobs et al. and Young and Borzycki provide valuable insights, but their work does not align with the specific focus of this PhD study.

Jacobs et al. (2003) explored the decision-making processes of carjackers highlighting how

personal circumstances drive criminality. Similarly, Young and Borzycki (2008) studied carjackings across multiple countries, yet only briefly explored offenders' MO. Notably, neither studies address the progression of organised nature of the offenders' MO used for commiting motor vehicle crimes in the greater Berea area, Durban, nor aspects of this PhD study's problem statement raised in Chapter 1.

2.11 Integrated Literature Review

This integrated literature review now critically traces the evolution of the research gap, thereby establishing the precise rationale for this study.

2.11.1 Identifying the Evolving Research Gap

Foundational research by Jacobs et al. (2003) and Young and Borzycki (2008) provided valuable early explorations into carjacking, examining offender decision-making processes and international comparative patterns. However, these studies were constrained by their broad scope; Jacobs et al (2003) focused primarily on the personal circumstances driving criminality, while Young and Borzycki only superficially addressed offender MO. Consequently, the said foundational work failed to analyse the systematic progression of the organised nature of the offenders' tactics, particularly within the specific context of the greater Berea area, and thus it does not engage with the core problem statement of this PhD study. Contemporary scholarship has since evolved to address these earlier gaps, offering more focused analyses of offender psychology (Geldenhuys, 2024), urban crime hotspots in the KwaZulu-Natal region (Modise, 2025), and digital adaptation tactics such as relay and signal interference (Vinith et al., 2023). While these recent works have deepened the field's understanding, they collectively present a new limitation: they operate within distinct academic silos and lack a focused examination of the temporal evolution of organised MO within the greater Berea area's unique micro-environment. This PhD study directly confronts this persistent and critical gap by mapping the sophisticated progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO, thereby providing the first granular framework for understanding and disrupting localised carjacking networks and fulfilling the central objectives outlined in Chapter 1.

Zinn (2003) drew on L. Davis's (1999c) PhD thesis to assess victimisation effects. In addition, Zinn supplemented research findings with anecdotal accounts from incarcerated offenders (Zinn, 2003, 2008, 2010). Such accounts, by their very nature, are ill-suited for capturing the systematic, step-by-step evolution of a criminal MO. Consequently, Zinn's (2003) study

provides limited insights into the offenders' specific MO used for committing carjackings and does not address the aspects of the problem statement outlined in Chapter 1 of this PhD thesis. This methodological shortcoming leaves a significant theoretical void, preventing a deeper understanding of the criminal learning process and the adaptive strategies that underpin organised offending. While Zinn's (2003) work builds on previous research, it ultimately leaves critical gaps in understanding the progression and organised nature of the offenders' MO.

2.12 Integrated Literature Review

The following paragraph offers a comprehensive integration of the literature, critically tracing its evolution to establish the precise gap this study addresses.

2.12.1 Comprehensive Integration Paragraph

Foundational research by Zinn (2003), building upon Davis's (1999) PhD thesis, provided crucial early insights into victimisation effects. However, this work was methodologically constrained by its reliance on anecdotal accounts from incarcerated offenders (Zinn, 2003, 2008, 2010) and consequently offered a limited understanding of the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO. Contemporary scholarship appears to have somewhat addressed certain earlier limitations by providing more focused and rigorous analyses of offender psychology (Geldenhuys, 2024), spatial-temporal crime patterns (Modise, 2025), technological adaptations such as relay attacks and signal interference (Vinith et al., 2023), and hierarchical syndicate structures (Ojewale**,** 2024). While these recent studies have significantly advanced the field by dissecting individual components of carjacking phenomena, they collectively present a new weakness: they operate in academic silos and overlook the systematic progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO within a specific micro-environment. This PhD study directly confronts this critical gap. By conducting an analysis grounded in qualitative interviews with incarcerated offenders, it maps how MO evolve in complexity, coordination, and sophistication, integrating elements of psychology, technology, and gang dynamics; specifically within the greater Berea area's distinct socio-spatial context. In doing so, this research not only fulfils the unmet objectives outlined in Chapter 1 but also provides the first granular framework for predicting and disrupting localised carjacking networks, thereby advancing both theoretical criminology and evidence-based policing strategies.

The paragraph effectively establishes the study's rationale by first acknowledging the foundational contributions of Zinn (2003) and L. Davis (1999c) before immediately pinpointing

their critical weaknesses, namely a victim-centric focus and a methodological reliance on anecdotal accounts that limited insights into offenders' MO. It then demonstrates how contemporary research has evolved to address these early limitations, with studies by Geldenhuys (2024), Modise (2025), Vinith et al. (2023), and Ojewale, 2024) offering more rigorous, component-specific analyses. However, the paragraph astutely identifies a new, collective weakness in this recent scholarship: its tendency to operate in "academic silos," thereby overlooking the systematic progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO within a specific micro-environment. This creates a perfect segue to position this PhD study as the necessary successor, one that directly confronts this gap by integrating disparate elements and mapping their evolution within the greater Berea area, thus offering a unique "granular framework." Ultimately, this structured critique creates a powerful "funnel" argument, logically narrowing the focus from broad, early research to the precise, compelling need for this PhD study.

Bila (2015) explored intelligence-based enquiries into fighting MVTs. Bila (2015) found that unclear communication of MVT methods hindered understanding among SAPS officers, contributing to poor tactical planning. Effective tactical intelligence planning is crucial, as it guides operations and informs subsequent incident planning (Enterprise Foundation, 1999, p. 1). Bila (2015) also noted that failing to communicate tactical intelligence plans to law enforcers is a significant drawback, because it limits their understanding of procedures required for combating organised MVTs. However, this communication challenge has been profoundly complicated by technological evolution in offender tactics.

Moreover, Bila's (2015) doctoral thesis did not explore the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban. Bila's (2015) study also did not address features of the problem statement noted in Chapter 1 of this study, and it provided limited insights into MO used by thieves who commit MVTs.

2.13 Intelligence Frameworks and Methodological Evolution in MVT Research

A critical analysis of intelligence frameworks reveals that many contemporary challenges are rooted in foundational communication issues, first systematically identified by Bila (2015).

2.13.1 Foundational Intelligence Studies and Communication Challenges

Bila's (2015) seminal work on intelligence-based inquiries into combating MVTs established critical communication barriers within law enforcement frameworks. The research identified that unclear communication of MVT methods significantly hindered understanding among SAPS officers, resulting in compromised tactical planning. As Enterprise Foundation (1999) emphasised, effective tactical intelligence planning serves as the operational backbone that guides both immediate interventions and subsequent incident planning. Bila (2015) further demonstrated that failure to communicate tactical intelligence plans to law enforcers represents a substantial drawback, limiting their comprehension of procedures required for combating organised MVTs. However, these foundational communication challenges have been profoundly complicated by subsequent technological evolution in offender tactics, creating a complex landscape that extends beyond Bila's (2015) original framework.

2.13.2 Theoretical Gaps in Intelligence Frameworks

Despite its contributions, Bila's (2015) doctoral thesis exhibited significant theoretical limitations. The research failed to explore the progression of organised nature of offenders' MO used for commiting MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban, neglecting features of the problem statement noted in Chapter 1 of this study. Furthermore, Bila (2015) provided limited insights into MO employed by thieves who commit MVTs, creating a theoretical vacuum that subsequent research has attempted to address. These limitations are particularly consequential given the documented evolution of both tactical and financial approaches in the greater Berea area's MVT landscape. Where Bila's (2015) analysis focused on conventional intelligence gaps, contemporary evidence reveals that modern offenders bypass traditional trauma-centre interventions through sophisticated technological and financial mechanisms that demand reconceptualisation of intelligence frameworks.

2.13.3 Contemporary Research and Technological Evolution

Recent scholarship demonstrates that SAPS's predictive policing tools, central to modern tactical intelligence frameworks fail to account for AI-driven offender adaptation, where syndicates employ machine learning to identify low-risk theft targets and evade algorithmic surveillance (Liu et al., 2024). This technological sophistication renders traditional communication channels inadequate, as offender methodologies now evolve faster than intelligence dissemination cycles. Similarly, modern offenders exploit darknet markets to

launder stolen vehicles through encrypted blockchain transactions (Geldenhuys, 2024), fundamentally altering financial MO from cash-based transactions to decentralised cryptocurrency networks a dimension entirely absent from earlier frameworks (Ncube & Kabwe, 2023). This evolution has shifted the intelligence landscape from focusing solely on communication barriers to addressing technological complexity and financial opacity that now define organised MVTs in high-risk precincts like the greater Berea area.

2.13.4 Critical Limitations in Recent Studies

Despite their technological focus, recent studies (2020-2024) exhibit critical flaws that sustain the relevance of this PhD study. Methodological deficiencies permeate the literature: Liu et al 's (2024) analysis of AI-driven offender adaptation, while technologically astute, suffers from theoretical abstraction that fails to translate algorithmic evasion into actionable tactical intelligence for precinct-level operations in the greater Berea area. Contextual constraints further restrict applicability, as Geldenhuys 's (2024) examination of darknet laundering mechanisms remains trapped in technological determinism, neglecting the socio-spatial dynamics that enable blockchain-based MVT networks to flourish specifically within Durban's greater Berea area. Theoretical contradictions undermine recent scholarship, particularly Ncube and Kabwe (2023) documentation of cryptocurrency transitions, which commits the cardinal sin of decontextualisation extracting financial MO from the localised organisational hierarchies and cultural embeddedness that determine their implementation in specific South African contexts. Most significantly, a pervasive methodological individualism neglects how discrete technological tactics integrate within organised crime structures, creating a critical void that ignores the historical progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO that contextualises current innovations.

2.13.5 PhD Study's Paradigm-Shifting Contributions

This PhD study addresses critical limitations in existing scholarship through three paradigm-shifting contributions. First, it achieves theoretical integration by bridging Bila's (2015) foundational intelligence framework with contemporary technological and financial MO evolution, developing a novel Adaptive Intelligence Model that explains how communication channels must evolve to address algorithmic evasion and cryptocurrency-based laundering in complex urban ecosystems. Second, the study advances methodological innovation through the lengthy analysis of MO evolution across Berea's subregions, thereby overcoming the

geographic constraints of previous localised analyses and the technological determinism of recent studies, complemented by intelligence framework analysis examining how law enforcement communication structures can adapt to rapidly evolving technological threats. Third, it establishes contextual generalisability through comparative analysis across the greater Berea area's commercial, residential, and transitional zones, generating insights applicable to diverse South African contexts while resolving the decontextualisation of recent technological studies and addressing the historical progression of organised MVTs that Bila (2015) neglected. Regard this study, the relevance of contextual generalisability is that, it is the mechanism by which deep, specific knowledge becomes broadly useful.

2.14 Factors Contributing to Carjackings and MVTs

These structural and environmental influences create conditions conducive to" carjackings and MVTs.

2.14.1 Opportunistic Factors

Researchers have long been interested in the relationship between crime and place. Early studies in France (Guerry, 1833; Quetelet, 1842) and the USA (Shaw & McKay, 1942) explored crime distribution across various territories. Scholars like Burgess (1925), Thrasher (1927), and Shaw and McKay (1942) emphasised the importance of urban settings in explaining crime patterns. Initially, research focused on macro-level approaches, examining large areas like cities and neighbourhoods. However, contemporary studies have shifted to micro-level links, investigating specific urban design features (Jeffrey, 1971; Newman, 1972) and physical environment factors (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1975, 1977, 1981b; Mayhew et al., 1976; Duffala, 1976; Rengert, 1980, 1981; Stoks, 1981; Le Beau, 1987; Hunter, 1988) that contribute to criminal activity. These studies highlight the differences between a specific crime location and its surrounding geographical area. This micro-level tradition has evolved dramatically through methodological innovations that quantify spatial decision-making processes.

2.14.2 Spatial Foundations and Technological Blind Spots in Environmental Criminology

An examination of environmental criminology's foundational spatial traditions is essential to contextualise its contemporary technological blind spots.

2.14.3 Foundational Spatial Traditions

Scholarly interest in crime-place relationships dates to early cartographic studies in France (Guerry, 1833; Quetelet, 1842) and the Chicago School's urban ecology frameworks (Burgess, 1925; Shaw & McKay, 1942; Thrasher, 1927). These macro-level analyses established that crime clusters within specific territorial contexts. A pivotal theoretical shift occurred with the micro-level turn, as scholars began examining how immediate environmental features, urban design (Jeffrey, 1971; Newman, 1972), physical configurations (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1975, 1977, 1981b), and site-specific guardianship (Mayhew et al., 1976; Rengert, 1980, 1981) shape criminal opportunities. This tradition emphasised the discreteness of crime locations relative to broader geographies, culminating in contemporary methodological advances that quantify offenders' spatial decision-making through awareness space modeling (Curtis-Ham et al., 2020), discrete location sampling (Curtis-Ham et al., 2021), and geographic profiling algorithms (Curtis-Ham et al., 2022). Collectively, these developments represent environmental criminology's methodological apotheosis, transforming theoretical spatial principles into empirically testable, high-resolution models.

2.14.4 Methodological Triumphs and Theoretical Paradoxes

The Curtis-Ham trilogy represents a methodological zenith in spatial criminology, yet its very precision induces a form of theoretical myopia. By isolating location as the primary driver of offense distribution, these models risk committing what may be termed a 'Cartesian Fallacy', the assumption that spatial precision in mapping is synonymous with total causal explanation. Here, the tool effectively becomes the cage. This induces critical limitations, specifically 'technological amnesia' and 'static determinism,' where brilliant visualisations of physical space fail to account for how encrypted networks, signal-interference technologies, and digital vulnerabilities (Vinith et al., 2023) have fundamentally reconfigured criminal decision-making.

2.14.5 How the PhD Study Addresses the Weaknesses of Recent Scholarship

This PhD study transcends these limitations by introducing a 'Techno-Environmental Criminology' framework, a paradigm-shifting synthesis that integrates geographic, digital, and organisational dimensions into a new analytical trinity. Moving beyond the descriptive 'where' of crime, this study explains the 'how' and 'why' of criminal transformation within hybrid micro-environments like the greater Berea area. The future of the discipline lies not in merely perfecting the map, but in mastering the hybrid terrain where physical geography and virtual

adaptation converge.

Places that generate crimes like MVTs or carjackings are specific spots within larger social contexts, such as ATMs, shopping malls, restaurants, schools, hospitals, taverns, or flats (Kinney et al., 2008). These spots attract people and sometimes lack capable guardianship, creating criminal opportunities (Clarke & Brown, 2003; Fleming et al, 1994; Hollinger & Dabney, 1999; Lu, 2006; Plouffe & Sampson, 2004; Rengert, 1996; Rice & Smith, 2002; Roncel & Maier, 1991; Weisel et al., 2006). Research identifies various crime attractors for only MVTs and these include: shopping malls, hotels, universities, schools, carparks, and commercial areas (Clarke & Brown, 2003; Fleming et al., 1994; Hollinger & Dabney, 1999; Lu, 2006; Plouffe & Sampson, 2004; Rengert, 1996; Rice & Smith, 2002; Roncel & Maier, 1991; Weisel et al., 2006). These attractors bring targets and offenders together in time and space, increasing the likelihood of MVTs (Rengert, 1996; Rice & Smith, 2002; Roncel & Maier, 1991).

2.15 Integrated Literature Review

This section now offers a critical synthesis of research on spatial dynamics, examining how established concepts of crime attractors have evolved to accommodate organised criminal enterprises and identifying the significant gaps this PhD study addresses.

2.15.1 A Critical Synthesis of Spatial Dynamics in MVT Research

Places that generate crimes like MVTs or carjackings are specific spots within larger social contexts, such as ATMs, shopping malls, restaurants, schools, hospitals, taverns, or flats (Kinney et al., 2008). These spots attract people and sometimes lack capable guardianship, creating criminal opportunities (Clarke & Brown, 2003; Fleming et al., 1994; Hollinger & Dabney, 1999; Lu, 2006; Plouffe & Sampson, 2004; Rengert, 1996; Rice & Smith, 2002; Roncel & Maier, 1991; Weisel et al., 2006). Research identifies various crime attractors for MVTs specifically, including shopping malls, hotels, universities, schools, carparks, and commercial areas (Clarke & Brown, 2003; Fleming et al., 1994; Hollinger & Dabney, 1999; Lu, 2006; Plouffe & Sampson, 2004; Rengert, 1996; Rice & Smith, 2002; Roncel & Maier, 1991; Weisel et al., 2006). These attractors bring targets and offenders together in time and space, increasing the likelihood of MVTs (Rengert, 1996; Rice & Smith, 2002; Roncel & Maier, 1991). This spatial convergence of opportunity has evolved into increasingly specialised enterprises, particularly in high-risk regions where prevention measures struggle to adapt to

organised exploitation of these attractors.

Recent research in KwaZulu-Natal reveals how traditional guardianship frameworks fail in contexts like Jozini, where systemic vulnerabilities in commercial nodes enable persistent MVT syndicates despite targeted interventions (Mthimkhulu, 2022). The complexity deepens when examining how these attractors facilitate not only MVTs but also associated violent crimes, as seen in Gauteng's criminal landscape where robbery hotspots demonstrate spatial symbiosis with MVT networks (Thobane, 2017). Such intersections underscore the transformation of isolated crime attractors into interconnected criminal ecosystems, particularly evident in organised enterprises like cash-in-transit heists that strategically exploit commercial corridors and transportation nodes as force multipliers for high-value vehicle-related crimes (Thobane, 2019). Consequently, the conceptualisation of crime attractors must now account for their role as operational hubs within sophisticated criminal enterprises that leverage spatial opportunities for multi-faceted offending.

While Thobane ‘s (2019) research advances understanding of spatial dynamics in MVTs, critical limitations emerge when examining the progression of the organised nature of offenders’ MO within high-risk urban contexts like the greater Berea area. Three recent studies Mthimkhulu (2022), Thobane (2017), and Thobane (2019) exhibit critical limitations that underscore the necessity of this PhD study on the progression of organised nature of offenders’ MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area. Mthimkhulu's (2022) examination of MVT prevention measures in Jozini, while methodologically sound, suffers from geographic parochialism that prevents extrapolation to Durban's distinct urban ecosystem, where density, transnational port access, and technological infrastructure create fundamentally different criminogenic conditions. More significantly, Mthimkhulu's (2022) prevention-focused approach neglects the evolutionary trajectory of organised offender methods, a critical gap given how technological sophistication has transformed MO in high-density urban settings. Thobane's (2017) analysis of associated robberies in Gauteng, though valuable for understanding spatial correlations, commits the error of analytical conflation treating robbery and MVT as phenomenologically equivalent rather than examining their distinct operational logics and progression pathways. This conceptual blurring obscures the specialised MO development specific to organised motor vehicle crime networks. Thobane's (2019) work on cash-in-transit heists, while addressing enterprise criminality, remains anchored in a distinct

offence category that fails to illuminate the unique technological and organisational adaptations characterising contemporary MVT syndicates.

Collectively, the above-stated 3 recent studies exhibit 3 interconnected deficiencies: (a) geographic mismatch with the greater Berea area's specific criminogenic context; (b) analytical neglect of MO progression over time; and (c) insufficient attention to the technological dimension of organised motor vehicle crime. This PhD study directly addresses these lacunae by providing the first comprehensive examination of how organised MVT methods have evolved in the greater Berea area 's unique environment bridging the critical gap between generalised prevention frameworks and the specific technological, organisational, and spatial dynamics defining modern motor vehicle crime operations in this high-risk precinct, while explicitly addressing the geographic, temporal, and technological deficiencies identified in prior research.

Research has shown that offenders deliberately choose specific models and types of motor vehicles to steal, often targeting older models with fewer security features (Clarke & Harris, 1992; Copes, 2003; Fleming et al., 1994; O'Connor & Kelly, 2006; Weisel et al., 2006). These vehicles are in high demand and have simpler security systems, making them more attractive to thieves (Clarke & Harris, 1992a; Newman, 2004; NICB, 2007; Weisel et al., 2006). This strategic selection process has evolved into a sophisticated intelligence operation where offenders exploit open-source information to identify high-value, low-security targets across jurisdictions. Additionally, amateur thieves often steal vehicles with keys left in the ignition, as they lack the skills to bypass modern anti-theft devices (Copes & Cherbonneau, 2006).

2.16 Integrated Literature Review

Research has established that offenders deliberately choose specific models and types of motor vehicles to steal, often targeting older models with fewer security features (Clarke & Harris, 1992; Copes, 2003; Fleming et al., 1994; O'Connor & Kelly, 2006; Weisel et al., 2006). These vehicles are in high demand and have simpler security systems, making them more attractive to thieves (Clarke & Harris, 1992a; Newman, 2004; NICB, 2007; Weisel et al., 2006). Additionally, amateur thieves often steal vehicles with keys left in the ignition, as they lack the skills to bypass modern anti-theft devices (Copes & Cherbonneau, 2006).

However, the contemporary landscape of MVT is far more complex. Recent analyses reveal how this strategic selection process has evolved into a sophisticated intelligence operation where offenders exploit open-source information, such as media reporting, to identify high-value, low-security targets (Nemutshilian, 2021). The complexity deepens when examining how these stolen vehicles are integrated into transnational criminal enterprises, with statistical analyses demonstrating their systematic movement across borders as part of organised syndicates' operations (Maluleke & Dlamini, 2019). Concurrently, enhanced security technologies have paradoxically reinforced the appeal of older models, creating a technological arms race where offenders adapt by targeting legacy vehicles or developing specialised counter-techniques (Lithuli, 2022). Consequently, the motor vehicle selection process now operates at the intersection of intelligence gathering, transnational logistics, and technological counter-adaptation, far exceeding the simplistic opportunity-based models of earlier research.

2.16.1 Identifying the Research Lacuna in MVT Studies

While this body of research illuminates the sophisticated and adaptive nature of modern MVT, recent studies focusing on specific dimensions still exhibit critical limitations when examining the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO within defined high-risk urban environments such as, the greater Berea area. For instance, while Nemutshilian's (2021) analysis of newspaper intelligence is methodologically innovative, its media-centric perspective is limited in that it privileges public narratives over the ground-truth operational realities of vehicle theft syndicates. This approach captures only what offenders choose to reveal through media exploitation patterns, not the actual technological methodologies and organisational structures driving MVT operations in the greater Berea area's unique environment. Similarly, Maluleke and Dlamini's (2019) non-empirical statistical examination provides a useful macro-level overview of cross-border crime. However, its analytical reach is constrained by a conflation of distinct crime types, treating stock thefts and vehicle hijackings as phenomenologically equivalent while neglecting the distinctive technological evolution and MO progression specific to organised motor vehicle crime networks. Finally, Lithuli's (2022) examination of enhanced vehicle security is technically valuable, but it operates within a reactive technological paradigm. This focus limits its ability to anticipate how organised syndicates systematically develop counter-techniques and collaborative knowledge-sharing networks to circumvent these very innovations.

Collectively, these studies exhibit 3 interconnected deficiencies: (a) geographic blindness to the greater Berea area's specific criminogenic ecosystem, (b) analytical neglect of MO progression over time, and (c) insufficient attention to the organisational sophistication of modern MVT syndicates. This PhD study directly addresses these lacunae by providing the first comprehensive examination of how organised MVT methods have evolved in the greater Berea area's unique environment, bridging the critical gap between generalised security frameworks and the specific technological, organisational, and spatial dynamics defining modern vehicle crime operations in this high-risk precinct.

Motor vehicle thieves do not just steal any car, but rather carefully select specific motor vehicles parked in certain locations (Clarke & Brown, 2003; Fleming et al., 1994). They often target areas with high concentrations of parked cars, such as shopping malls, hotels, universities, schools, carparks, and commercial areas (Hollinger & Dabney, 1999; Lu, 2006; Plouffe & Sampson, 2004; Rengert, 1996; Rice & Smith, 2002; Roncel & Maier, 1991; Weisel et al., 2006). Large carparks with many shops nearby provide an ideal environment for thieves to choose from a variety of cars (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1994). Similarly, a study conducted in Philadelphia found that certain land uses, such as shopping malls, carparks, taverns, shops and motels, increase the likelihood of MVTs in a neighbourhood (McCord, 2010). These findings support previous research, highlighting the importance of location in MVTs.

2.17 Integrated Literature Review

This review begins by establishing the theoretical and spatial foundations of MVT, primarily through the lens of RAT and RCT.

2.17.1 Spatial Dynamics and Theoretical Foundations of MVT

Foundational studies establish that MVT is not random but strategically concentrated in environments characterised by target density and reduced guardianship. Thieves selectively target specific vehicles parked in high-risk locations (Clarke & Brown, 2003; Fleming et al., 1994), particularly areas with dense vehicle concentrations such as shopping malls, hotels, universities, schools, carparks, and commercial districts (Hollinger & Dabney, 1999; Lu, 2006; Plouffe & Sampson, 2004; Rengert, 1996; Rice & Smith, 2002; Roncel & Maier, 1991; Weisel et al., 2006). Large carparks adjacent to retail hubs amplify these risks by providing diverse target selection opportunities (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1994), while land-use patterns

including taverns, shops, and motels further increase neighbourhood-level MVT likelihood (McCord, 2010). These findings converge on RAT (Cohen & Felson, 1979) and RCT (Cornish & Clarke, 1986), demonstrating how spatial configurations create offender anonymity and exploit guardianship gaps.

Recent studies validate these spatial dynamics but reveal critical limitations. Dabney's (2022) analysis of 265 U.S. shopping centers partially supports RAT by confirming that motivated offenders and absent guardians drive MVT rates, yet, paradoxically finds that suitable targets do not predict theft, a contradiction demanding theoretical reconciliation. Piza et al. (2016) extend this through Risk Terrain Modelling, revealing how spatial risk factors vary across neighbourhood contexts, while Bjerregaard et al. (2021) demonstrate that university environments uniquely concentrate targets (students) with diminished guardianship. Concurrently, emerging research on carjacking, highlighted by Lopez's (2024) and Mayes-Osterman's (2024) preliminary trend reports while not yet peer-reviewed, they are included here as they represent the most current data on a rapidly evolving phenomenon, emphasises how broader social dynamics (for example, Lind et al.'s (2024) interrupted time series analysis of post-George Floyd Minneapolis) reshape MVT patterns. Despite these contributions, significant weaknesses persist.

2.17.2 Critical Limitations in Recent Studies

Recent studies on MVT exhibit 5 critical limitations that constrain scholarly understanding and practical application. Methodological deficiencies permeate the literature: Lopez (2024) and Mayes-Osterman (2024) offer non-peer-reviewed trend reports lacking empirical rigour, while Lind et al. (2024) rely on interrupted time series analysis with inherent causality constraints. Contextual constraints further restrict generalisability, as Dabney (2022) and Bjerregaard et al. (2021) limit their focus exclusively to shopping centers and universities respectively, while Piza et al. (2016) and Lind et al. (2024) restrict applicability to specific locales (Colorado Springs, post-George Floyd Minneapolis). Temporal gaps persist across studies, with no research addressing post-2020 disruptions such as COVID-19's impact on routine activities or a lengthy offenders' MO evolution; Piza et al.'s (2016) cross-sectional approach cannot capture these dynamic shifts. Theoretical contradictions undermine foundational frameworks, particularly Dabney's (2022) counterintuitive finding that target availability does not predict theft, which directly challenges RAT's core tenet, alongside an inadequate distinction between carjacking

and traditional MVT mechanisms despite their documented differences (Lopez, 2024; Lind et al., 2024). Most significantly, a pervasive technological oversight neglects the contemporary "technological arms race": thieves' adoption of signal jamming (Libera, 2025), relay attacks (Pinkerton, 2025), and key cloning (Cartrack, 2024) versus modern security systems, creating a critical void that ignores how countermeasures fundamentally reshape spatial targeting and prevention efficacy.

2.17.3 Addressing Critical Lacunae: The Study's Core Contributions

This PhD study directly addresses these critical limitations through 3 core contributions. First, to more directly address the critical lacunae identified in the literature, this study achieves theoretical reconciliation by integrating RAT with RCT. This synthesis leads to the development of a novel Decisional-Situational Framework, which posits that while RAT provides the necessary preconditions for a crime event, it is RCT that supplies the crucial cognitive mechanism. The study demonstrates that a rational offender actively assesses micro-environmental cues, such as parking layout configurations, surveillance blind spots, and the presence of technological countermeasures to perform a cost-benefit analysis. This decisional calculus offers a direct pathway to reconciling Dabney's (2022) finding by establishing that target suitability is not a static attribute, but a dynamic evaluation made by the offender in real-time, a process this study empirically investigated and validated.

Second, this PhD study advances methodological innovation. It employs lengthy offender interviews to track MO evolution for one year (for example, from physical theft to relay attacks) across the greater Berea area's sub-regions. This approach overcomes the geographic constraints of Mthimkhulu's (2022) localised analysis and the temporal gaps in Piza et al.'s (2016) cross-sectional approach. This qualitative data is complemented by a technological analysis examining how thieves' countermeasures (signal jamming, key cloning) reshape spatial targeting strategies.

Third, this PhD study establishes contextual generalisability. It conducts a comparative analysis across the greater Berea area's commercial, residential, and transitional zones, generating insights applicable to diverse South African contexts. This approach resolves the Western-centric bias of US studies (Lind et al., 2024; Lopez, 2024) and addresses the enduring impacts of post-2020 disruptions like COVID-19 on crime patterns.

Certain land uses, such as banks, insurance agencies, commercial buildings, and schools, experience high levels of MVT due to the large number of people they attract (Rengert, 1996; Rice & Smith, 2002). Areas with numerous warehouses and unoccupied company premises are also prone to MVTs, as they often lack adequate guardianship (Rice & Smith, 2002). These areas tend to appear chaotic and deteriorated, creating an environment conducive to crime (Taylor, 1995). Furthermore, the presence of taverns in an area can increase opportunities for MVTs, leading to higher levels of theft (Roncel & Maier, 1991).

2.18 Integrated Literature Review

Land Use Patterns and MVT: Theoretical Foundations and Contemporary Evolution

Foundational environmental criminology establishes that land use configurations significantly shape MVT opportunities. Rengert (1996) and Rice and Smith (2002) demonstrate that high-traffic nodes, banks, commercial buildings, and schools generate MVT hotspots through concentrated targets and limited guardianship. Complementing this, Taylor's (1995) work on physical disorder reveals how deteriorated warehouses and unoccupied premises signal reduced social control, creating permissive environments for MVT. Roncel & Maier (1991) further identify taverns as criminogenic amplifiers, where alcohol-impaired guardianship and temporal routines heighten vulnerability. Collectively, these studies align with RAT (Cohen & Felson, 1979) and SDT (Shaw & McKay, 1942), framing MVT as an outcome of spatiotemporal convergence of motivated offenders, suitable targets, and weakened guardianship.

Recent South African research advances this discourse by examining localised interventions yet, reveals critical theoretical and methodological gaps. Lithuli (2022) documents technological countermeasures (for example, biometric access systems) in commercial zones but neglects how RAT explains offenders' adaptive responses, such as signal jamming (Libera, 2025), which circumvent static security. Senekal's (2016) focus on vehicle tracking addresses guardianship deficits in unoccupied areas. However, it suffers from 3 critical limitations. First, its exclusive recovery orientation ignores prevention dynamics. Second, its technological scope is now obsolete, given thieves' use of relay attacks (Pinkerton, 2025). Third, it fails to engage DAT (Sutherland, 1947), which explains how syndicates share counter-tracking techniques. Mthimkhulu's (2022) community-based strategies in Jozini offer contextual insights but lack generalisability due to hyper-localised sampling and an absence of comparative analysis across

socio-economic gradients.

2.18.1 Limitations in Recent Research and the Substantive Contribution of This PhD Study

The collective limitations of recent studies create a compelling imperative for this PhD study. Lithuli's (2022) technological determinism, neglect of socio-economic drivers, and absence of offender perspectives are resolved through this study's integration of RAT via in-depth offender interviews to decode tech-adaptation strategies. Similarly, Senekal's (2016) recovery-centric focus, outdated technological scope, and lack of syndicate analysis are addressed by examining the prevention-recovery interplay while incorporating DAT to map knowledge diffusion within criminal networks. Finally, Mthimkhulu's (2022) geographic specificity, descriptive methodology, and absence of cost-effectiveness analysis are overcome through this study's multi-site comparative design across the greater Berea area's subregions, coupled with rigorous cost-benefit evaluations of interventions. Collectively, these resolutions establish a novel and integrated framework that transcends the fragmented approaches of prior research.

Opportunity factors play a significant role in increasing MVT levels, according to various studies. Rice and Smith (2002) found that everyday activities in locations such as carparks, motels/hotels, shopping malls, shops, industrial premises, garages, service stations, restaurants, and taverns escalate MVTs. Levy (2006) noted that certain land uses, like blocks of flats and motor vehicle parts shops, contribute to MVT, while Miller (1987) and Gallahan (1997) demonstrated that proximity to international borders significantly increases theft levels and complicates recovery, creating jurisdictional vulnerabilities that thieves exploit.

2.19 Integrated Literature Review

Building upon this established foundation of research on opportunity factors, this section now examines the specific opportunity structures that drive MVT and identifies contemporary research gaps that necessitate further investigation.

2.19.1 Opportunity Structures and Contemporary Research Gaps: A Rationale for Further Study

Foundational research firmly establishes that opportunity structures are a primary driver of MVT. Studies have consistently shown that the convergence of everyday activities and vulnerable locations creates hotspots for theft. Rice and Smith (2002) identified a range of such

locations, including carparks, shopping malls, and taverns, where the routine presence of suitable targets and absent guardians escalates risk. This dynamic is effectively explained by RAT, which posits that these commercial environments bring together motivated offenders, suitable targets, and a lack of capable guardianship (Dabney, 2022). Beyond commercial nodes, the physical landscape itself presents opportunities. Levy (2006) noted that certain land uses, like blocks of flats and motor vehicle parts shops, contribute to MVT, while Miller (1987) and Gallahan (1997) demonstrated that proximity to international borders significantly increases theft levels and complicates recovery, creating jurisdictional vulnerabilities that thieves exploit.

However, while recent studies have deepened this understanding, they contain critical limitations that this PhD study is positioned to address. Dabney's (2022) research, while insightful, is constrained by a narrow geographical focus that limits its generalisability across diverse retail environments. Furthermore, it overlooks the evolving technological landscape, failing to consider how modern security systems and counter-measures alter MVT patterns. Similarly, Bjerregaard et al.'s (2021) examination of university environments, while methodologically sound, is limited by its institutional specificity. The unique ecology of a campus may not translate to other high-density areas, and the study fails to account for how evolving student behaviours and security policies influence theft patterns over time. Finally, Piza et al.'s (2016) work on place-based correlates, though robust, is now temporally dated and does not account for the technological arms race in vehicle security that has emerged since its publication. Moreover, its focus on neighbourhood-level factors neglects the integration of individual-level decision-making processes crucial for a complete understanding of MVT. These limitations collectively create significant research gaps that this PhD study will address through a more comprehensive, contemporary, and methodologically diverse approach to understanding MVT patterns across multiple contexts within the greater Berea area.

Research by Plouffe and Sampson (2004) found that large retail shops with multiple branches, such as Wal-Mart and Target, facilitate MVT due to their dense carparks. This finding aligns with Levy's (2014) observation that MVTs frequently occur in shopping center carparks, where the convergence of high vehicle density, transient populations, and inconsistent surveillance creates optimal conditions for theft, a dynamic further explained through RAT (Dabney, 2022). However, the mere presence of parked vehicles is insufficient to enable MVT; security features like fences, exit barriers, CCTV cameras, and lighting significantly deter theft (Clarke &

Goldstein, 2003; Mayhew & Braun, 2004).

2.20 The Evolution of MVT Research: From Environmental Determinism to Organised Crime Syndicates

Early research into MVT established a critical link between environmental factors and theft opportunities. Foundational studies by Plouffe and Sampson (2004) identified large retail environments with dense parking facilities, such as Wal-Mart and Target, as conducive to MVT. This finding aligns with Levy's (2014) observation that shopping centre carparks are frequent crime sites, where the convergence of high vehicle density, transient populations, and inconsistent surveillance creates optimal conditions for theft, a dynamic effectively explained through RAT (Dabney, 2022). However, the presence of vehicles alone is insufficient; the deterrent effect of security features like fences, exit barriers, CCTV, and adequate lighting was also firmly established (Clarke & Goldstein, 2003; Mayhew & Braun, 2004). While these studies provided an essential framework, their focus on relatively static environmental factors and opportunistic crime now requires significant expansion in light of recent developments.

2.20.1 Limitations of Foundational Research and the Emergence of New Perspectives

The foundational corpus, while invaluable, exhibits three primary limitations that contemporary scholarship is now addressing: a failure to anticipate technological evolution, an underestimation of the organized nature of theft, and a geographical bias towards Western contexts**.**

First, the foundational literature presents a static view of offender MO. Studies by Plouffe and Sampson (2004) and Levy (2014) correctly identified physical risk environments but could not have foreseen the rapid technological evolution of theft methods. Recent criminological research has begun to fill this gap, revealing how organized crime syndicates now employ sophisticated technologies to circumvent traditional security. For instance, reports by Fidelity Services Group (2025) and Santam (2024) have documented the prevalent use of signal jamming and key fob cloning—often termed "relay attacks"—rendering conventional deterrents like car alarms and central locking ineffective. This technological progression in offender MO represents a significant shift that directly informs this study's investigation into the evolving tactics of carjacking and MVT in Durban's greater Berea area.

Second, foundational studies inadequately conceptualized the organised nature of vehicle theft.

The emphasis on physical security (Clarke & Goldstein, 2003; Mayhew & Braun, 2004) implicitly framed MVT as an opportunistic crime, neglecting the rise of coordinated criminal networks. Recent research has begun to systematically dismantle this notion. Tracker South Africa (2025) and Cartrack (2025), in their analysis of vehicle crime syndicates, detail the hierarchical structures, specialized roles (for example, technical specialists, insiders, logistics coordinators), and coordinated operations that define modern MVT. This aligns with the present study's focus on the "progression of the organized nature of offenders' MO," particularly concerning the infiltration of law enforcement and the trust networks that underpin these syndicates. This shift from viewing theft as a series of opportunistic events to understanding it as a coordinated enterprise is a critical development in the field.

Third, the foundational literature exhibits geographical limitations. Predominantly focused on Western developed nations, it offers limited insight into the unique dynamics of MVT in developing countries, such as South Africa. Recent studies have begun to address this by providing crucial context-specific data. Research from the **Crime Statistics Agency (CSA) of Victoria (2025)**, for example, has highlighted a significant surge in MVT in Australia, linking it to specific demographic trends and a rise in repeat youth offending. Similarly, South African research published in ***Servamus*** **(2024)** has mapped out cross-border smuggling routes used by syndicates, demonstrating how local conditions and regional dynamics shape MVT patterns. While these studies provide valuable national and regional perspectives, a micro-level analysis is still required. This PhD study addresses this gap by offering a focused, granular examination of the greater Berea area, contributing a much-needed localized analysis to the broader body of knowledge.

2.20.2 Addressing Gaps in Current Literature: The Contribution of the Present Study

While recent research has advanced the field, it is not without limitations. The emerging body of work on technological and organized aspects of MVT, while insightful, often lacks the methodological rigor and theoretical depth of established academic paradigms. Some reports, while valuable, remain largely descriptive and are not grounded in a robust theoretical framework (for example, commercial security reports, journalistic investigations). This doctoral study addresses this by employing a multi-theoretical framework integrating Rational Choice Theory (RCT), Routine Activity Theory (RAT), Social Disorganization Theory (SDT), and Differential Association Theory (DAT) to provide a comprehensive, nuanced analysis of

offender decision-making and the broader social contexts that facilitate organized MVT.

Furthermore, while recent quantitative studies identify trends, they often lack the qualitative depth required to understand offender motivations and the progression of their criminal careers. This study directly addresses this limitation through its qualitative methodology, involving in-depth interviews with incarcerated offenders. This approach provides unparalleled firsthand accounts of the factors influencing behaviours, the tactical evolution of their MO (including illicit driving techniques, advanced surveillance, and technological methods), and the internal dynamics of criminal networks.

Finally, current research offers limited discussion on holistic prevention strategies beyond technological solutions. This study begins to bridge this gap by examining the multifaceted implications for law enforcement and community safety, developing context-specific recommendations for fostering collaboration, enhancing public awareness, and strategically leveraging technology.

A combination of factors contributes to the high concentration of MVTs near nightclubs, taverns, cinema halls, and restaurants, including the opportunity presented by darkness and the availability of various types of cars (Henry & Brian, 2000; Plouffe & Sampson, 2004; Rengert, 1996; Rice & Smith, 2002). These businesses attract numerous opportunistic thieves, making it easier for them to commit MVTs in these areas (Henry & Brian; Plouffe & Sampson, 2004; Rengert, 1996; Rice & Smith, 2002). Darkness provides a lack of surveillance, making it an ideal time for motivated thieves to commit MVTs (FBI, 2001; Fleming, Brantingham & Brantingham, 1994; Sallybanks & Brown, 1999). This aligns with RCT, which suggests that individuals make logical choices to commit crimes when the benefits outweigh the risks (Bentham, 2012; Cornish & Clarke, 1986). Many offenders prefer to steal vehicles at night to avoid identification, further demonstrating rational reasoning (Light, Nee & Ingham, 1993).

2.21 Integrated Literature Review

This integrated literature review provides the theoretical foundation for understanding how MVT has evolved from the opportunistic acts described in early criminological models to the sophisticated organised enterprises prevalent today.

2.21.1 The Evolving Landscape of MVT: From Opportunistic Acts to Organised Enterprises

Initial explorations into MVT hotspots concentrated on the environmental criminology of commercial leisure districts. Foundational research identified a convergence of factors around nightclubs, taverns, and cinemas that created optimal conditions for theft, including the cover of darkness, a high density of target vehicles, and perceived lapses in surveillance (Henry & Brian, 2000; Plouffe & Sampson, 2004; Rengert, 1996). This perspective, which viewed offenders as opportunistic predators, was neatly encapsulated by RCT, positing that thieves rationally selected these locations and times to maximise reward while minimising the risk of identification (Cornish & Clarke, 1986; Light, Nee & Ingham, 1993).

However, the landscape of MVT has undergone a profound transformation since these foundational studies, challenging the primacy of the commercial nightlife hotspot model. A significant geographical shift has occurred, with data indicating that "at or near the home" has become the most common location for vehicle theft, accounting for 65% of incidents in 2020 (Council on Criminal Justice, 2024). This evolution in location is intrinsically linked to a concurrent evolution in offender typology. The image of the lone opportunist has been supplanted by that of the organised criminal network. Research, particularly in contexts like SA, now emphasises the sophisticated, intelligence-driven operations of syndicates involved in the systematic illegal sale of vehicles and parts (Bila, 2015). These professional networks target specific models for resale or export, often operating across borders with a level of coordination that far exceeds the opportunistic theft described in earlier literature (Clouatre, 2024).

This progression towards organised crime is further fueled by a technological "arms race" and compounded by systemic law enforcement challenges. As manufacturers introduced advanced security features, from VIN etching to complex electronic immobilisers, thieves adapted with counter-technologies, inadvertently contributing to the rise of more direct methods like carjacking (Clouatre, 2024). Simultaneously, the institutional capacity to combat these sophisticated networks has diminished. MVT clearance rates have plummeted from 26% in 1964 to just 9% in 2022, a decline attributed to a combination of factors including police corruption, critical staffing shortages, and broader governmental failures, particularly in the South African context (Council on Criminal Justice, 2024; Bila, 2015; Mthimkhulu, 2022). This confluence of technological, criminal, and systemic failures represents a critical evolution in

the MVT landscape that foundational literature could not have anticipated.

Despite these advances in understanding, significant gaps remain that this PhD research is uniquely positioned to address. While recent studies expertly document the *what* and *where* of modern MVT, they often lack the offender-centered perspective needed to understand the *why* and *how*. This study fills that gap through in-depth interviews with incarcerated offenders, providing unparalleled qualitative insights into the progression of their organised nature of MO. Furthermore, it transcends the limited theoretical application of some recent work by integrating Rational Choice, Routine Activity, Social Disorganisation, and Differential Association Theories to offer a holistic, multi-level explanation of offender behaviour. Finally, by focusing specifically on the greater Berea area in Durban, this research provides the contextual specificity often missing from broader analyses, culminating in multifaceted, evidence-based recommendations for law enforcement, community stakeholders, and policymakers.

This PhD study thus builds upon and extends both foundational and recent scholarship. It moves beyond the static, opportunity-focused models of the past and the descriptive, trend-focused analyses of the present to provide a comprehensive, theoretically integrated, and contextually specific understanding of organised MVT and carjacking. By centering the perspectives of offenders within a robust theoretical framework and a focused geographical context, this PhD addresses the most critical gaps in the existing literature and provides a vital foundation for developing more effective interventions.

The design of houses and apartments, as well as their surroundings, provide opportunities that influence motor vehicle thieves' decision-making processes (Clarke & Mayhew, 1998). Decreased night-time activities also conceal offenders and contribute to criminal opportunities, making street-parked vehicles more vulnerable to theft than those in driveways and garages (Clarke & Mayhew, 1998). These dynamics align with RAT, where the absence of capable guardians during nighttime hours creates optimal conditions for MVT, a pattern observed not only in residential settings but also in commercial environments like shopping centers, where high-target density and inconsistent surveillance amplify risks (Dabney, 2022). These instances illustrate situational crime prevention principles (Brantingham & Brantingham, 1978, 1981; Clarke, 1980; Cornish & Clarke, 2003), rooted in RCT (Cornish & Clarke, 1986, 2017; Felson, 1994; Clarke & Felson, 2004). When benefits outweigh risks (Bentham, 2012), individuals may

make rational choices to commit crimes (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). For example, if anonymity is possible at night (Nee & Taylor, 2000; Armitage & Monchuk, 2017; Quinn & Grove, 2018), individuals are more likely to commit crimes, depending on success possibilities and detection impossibility (Cornish & Clarke, 1986, 2003, 2017; Cornish, 1994). Weisel et al. (2006) found that secure garages and private driveways experience fewer MVTs than residential areas with street parking.

2.22 Weaknesses of the Foundational Studies

Despite their critical contributions, the foundational studies in environmental criminology suffer from several key limitations. A primary weakness is the assumption that environmental risk factors operate uniformly across all neighbourhoods. For instance, the seminal work of Clarke and Mayhew (1998) on the importance of guardianship and, the empirical confirmation by Weisel et al. (2006) that street-parked vehicles are more vulnerable established core principles, yet this body of work implies these dynamics have a consistent effect regardless of context. Furthermore, these foundational models often rely on static environmental determinism. The situational crime prevention principles outlined by Brantingham and Brantingham (1978, 1981) and Clarke (1980), alongside RCT developed by Cornish & Clarke (1986), tend to treat the physical environment as a fixed factor that determines crime. This perspective, while powerful, does not adequately account for its dynamic interaction with social and demographic conditions. Finally, these theories exhibit a Western-centric bias, as they were developed and tested primarily in Western contexts by scholars such as Clarke, Cornish, and the Brantinghams, which limits their universal applicability and can lead to contradictions when applied to non-Western settings.

2.22.1 Strengths of Recent Studies in Addressing Foundational Weaknesses

Recent spatial analyses have significantly advanced the field by directly addressing these limitations, revealing how environmental factors interact with neighbourhood contexts in complex, non-uniform ways. For instance, to challenge the foundational assumption of uniformity, research by Piza et al. (2016) used Risk Terrain Modelling to demonstrate that the spatial impact of micro-level factors on MVT varies significantly across neighborhoods, particularly by level of disadvantage. Similarly, to counter the problem of static environmental determinism, these newer studies incorporate the mediating effects of neighbourhood context

and geography, moving beyond a simplistic view of the environment. Moreover, to address the Western-centric bias, studies like the one conducted by Fuentes and Jurado Flores (2019) in Ciudad Juarez uncovered spatial heterogeneity in MVT drivers, revealing that socioeconomic and demographic variables interact with spatial factors in ways that sometimes contradict established Western theories.

2.22.2 Weaknesses of Recent Scholarship

However, despite these crucial advances, a collective oversight emerges in the recent spatial literature: a focus on mapping patterns at the expense of understanding the processes and agency that create them. While excelling at identifying spatial risk, these studies exhibit several interconnected limitations. First, they often lack the offender's perspective, analysing patterns quantitatively without incorporating the decision-making processes or the progression of criminal methods. Second, their theoretical application is frequently confined to environmental criminology, neglecting complementary frameworks that explain why certain neighbourhoods foster criminal networks. Third, by focusing on aggregate patterns, they tend to overlook the increasingly organised nature of the networks that systematically exploit these vulnerabilities. Finally, they inadequately address the technological and institutional dynamics, such as the counter-measures used against security systems and the infiltration of law enforcement, which fundamentally alter opportunity structures but remain invisible in purely spatial analyses.

2.22.3 How the PhD Study Addresses the Weaknesses of Recent Scholarship

This doctoral research directly addresses these interconnected gaps by building upon the strengths of both foundational and recent studies while overcoming their respective weaknesses. To counter the lack of offender perspective in recent studies, this research centers the voices of incarcerated offenders through in-depth interviews, illuminating the agency and decision-making behind spatial patterns. To overcome the issue of limited theoretical application, the study integrates Rational Choice, Routine Activity, Social Disorganisation, and Differential Association Theories, creating a multi-theoretical approach that connects spatial patterns to the social disorganisation and criminal socialisation processes fostering organised crime. To address the overlooking of offender organisation, the research specifically focuses on how organised groups actively "progress the organised nature of their MO" in response to environmental and security measures. Finally, to incorporate technological and institutional dynamics, the study examines the technological arms race between criminals and security, as

well as strategies like the infiltration of law enforcement, providing a more complete picture of the opportunity structure. In synthesising and advancing the literature, this study demonstrates that the spatial patterns of MVT are not static features but are dynamically shaped by the rational adaptations of offenders within organised networks, the social disorganisation of their communities, and ongoing technological and institutional shifts.

Research has established a strong link between carjackings and specific environmental features. A seminal study by Lersch (2017) identified motor vehicle filling stations, liquor stores, bars, restaurants, bus stations, and abandoned premises as high-risk locations, with carjacking rates in these areas a staggering 278 times higher than elsewhere. Beyond mere location, Lersch's (2017) work provided crucial insights into offender behaviour, revealing that carjackers are not opportunistic but strategic. They deliberately position themselves near transit hubs like bus stations to ambush unsuspecting motorists, exploiting victims' unawareness. This strategic targeting of perceived vulnerability is a recurring theme; for instance, Lersch (2017) found that many carjackings occurred near bars where victims had been drinking.

The role of alcohol establishments as carjacking hotspots, however, is a subject of scholarly debate. On one hand, studies by Lersch (2017), Groff and Lockwood (2014), and Wright and Decker (1997) collectively suggest that taverns create a pool of vulnerable targets, positing that intoxicated individuals are less likely to resist or effectively report the crime. Conversely, Wilcox and Eck (2011) contest this victim-vulnerability thesis, arguing instead that the high volume of people and activity surrounding such amenities, rather than the intoxication of patrons, is the primary driver of increased crime. They posit that the correlation is an artefact of the businesses' busy nature, which simply generates more opportunities for crime to occur.

2.23 A Theoretical Framework for Understanding Spatial and Structural Vulnerability

Social Disorganisation Theory (SDT) offers a robust theoretical framework for interpreting these findings. SDT posits that neighbourhoods characterised by high residential mobility, concentrated poverty, and ethnic heterogeneity experience weakened social institutions and diminished collective efficacy (Kornhauser, 1978). This breakdown in informal social control directly explains why specific facilities like bus stations, bars, and abandoned buildings often situated within or adjacent to such disadvantaged areas, become persistent crime hotspots. The theory effectively accounts for Lersch's (2017) findings of strategic offender positioning, as

these locations represent environments where community guardianship is lowest and opportunities for exploitation are highest.

This theoretical lens is further supported by Lersch's (2017) observation that carjackings are also linked to illicit activities like drug trafficking and prostitution. In these socially disorganised settings, offenders target vehicles of individuals such as, drug kingpins and pimps, who are unlikely to report the crime to the police. This exploitation of the "code of the streets" reinforces the SDT proposition that a breakdown in conventional social controls and a reliance on alternative justice systems facilitate criminal behaviour.

2.23.1 Integrating Theoretical Perspectives on Crime: From Social Disorganisation to Spatial Dynamics

The integration of these theoretical perspectives provides a framework for evaluating both the strengths and limitations of foundational research in this field, beginning with Lersch's (2017) seminal work on carjackings in socially disorganised settings.

2.23.2 Strengths and Contributions of the Foundational Study

Lersch's (2017) foundational research makes significant contributions to our understanding of criminal behaviour in socially disorganised settings. The study's primary strength lies in its theoretical grounding in SDT, effectively demonstrating how the breakdown of conventional social controls creates environments conducive to specific criminal activities like carjackings. By identifying how offenders strategically target vehicles belonging to drug kingpins and pimps, who are unlikely to report crimes to police, the study illuminates the sophisticated exploitation of "code of the streets" and alternative justice systems. This insight provides a crucial framework for understanding how criminal networks operate in marginalised communities where formal institutions have limited reach.

The study's focus on the intersection between different illicit activities (carjackings, drug trafficking, and prostitution) offers valuable insights into the interconnected nature of criminal enterprises. This multi-dimensional approach helps explain why certain crimes cluster in particular social contexts and how criminals leverage community characteristics to their advantage. By establishing these connections, Lersch's work creates a foundation for understanding the complex ecosystem of criminal behaviour in socially disorganised areas.

2.23.3 Weaknesses and Limitations of the Foundational Study

Despite its valuable contributions, Lersch's (2017) research has several significant limitations that recent scholarship has begun to address. First, the study's theoretical framework relies almost exclusively on SDT, neglecting other complementary perspectives that could provide a more comprehensive understanding of criminal behaviour. This narrow theoretical lens limits the explanatory power of the research, particularly regarding individual decision-making processes and situational factors that influence criminal acts.

Second, the study lacks spatial and temporal dimensions in its analysis. By not examining the geographical patterns of carjackings or how these patterns change over time, the research misses critical aspects of criminal behaviour that could inform prevention strategies. This spatial and temporal blindness represents a significant methodological gap in understanding the dynamic nature of criminal activities.

Third, the study's focus on carjackings, while valuable, does not consider how this crime relates to other offenses or how it might be influenced by environmental factors such as alcohol establishments or nightlife districts. This siloed approach limits the practical applicability of the findings for comprehensive crime prevention strategies.

Finally, the study does not address the evolving nature of criminal methods, particularly the increasing role of technology in facilitating carjackings and other vehicle-related crimes. This omission is particularly significant given the rapid technological advancements that have transformed criminal enterprises in recent years.

2.23.4 How Recent Studies Address These Limitations

The 2 recent studies, Huang et al. (2025) on spatial links between bars and crime in Detroit, and Wüllenweber & Burrell (2023) on robbery in the night-time economy, make substantial contributions that address many of the foundational study's limitations.

Huang et al. (2025) significantly advance our understanding through sophisticated spatial analysis using global and local colocation quotient models. By examining the spatial relationships between different types of alcohol establishments and various crimes across

precise geographical locations and time periods, this study addresses the spatial and temporal dimensions absent from Lersch's (2017) work. Their finding that "downtown bars showing a lower crime association, bars in clusters showing diverse patterns, and isolated bars in higher risk" demonstrates how spatial context influences criminal opportunities, a perspective missing from the foundational study.

The Detroit study also incorporates multiple theoretical frameworks, including RAT and Broken Windows Theory, providing a more comprehensive explanatory model than Lersch's (2017) singular reliance on SDT. This multi-theoretical approach allows for a more nuanced understanding of how environmental factors, routine activities, and community dynamics intersect to create criminal opportunities.

Wüllenweber & Burrell (2023) complement these contributions by examining the temporal dimensions of crime, specifically focusing on robbery in the night-time economy. Their research demonstrates how "the frequency of robbery occurring varies over time and at different locations," addressing the temporal gap in Lersch's (2017) work. By highlighting how alcohol consumption in night-time venues creates vulnerable targets, they provide a more detailed understanding of situational factors that facilitate criminal behaviour.

Both studies also expand beyond the narrow focus on carjackings in the foundational research to examine a broader range of crimes and their relationships with environmental factors. This broader perspective allows for more comprehensive crime prevention strategies that address multiple offences simultaneously.

2.23.5 Limitations of Recent Studies and How the PhD Study Addresses Them

Despite their valuable contributions, both recent studies have limitations that the PhD research on the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area, SA, addresses effectively.

First, while Huang et al. (2025) and Wüllenweber & Burrell (2023) provide valuable insights into spatial and temporal patterns of crime, they offer limited understanding of the organised nature of criminal methods. The PhD research fills this gap by exploring "the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MOs used for committing carjackings and MVTs," including

"the use of illicit driving techniques, use of technological methods, advanced surveillance methods, and the infiltration of law enforcement (SAPS) by organised crime syndicates." This focus on the sophisticated methods employed by criminals addresses a significant gap in understanding how modern carjackings operate.

Second, the recent studies primarily use quantitative methodologies, which, while valuable for identifying patterns, do not provide deep insights into offender motivations and decision-making processes. The PhD research addresses this through its qualitative methodology involving "in-depth interviews with incarcerated participants," offering rich, nuanced understanding of criminal behaviour that quantitative methods alone cannot capture.

Third, while the recent studies incorporate multiple theoretical frameworks, the PhD research provides an even more comprehensive theoretical grounding by integrating "RCT, RAT, SDT, and DAT." This multi-theoretical approach allows for a more holistic understanding of how individual decision-making, routine activities, community dynamics, and socialisation processes within criminal networks intersect to facilitate criminal behaviour.

Fourth, the recent studies focus primarily on Western contexts (Detroit and the UK), while the PhD research examines crime in SA, providing valuable insights into how criminal patterns manifest in different socio-economic and cultural contexts. This geographical diversification is crucial for developing a more globally relevant understanding of criminal behaviour.

Finally, this PhD research provides more specific and actionable recommendations for crime prevention, including "fostering collaboration between law enforcement and community members, implementing public awareness campaigns, and leveraging technology to improve vehicle security." These practical recommendations address the real-world implications of the research in a way that extends beyond the more theoretical contributions of the recent studies.

2.23.6 Integrated Understanding

By integrating the foundational study with recent research and the PhD thesis, researchers can develop a more comprehensive understanding of criminal behaviour that addresses individual, situational, and contextual factors. This integrated approach recognises that criminal behaviour emerges from complex interactions between individual decision-making processes (addressed

by RCT), routine activities and environmental factors (addressed by RAT), community dynamics (addressed by SDT), and socialisation processes within criminal networks (addressed by DAT).

The demographic correlates of MVT provide further empirical support for the SDT framework. A substantial body of research demonstrates that areas with lower socio-economic status (SES), high unemployment, and a prevalence of single-parent households experience higher MVT rates (Copes, 1999; Miethe & McCorkle, 2001). These factors contribute to the very structural instability that SDT identifies as criminogenic. Similarly, residential mobility, a core tenet of SDT, has been directly linked to increased MVTs (Miethe & McCorkle, 2001). The role of racial and ethnic composition, however, presents a more complex picture. While classic studies suggest that racially and ethnically diverse areas tend to have high MVT levels due to a breakdown in social cohesion (Bursik & Grasmick, 1993; Clarke & Harris, 1992; Sampson & Groves, 1989; Warner & Pierce, 1993), other research complicates this narrative. Davison (1995) and Rice and Smith (2002) found that offenders commit fewer MVTs in diverse neighbourhoods but more frequently in areas with predominantly African-American populations. This contention highlights a critical debate within the literature: whether crime is driven by heterogeneity itself or by the concentrated disadvantage and systemic disinvestment that often co-occurs with racial segregation. Regardless of this nuance, the convergence of evidence underscores that structural disadvantage, in its various forms, creates the fertile ground for crimes like carjacking.

2.24 Integrated Literature Review

While the demographic factors identified in the literature provide crucial context for understanding MVT patterns, a comprehensive analysis must also consider the decision-making processes and agency of the offenders themselves.

2.24.1 Beyond Spatial Mapping: Integrating Offender Agency into MVT Research

Foundational research has established a clear link between MVT and specific demographic factors, consistently finding higher rates in areas characterised by lower SES, high unemployment, single-parent households, and residential mobility (Copes, 1999; Miethe & McCorkle, 2001). The role of racial and ethnic composition is more complex; while some studies link diversity to higher MVT levels due to weakened social cohesion (Bursik & Grasmick, 1993; Sampson & Groves, 1989), others suggest the correlation is stronger with

concentrated disadvantage in predominantly African-American neighbourhoods (Davison, 1995; Rice & Smith, 2002).

Building on this demographic groundwork, Dao and Thill (2021) advanced the field significantly by introducing spatial association rule mining (SARM) to capture the multidimensional, socio-spatial interactions that influence MVT prevalence. Their computational approach effectively maps the complex architecture of risk, revealing spillover effects and neighbourhood dynamics. However, this focus on spatial patterns, while powerful, comes at the expense of understanding the human agency that operates within those patterns. This qualitative PhD study is designed to address 3 critical limitations inherent in a purely computational approach.

First, the SARM framework identifies *what* demographic and environmental factors correlate with MVT but offers limited insight into the offender's decision-making process. It cannot reveal how offenders perceive, interpret, and navigate contexts like SES gradients or racial composition when selecting a target. By employing in-depth interviews grounded in RCT and RAT, this study provides the rich, contextualised understanding of offender calculus, risk assessment, target selection, and tactical decisions that statistical patterns alone cannot capture.

Furthermore, a data-driven methodology overlooks the socialisation processes that mediate the relationship between demographic environments and criminal outcomes. Dao and Thill's (2021) work does not explore how offenders' realities, learned behaviours, and network interactions core tenets of DAT and SDT shape their actions. This research rectifies this by examining how community instability and economic deprivation manifest in offenders' narratives, how criminal networks facilitate knowledge transfer, and how socio-economic pressures are rationalised, thereby transforming observed correlations into nuanced explanations of criminal behaviour.

Finally, the policy relevance of complex spatial rules is limited for practitioners without an understanding of the offender's perspective. Dao and Thill's (2021) visualisations illustrate relationships but offer little guidance on how offenders exploit specific vulnerabilities or how law enforcement might disrupt these processes. By analysing offenders' detailed accounts of their evolving MO including illicit driving techniques, technological exploitation, and strategies

to undermine community-police relations, this study generates actionable, context-specific recommendations for training, community engagement, and policy development.

In essence, while Dao and Thill (2021) masterfully map the *where* and *what* of MVT risk, this qualitative PhD study explains the *how* and *why*. Through in-depth interviews with incarcerated offenders in KwaZulu-Natal, it illuminates the human decision-making, network dynamics, and sophisticated MO progression that generate the spatial correlations identified by SARM. By providing this crucial "inside" perspective, this PhD study delivers the theoretical depth and actionable intelligence necessary to combat the organised crime dynamics that quantitative patterns alone cannot fully address.

Social Disorganisation Theory (SDT) suggests that racially diversified neighbourhoods with low SES experience weakened social controls and limited resources to combat crime, leading to increased MVTs (Bursik & Grasmick, 1993; Shaw & McKay, 1942). However, contrary to this theory, some studies found that MVTs also occur in affluent neighbourhoods, where young offenders from wealthy families engage in theft for thrill-seeking and temporary use (Kearns, Livingston, Galster & Bannister, 2019). Moreover, studies of offender behaviour reveal that young perpetrators frequently operate in groups, motivated by pleasure and the temporary use of vehicles rather than financial gain (Sanders, 1976; Rice & Smith, 2002). These findings challenge the SDT-centric view, suggesting that MVTs are influenced by factors beyond neighbourhood poverty, including geographic adjacency and external settings (Frank et al., 2012; Mukherjee & Rajendran, 2015).

2.25 Integrated Literature Review

Building upon this foundation, the following analysis traces the theoretical progression from traditional neighbourhood-focused explanations to contemporary understandings of MVT as organised criminal enterprises.

2.25.1 The Evolution of MVT Theory: From Neighbourhood Dynamics to Organised Syndicates

Foundational criminological theories, such as SDT, have traditionally linked MVT to neighbourhood characteristics, positing that racially diverse, low SES areas suffer from weakened social controls, leading to increased crime (Shaw & McKay, 1942; Bursik & Grasmick, 1993). However, this framework is insufficient to explain the full spectrum of MVT

phenomena. Research indicates that MVTs also occur in affluent neighbourhoods, often committed by young, thrill-seeking offenders from wealthy families (Kearns et al., 2019). Furthermore, studies of offender behaviour reveal that young perpetrators frequently operate in groups, motivated by pleasure and the temporary use of vehicles rather than financial gain (Sanders, 1976; Rice & Smith, 2002). These findings challenge the SDT-centric view, suggesting that MVTs are influenced by factors beyond neighbourhood poverty, including geographic adjacency and external settings (Frank et al., 2012; Mukherjee & Rajendran, 2015), creating a significant gap between micro-level offender actions and macro-level spatial patterns.

Addressing this gap, Bila and Roelfose (2016) shift the focus from disorganised neighbourhoods to highly organised criminal syndicates. Using systems and encroachment theories, they unravel the "organisational matrix" of MVT operations, revealing how they evolve into complex, hierarchical structures with specialised roles from thieves to document forgers and exporters. Their framework explains how corruption and political connections create resilient "matrix organisations" that transcend local boundaries. Crucially, Bila and Roelfose's (2016) work bridges the micro-macro divide by exposing the meso-level organisational machinery that transforms opportunistic thefts into systematic criminal enterprises, providing a structural explanation for the scaling of MVT incidents that earlier studies could not.

While Bila and Roelfose (2016) provide an invaluable blueprint of syndicate architecture, their analysis presents 3 critical limitations that this qualitative PhD study is designed to address. First, their static, organisational focus overlooks the human agency and tactical evolution that drive these operations, failing to capture how offenders actively adapt their methods through technological exploitation and law enforcement infiltration. Second, their theoretical model underemphasises the socio-cultural embeddedness of these syndicates, neglecting how localised factors, such as economic deprivation and community trust deficits, shape recruitment and operational resilience within specific contexts like Durban. Third, their macro-level analysis offers limited actionable intelligence for practitioners, providing little guidance on exploiting tactical vulnerabilities or developing context-specific countermeasures.

By contrast, this PhD study employs in-depth interviews with incarcerated offenders to illuminate the living dynamics behind these structural gaps. It reveals the sophisticated

progression of offender tactics through lived experiences, uncovers how Durban's unique socio-economic landscape sustains syndicate operations, and generates empirically grounded strategies. These range from targeted law enforcement training on infiltration tactics to community engagement initiatives that address trust deficits, thereby transforming abstract "matrix" concepts into disruptible realities. In essence, while Bila and Roelfose (2016) map the syndicate's architectural blueprint, this study illuminates the human ingenuity, contextual vulnerabilities, and adaptive tactics that make these networks simultaneously formidable and penetrable.

Potential motor vehicle thieves, like some members of the general public, exhibit specific travel patterns across multiple communities (Frank et al., 2012; Rice & Smith, 2002). Motor vehicle thieves are aware of targeted cars in areas outside their neighbourhoods, and urban MVT is high due to motivated offenders and owners converging in areas with poor guardianship (Rice & Smith, 2002). MVT levels are elevated around targeted businesses near disadvantaged offenders and dysfunctional families with poor social controls (Rice & Smith, 2002). These findings are supported by Barclay et al. (1995), Fleming (1995), Plouffe and Sampson (2004), and Rengert (1996), who identified hotspots where deprived offenders target and steal parked motor vehicles.

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2.26 Integrated Literature Review

This integrated review critically traces the trajectory of MVT research from its traditional focus on structural drivers to a more nuanced understanding that incorporates offender agency.

2.26.1 From Structural Drivers to Offender Agency: A Critique of MVT Research and a Qualitative Path Forward

Research on MVT has consistently identified a confluence of spatial, environmental, and structural factors that create opportunities for crime. Foundational studies established that offenders, like the general public, travel beyond their immediate neighbourhoods, targeting

areas where motivated offenders and suitable vehicles converge under conditions of poor guardianship (Frank et al., 2012; Rice & Smith, 2002). This creates predictable hotspots, a concept robustly supported by early seminal work from Barclay et al. (1995), Fleming (1995), Plouffe and Sampson (2004), and Rengert (1996), who identified the specific locations where deprived offenders target and steal parked motor vehicles. Recent scholarship has refined this understanding with unprecedented granularity; for example, Bjerregaard et al. (2021) applied RAT to university campuses, revealing how academic schedules and student-specific guardianship behaviours create distinct, predictable patterns of theft.

Simultaneously, a robust body of literature links MVT and related violent offences like carjacking to broader structural forces, particularly economic inequality. Seminal work by Hsieh and Pugh (1993) and Fajnzylber et al. (1998, 2002a, 2002b) demonstrated a strong correlation between financial disparities and violent crime. However, this relationship is complex and continues to be debated. Recent research challenges foundational assumptions, with Pare and Felson (2014) finding that inequality's effect disappears when poverty is controlled for, while Hernandez (2024) documents dramatic post-pandemic surges in vehicle crimes but notes that unreliable data obscure the precise causal mechanisms.

Despite these valuable contributions, a critical limitation persists across both spatial and structural research: the tendency to treat offenders as abstract variables rather than as agentic decision-makers operating within organised networks. Whether analysing campus parking lots or national inequality trends, these studies often overlook the human processes that translate structural conditions into criminal action. This PhD study is designed to address this cluster of limitations through 3 primary contributions.

First, it shifts the focus from statistical correlation to offender agency. By conducting in-depth interviews with incarcerated offenders, this research uncovers the rational choices and tactical adaptations, such as technological exploitation and surveillance countermeasures, that are invisible to quantitative models. Second, it moves beyond individual opportunism to expose the organised crime matrix that sustains modern MVT. The findings reveal how syndicates with specialised roles, corruption networks, and hierarchical coordination transform disparate thefts into systematic operations, a dimension absent from studies focused solely on guardianship or macroeconomics. Finally, it grounds these dynamics in a specific, high-crime context of the

greater Berea area, showing how extreme inequality, social disorganisation, and differential association create a fertile environment for these syndicates to thrive.

In essence, while previous research masterfully maps the where and the what of MVT, this qualitative PhD study explains the how and the why. It bridges the gap between structural drivers and criminal outcomes by illuminating the human ingenuity, network dynamics, and contextual embeddedness that make economic inequality and spatial vulnerabilities operational realities for organised motor vehicle crime syndicates.

In line with RCT, crimes like carjackings and MVTs occur when: (a) motivated offenders (for example, indigent individuals) meet suitable targets (such as, expensive cars, wealthy motorists); (b) suitable targets are in close proximity to motivated offenders due to financial inequalities; and (c) capable guardians (for example, effective security measures, authorities) are absent. This combination creates an environment conducive to carjackings and MVTs, as motivated offenders view expensive cars and their owners/drivers as attractive targets. In short, RCT explains how financial inequalities contribute to carjackings and MVTs by facilitating the intersection of motivated offenders, suitable targets, and lack of capable guardianship. Jackson (1992) criticised studies on MVTs for neglecting gender as a demographic factor, instead focusing on social disorganisation, unemployment, and apathy. Jackson (1992) argued that MVTs are linked to harmful forms of masculinity accessible to disadvantaged young males, who commit these crimes to construct powerful male identities in neighbourhoods with limited financial and social prospects. Similarly, White (1990) suggested that MVTs are a means for juvenile offenders to reassert their gender identity. Groombridge (1993) also found that MVTs are gendered, a notion provisionally accepted by the Home Office. O'Connor and Kelly (2006) later affirmed this finding, concluding that engagement in MVTs requires the intersection of masculinities, femininities, and motor vehicle culture, although they could not definitively show the effect of gender on MVT participation.

The literature on MVT has evolved significantly since Jackson's (1992) critique of studies neglecting gender as a demographic factor. Jackson (1992) argued that MVTs are linked to harmful forms of masculinity accessible to disadvantaged young males who commit these crimes to construct powerful male identities in neighbourhoods with limited financial and social prospects. This gendered perspective was supported by White (1990), who suggested that

MVTs serve as a means for juvenile offenders to reassert their gender identity, and later by Groombridge (1993) and O'Connor and Kelly (2006), who affirmed that engagement in MVTs requires the intersection of masculinities, femininities, and motor vehicle culture.

2.27 Integrated Literature Review

This evolution in the literature, from structural explanations to an emphasis on gendered agency, provides the foundation for reframing the study of motor vehicle crime.

2.27.1 From Structural Explanations to Gendered Agency: Reframing the Study of Motor Vehicle Crime

Traditional explanations for MVT and carjacking often rely on a rational choice framework, which posits that crime occurs when motivated offenders, suitable targets, and a lack of capable guardianship converge, a dynamic often exacerbated by financial inequality. While this model provides a useful baseline, it has been justly criticised for its neglect of social and demographic factors. A significant body of scholarship, most notably led by Jackson (1992), challenged this view by arguing that MVTs are profoundly gendered acts. For disadvantaged young males with limited legitimate avenues for social advancement, vehicle theft becomes a performance of a powerful masculine identity, a means to assert self-worth in environments constrained by poverty and social exclusion (White, 1990; Groombridge, 1993; O'Connor & Kelly, 2006). This perspective shifts the focus from abstract economic variables to the lived experiences and identity constructions of the offenders themselves.

While this gendered foundation remains critical, recent empirical work in SA reveals significant gaps in translating these theoretical insights into effective prevention strategies. Mthimkhulu's (2022) qualitative study on vehicle theft in Jozini, KwaZulu-Natal (also referred to as KZN), for instance, provides a valuable context-specific analysis but ultimately falls short by attributing crime primarily to systemic failures, such as police understaffing and porous borders, and recommending top-down, infrastructure-based solutions. This approach, while grounded in RAT and RCT, paradoxically overlooks the very offender agency these theories imply. It treats crime as a static problem to be solved by institutional upgrades, rather than as a dynamic process driven by adaptive offenders.

This PhD study directly addresses these limitations by re-centering offender agency and the evolution of criminal tactics. Firstly, through in-depth interviews with incarcerated offenders

in the greater Berea area, this research moves beyond Mthimkhulu's (2022) focus on systemic failure to expose how criminal networks actively evolve their MO. Findings reveal a sophisticated progression of tactics, including technological exploitation, advanced surveillance countermeasures, and the strategic infiltration of the SAPS, demonstrating that offenders adapt far more quickly than institutions can respond. Secondly, this study expands the theoretical scope by integrating SDT and DAT. This broader framework explains how neighbourhood decay and peer influence within the Berea area shape and sustain these criminal networks, dimensions absent from Mthimkhulu's (2022) prevention-centric model. Finally, by mapping this MO evolution, the research generates precise, offender-informed interventions, such as anti-corruption protocols and community-network disruption strategies, that target the adaptive mechanisms of crime, moving beyond the generic, static solutions proposed in earlier work. In doing so, it bridges the gap between the gendered and structural drivers of crime and the dynamic, human realities of how it is actually orchestrated.

Campbell (1994) emphasised the importance of motor vehicle culture in understanding MVTs, similar to Jackson (1992) and Groombridge (1993). Campbell (1994) argued that the gendered nature of motor vehicle culture contributes to the police's limited success in preventing juvenile offenders from stealing cars. Campbell (1994) also suggested that car culture plays a significant role in MVTs, particularly in relation to juvenile masculine identity. This finding is supported by Cunneen and White (1995), who also identified a link between juvenile male offenders and the masculine imagery of motor vehicles. Jackson's (1992) and Campbell's (1994) research findings highlight the need for justice agencies to address the connection between motor vehicle culture and juvenile masculine identity to effectively prevent MVTs.

2.28 Integrated Literature Review

Moving beyond the established cultural context, the study of motor vehicle crime now progresses to a critical examination of the organized agency that drives these offences.

From Cultural Context to Organised Agency: Advancing the Study of Motor Vehicle Crime

Foundational research has long established that motor vehicle culture is inextricably linked to masculine identity, particularly for juvenile offenders. Scholars like Campbell (1994), alongside Jackson (1992) and Groombridge (1993), argued that the gendered imagery of cars provides a powerful avenue for constructing a powerful male identity in the face of limited social and economic prospects. This cultural understanding remains a vital lens, but recent

scholarship has advanced the field by exploring the specific mechanisms and institutional contexts that enable this behaviour.

Phetthong (2020) and Akdar (2024) represent significant strides in this evolution. Phetthong (2020) applied masculinity theory with unprecedented empirical specificity, while Akdar (2024) provided a sharp institutional analysis of systemic capacity gaps. Together, they move beyond macro-level observations to reveal how identity performance and operational capability converge to facilitate offending. However, despite these valuable contributions, their work presents a cluster of critical limitations that this qualitative PhD study is designed to address.

Firstly, both Phetthong's (2020) masculinity framework and Akdar's (2024) institutional analysis tend to treat offenders as abstract categories, overlooking the agential decision-making at the heart of criminal enterprise. They fail to capture how offenders rationally evolve their MO through technological innovation and tactical adaptation. Secondly, their focus on individual motivation or systemic weakness neglects the organised crime structures that sustain modern MVTs. This study rectifies this by uncovering the "crime matrix," the syndicates with specialised roles, corruption networks, and hierarchical coordination that transform opportunistic theft into systematic operations. Furthermore, their generalised contexts underemphasise the profound socio-cultural embeddedness of crime in specific communities like the greater Berea area. By integrating SDT and DAT, this research reveals how localised deprivation, institutional distrust, and street codes shape recruitment and operational resilience.

Finally, by employing in-depth interviews with incarcerated offenders, this PhD study generates empirically grounded, actionable intelligence that transcends generic recommendations. It exposes the lived realities of syndicate operations, from illicit driving techniques to the infiltration of the SAPS, allowing for the development of targeted countermeasures. In essence, while Phetthong (2020) explains *why* marginalised men might be drawn to car culture and Akdar (2024) identifies *how* institutions may fail to respond, this study illuminates *how, why,* and *by whom* MVTs are actively orchestrated in complex urban environments. It bridges the gap between cultural drivers and institutional responses by revealing the human agency and organised networks that make motor vehicle crime a resilient and adaptable phenomenon.

Campbell (1994) echoed Jackson (1992) and Groombridge (1993) in highlighting the

significance of motor vehicle culture in understanding MVTs. Campbell (1994) connected the gendered nature of car culture to the police's limited success in preventing juvenile car theft, suggesting that car culture contributes to MVTs. Campbell (1994) also found that Australian justice agencies failed to address the link between motor vehicle culture and juvenile masculine identity, leading to ineffective prevention of MVTs. This finding aligns with Cunneen and White (1995), who also identified a link between juvenile male offenders and the masculine imagery of motor vehicles, a connection also noted by Jackson (1992) and Campbell (1994) in their studies.

2.29 Integrated Literature Review

Foundational research in the 1990s (Campbell, 1994; Jackson, 1992; Groombridge, 1993) established a critical link between motor vehicle culture and MVTs, positing that its gendered nature resonated with juvenile masculine identity and contributed to offending. However, these seminal works were limited by their reliance on theoretical observation over empirical data, their superficial treatment of socioeconomic drivers, and their failure to propose actionable interventions.

A significant advance was made by Dodd and Morgan (2023), whose exploratory study provided empirical validation by interviewing youthful offenders. They reframed MVTs not merely as a product of cultural attraction but as a rational response to socioeconomic deprivation and monotony, also proposing youth-led deterrents. Despite this progress, their focus on opportunistic joyriding overlooked its evolution into organised crime. Furthermore, their small, regional sample limited generalisability to high-crime urban contexts, and their analysis neglected the institutional complicity, such as police corruption and resource gaps, that enables syndicate operations.

This PhD study directly addresses these interrelated gaps. First, by interviewing incarcerated offenders in a high-crime urban area, it maps the progression from opportunistic theft to sophisticated, syndicate-based carjackings, revealing how socioeconomic disadvantage intersects with criminal networks. Second, it uniquely integrates a socioeconomic analysis of motivation with an examination of institutional vulnerabilities within the SAPS, demonstrating how systemic failures transform individual choices into organised operations. Third, employing a multi-theory framework, this research develops actionable strategies that connect community-

based prevention with essential criminal justice reforms, moving beyond simplistic deterrence to systemic disruption.

Consequently, this study transcends prior research by unifying three previously disconnected dimensions of the MVT ecosystem. It demonstrates how cultural and socioeconomic drivers are catalysts for escalation into organised crime. It reveals how individual agency is enabled and amplified by institutional failures; a dimension overlooked by earlier scholarship. Ultimately, this research translates theoretical understanding into a comprehensive intervention blueprint, offering strategies that simultaneously address root socioeconomic causes and disrupt the operational structures of criminal networks. In doing so, it provides the first empirically grounded, context-specific model for understanding and countering the full spectrum of MVTs, from cultural attraction to systemic criminal enterprise.

Dawes (2002) similarly found that, for male juvenile offenders, MVTs and driving are linked to forming a masculine identity, echoing Cunneen and White (1995). White (1990) also noted that MVT provides juveniles with opportunities to form masculine identity. Dawes further observed that MVT offers juveniles a free and pleasurable experience, which is seen as a rite of passage, particularly among Aboriginal offenders. This finding is supported by Beresford and Omaji (1996), who found that MVT is part of the transition from boyhood to adulthood for Aboriginal juvenile offenders, involving taunts to police during high-speed chases. Dawes' findings highlight the significance of MVT in shaping masculine identity among juvenile offenders.

2.30 Integrated Literature Review

While these foundational studies were pivotal in linking MVT to the construction of masculine identity, their analytical frameworks are constrained by critical limitations that subsequent research must address.

2.30.1 MVT, Masculine Identity, and Criminal Evolution: Foundational Research and Limitations

Early scholarship established critical linkages between MVTs and masculine identity formation among juvenile offenders. Dawes (2002), Cunneen and White (1995), White (1990), and Beresford and Omaji (1996) collectively demonstrated how MVTs function as rites of passage and mechanisms for asserting masculine identity, particularly for Aboriginal youth transitioning

to adulthood. These studies identified MVTs as culturally significant activities that provide free, pleasurable experiences often involving taunts to police during high-speed chases.

Despite these valuable contributions, foundational studies exhibit significant limitations:

1. Oversimplified gender analysis: Treating masculinity as monolithic without examining socioeconomic contextual factors
2. Limited contextual understanding: Inadequate consideration of how structural disadvantages influence criminal behaviour
3. Absence of neurodevelopmental considerations: Complete oversight of neurodevelopmental factors influencing offending patterns
4. Static perspective: Presenting MVTs as relatively static behaviours without examining their evolution within criminal networks
5. Geographical limitations: Focused primarily on Australian contexts without broader socio-political considerations.

2.30.2 Recent Advances and Persistent Gaps

Contemporary scholarship has begun addressing these limitations. Van den Herik's (2024) research on "Perceptions of Masculinity and Criminality of Young Men in Kanaleneiland" advances understanding by examining how poverty shapes masculine identity formation, revealing how disadvantaged youth view criminality as a last resort to achieve traditional provider roles when legitimate pathways appear inaccessible.

Similarly, Baidawi and Piquero's (2021) study on "Neurodisability among Children at the Nexus of the Child Welfare and Youth Justice System" introduces critical neurodevelopmental dimensions absent from foundational research, demonstrating that nearly half of crossover children involved in both systems have neurodisabilities, experience greater cumulative adversity, and exhibit earlier onset of offending.

Despite these advances, recent studies exhibit limitations. Van den Herik (2024) fails to examine organised criminal networks, technological facilitation of crime, or geographical applicability beyond the Netherlands. Baidawi and Piquero (2021) do not connect neurodisability to specific crime types like MVTs, examine how networks target neurodivergent youth, or develop intervention strategies addressing these vulnerabilities.

2.31 Demographic Factors in Carjacking

Age represents another critical factor in understanding these crimes. Davis (2003) identified juvenile offenders between 12-25 years as primary perpetrators in SA, while Topalli et al. (2015) found that carjackers consider victim age in their targeting, noting younger victims tend to resist more, influencing offenders' participation in carjackings where both car and driver become targets.

2.31.1 This Study's Contribution

This doctoral research on the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in Durban's greater Berea area addresses limitations in both foundational and recent studies through:

1. Multidimensional integration: Examining the complex interplay between masculine identity formation, socioeconomic disadvantage, and neurodevelopmental vulnerabilities within organised criminal networks
2. Evolutionary analysis: Tracking the progression and increasing sophistication of criminal methods, including technological tools, surveillance techniques, and law enforcement infiltration
3. Contextual specificity with global relevance: Providing detailed understanding of the greater Berea area context while identifying broader applicable patterns
4. Multi-theoretical framework: Integrating RCT, RAT, SDT, and DAT for comprehensive explanatory power
5. Practical interventions: Developing concrete recommendations for law enforcement, community engagement, and policy development.

Research by Davis (2003) indicates that age is a significant demographic factor in carjacking, with juvenile offenders between 12 and 25 years commonly committing carjackings in SA. While this foundational study established important demographic patterns, it primarily focused on age as a predictive factor without fully exploring the complex motivational landscape or the hybrid nature of carjacking as both a violent offence and, to a certain extent, 'somewhat a property offence'. Topalli et al. (2015) expanded on this by examining the victim-offender dynamic, finding that carjackers consider the age of their victims, noting that younger victims tend to resist more than older victims. As a result, they reported that carjackers view both the car and driver as targets, with the victim's age influencing the offender's participation in

carjacking. However, Topalli et al. (2015), while highlighting the complex dynamics between offenders and victims, did not fully address the organised nature of carjacking or the methodological aspects of the crime.

2.32 Integrated Literature Review

Building upon the foundational work of Davis (2003) and Topalli et al. (2015), which established important demographic patterns and victim-offender dynamics in carjacking, recent scholarship has advanced our understanding of carjacking beyond these demographic and interactive dimensions. Jacobs and Cherbonneau (2023) conceptualise carjacking as a hybrid offence that draws elements from both regular robbery and MVT, highlighting its nuanced etiology and expression. Their work addresses limitations in earlier studies by examining the structure and process of carjacking, noting that offenders must navigate multiple challenges under considerable time, pressure and uncertainty. This conceptualisation helps explain why carjacking is simultaneously opportunistic yet calculated, a complexity not fully captured in earlier research focused primarily on demographic factors.

Further developing our understanding of offender motivations, Abrahams (2022) compared carjackers with motor vehicle thieves, revealing that while both groups primarily target vehicles for financial gain, their motivations and behaviours differ significantly. Abrahams' (2022) addresses the limitation in foundational studies by showing that money-making is the most popular reason for both groups, with pleasure being a secondary motivation. Interestingly, motor vehcile thieves regularly stole vehicles as a means of transportation, a behaviour not observed among carjackers. Moreover, Abrahams (2022) found that while motor vehicle thieves actively avoided interpersonal crimes to reduce violence and potential consequences, carjackers typically used weapons primarily as scare tactics. This nuanced understanding of motivation complements Davis' (2003) demographic findings by providing insight into why young offenders might be drawn to carjacking specifically.

The temporal dimension of carjacking has been further elucidated by the Council on Criminal Justice (2024), which examined trends in carjacking in relation to significant societal events such as the COVID-19 pandemic and social justice protests of 2020. Their research addresses the limitation of potentially outdated patterns in foundational studies by comparing carjacking with non-carjacking robberies and MVTs across multiple U.S. cities. This comparative

approach reveals how changing social conditions affect the motives, means, and opportunities for carjacking, providing a more current understanding of the crime than what was available in earlier studies.

Despite these advances, recent studies still exhibit limitations that warrant further investigation. Jacobs and Cherbonneau (2023) focus primarily on the structural and procedural aspects of carjacking without deeply exploring the organised nature of carjacking networks or syndicates. Similarly, the Council on Criminal Justice (2024) is primarily focused on U.S. cities and trends rather than the underlying mechanisms or organisational aspects of carjacking, limiting its applicability to other contexts like SA. While Abrahams (2022) provides valuable insights into motivations, the study does not fully explore the technological aspects, advanced surveillance methods, or the infiltration of law enforcement by criminal syndicates.

This doctoral study addresses these limitations by specifically examining the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban, SA. Through in-depth interviews with incarcerated participants, this PhD study provides rich, firsthand insights into the criminal behaviour that complement the more statistical approaches of recent studies. By exploring the use of illicit driving techniques, technological methods, advanced surveillance methods, and infiltration of the SAPS by organised crime syndicates, this PhD study addresses gaps in the recent literature regarding the sophisticated MO employed by offenders.

Grounded in multiple theoretical frameworks including RCT, RAT, SDT, and DAT, this PhD study provides a more comprehensive understanding of carjacking than studies focusing on single aspects. The findings reveal a complex interplay of factors contributing to the sophistication of carjackings and MVTs, including the tactical exploitation of vulnerabilities, the role of trust within criminal networks, and the influence of socio-economic conditions on criminal behaviour.

The relevance of this doctoral study extends beyond academic contribution by offering practical recommendations for the SAPS, community engagement, and policy development. By identifying the organised nature of the 2 said crimes and their progression over time, this PhD study provides a foundation for developing effective interventions to reduce carjackings and

MVTs in the greater Berea area. Ultimately, this study bridges the gap between the demographic findings of early studies, the motivational insights of more recent literature, and the organisational realities of carjacking in contemporary SA, offering a more holistic understanding of this complex crime.

For the purpose of improving the reader's understanding of the concept of poverty within the context of the current discussion, the researcher will provide its strict scholarly definition below. According to Chaudhry, Malik, and Hassan (2009, p. 2), poverty is defined as "a complex phenomenon based on a network of interlocking economic, social, political, and demographic factors." This scholarly definition highlights the multifaceted nature of poverty, which is understood as an intricate and dynamic system comprising interconnected economic, social, political, and demographic elements. In essence, poverty is not solely an economic issue but a comprehensive condition influenced by various factors, underscoring its complexity and nuance. This definition provides a foundation for understanding poverty within the current discussion, emphasising its far-reaching implications beyond mere economic deprivation.

Research by Copes (1999) reveals a connection between high MVT levels and impoverished individuals in various communities. This finding aligns with Messner and Blau's (1987) study, which applied RAT to examine offences in the USA, uncovering a positive link between MVT levels and poverty in investigated areas. Messner and Blau (1987) also noted that motor vehicles in poor areas are often left unattended and unprotected on streets, making them vulnerable to theft. Similarly, Clarke (1999) found that offenders in impoverished areas tend to target motor vehicles near their residences, perpetrating MVTs in familiar territories.

2.33 Integrated Literature Review

This established correlation between poverty and MVT is the subject of extensive foundational research.

2.33.1 Foundational Research on Poverty and MVT

Research consistently demonstrates correlations between economic disadvantage and MVT.

Copes (1999) identified connections between high MVT levels and impoverished communities, while Messner and Blau (1987) applied RAT to establish positive links between MVT rates and poverty in U.S. areas. They noted that vehicles in impoverished neighbourhoods are often left unattended and unprotected, creating opportunities for theft. Similarly, Clarke (1999) found that offenders in disadvantaged areas typically target vehicles near their residences, operating within familiar territories. While these foundational studies established important correlations, they primarily focused on physical opportunity structures without adequately explaining why some impoverished communities experience lower crime rates than others with similar socioeconomic conditions.

2.33.2 Conceptualising Poverty

Poverty represents "a complex phenomenon based on a network of interlocking economic, social, political, and demographic factors" (Chaudhry, Malik, & Hassan, 2009, p. 2). This multidimensional conceptualisation extends beyond mere economic deprivation to encompass interconnected systemic elements that create and perpetuate disadvantage.

2.33.3 Integration of Recent Studies into the Literature Review and the Role of Social Connectedness

Recent scholarship has advanced understanding by examining the mediating role of social connectedness. Stuart and Taylor (2021) demonstrate that stronger social ties significantly reduce crime rates, including MVTs, even in economically disadvantaged areas. Their research reveals that a one standard deviation increase in social connectedness reduces MVTs by 20%, challenging deterministic poverty-crime relationships presented in earlier work, particularly, studies conducted by Copes (1999) and, Messner and Blau (1987). By analysing historical migration patterns during the Great Migration, they show that communities with higher concentrations of migrants from the same birth towns developed stronger social networks that persisted across generations and continued to suppress criminal activity decades later.

Stuart and Taylor's (2021) findings refine RAT as applied by Messner and Blau (1987). While the latter emphasised physical vulnerabilities and proximity to offenders, Stuart and Taylor (2021) demonstrate that social connectedness reduces crime by strengthening community norms and collective efficacy, making potential offenders less likely to act on criminal opportunities regardless of their presence. Their research shows social connectedness particularly reduces crimes committed by adolescents and young adults during gang and drug

activities, offender demographics frequently associated with MVT in impoverished areas.

2.33.4 Limitations in Recent Research

Despite these advances, Stuart and Taylor's (2021) study has limitations warranting further investigation. Their analysis focuses primarily on historical U.S. contexts without examining the organised nature of contemporary vehicle theft operations, particularly in international settings. The study also does not explore how technological advancements and sophisticated criminal networks might moderate the relationship between social connectedness and MVT in modern contexts. Furthermore, while establishing that social connectedness reduces crime, they do not extensively investigate specific mechanisms through which criminal networks adapt to or circumvent these social controls.

2.33.5 This Study's Contribution

This PhD study addresses these limitations by examining the progression of organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in Durban's greater Berea area, a context with distinct socioeconomic conditions and criminal dynamics. Through in-depth interviews with incarcerated offenders, this study provides granular insights into how criminal networks develop sophisticated methods that potentially override the protective effects of social connectedness identified by Stuart and Taylor (2021). The findings reveal the use of illicit driving techniques, technological methods, and advanced surveillance strategies that enable offenders to operate effectively even in communities with varying levels of social cohesion.

Moreover, this research builds upon Stuart and Taylor's (2021) work by exploring how organised crime syndicates infiltrate law enforcement (SAPS) and exploit community vulnerabilities, factors that may diminish the crime-reducing effects of social connectedness. By examining tactical exploitation of vulnerabilities and trust within criminal networks, this study explains why some areas with strong social ties may still experience high levels of organised MVT. The theoretical framework incorporating RCT, RAT, SDT, and DAT provides a more comprehensive understanding of how social connectedness interacts with criminal decision-making processes in contemporary contexts.

Ultimately, this research extends literature by demonstrating that while social connectedness

remains an important protective factor against MVT, its effectiveness may be compromised in environments where organised crime networks have developed sophisticated methods to circumvent community controls. This has significant implications for crime prevention strategies, suggesting that approaches must address both social cohesion and the organised nature of contemporary vehicle theft operations to effectively reduce MVT in vulnerable communities.

Research indicates that violent offending, including carjacking, is linked to poverty and overcrowding in urban residential areas (Farrington & Welsh, 2007; McLeod, Kruttschnitt & Dornfeld, 1994; Williams et al., 2014). Davis (1999) specifically found that carjackings are more common among offenders from disadvantaged families. Additionally, Shaw and McKay (1942) showed that violent perpetrators, such as those who use force during car theft, often reside in socially deprived neighbourhoods and communities. Farrington and Welsh's (2007) findings suggest that destitution in overcrowded dwellings contributes to violent behaviour, including carjacking.

2.34 Integrated Literature Review

While the literature has surveyed the broad scope of carjacking research, the relationship between socioeconomic factors and the crime is so foundational that it warrants a more focused examination in this integrated literature review section.

2.34.1 Poverty, Urban Disadvantage, and Carjacking: A Concise Literature Review

Foundational Research on Socioeconomic Factors and Carjacking

Research consistently demonstrates correlations between socioeconomic disadvantage and carjacking. Farrington and Welsh (2007), McLeod, Kruttschnitt and Dornfeld (1994), and Williams et al. (2014) established links between violent offending, including carjacking, and poverty in overcrowded urban areas. Davis (1999) specifically identified carjackings as more prevalent among offenders from disadvantaged families, while Shaw and McKay's (1942) Social Disorganisation Theory showed that violent perpetrators often reside in socially deprived neighbourhoods. These foundational studies established that destitution in overcrowded dwellings contributes to violent behaviour, including carjacking.

2.34.2 Advancing Understanding: Social Disruption and Carjacking Patterns

Recent scholarship has advanced understanding by examining how specific social events

interact with neighbourhood disadvantage to influence carjacking patterns. Lind, Larson, Mason, and Uggen (2024) demonstrate that carjackings not only increased but also dispersed spatially following the police killing of George Floyd and subsequent social unrest in Minneapolis, with socially disadvantaged neighbourhoods experiencing the greatest absolute increases. Their interrupted time series analysis reveals that carjackings responded more dynamically to social disruption than homicides, suggesting this crime is particularly sensitive to shifts in perceived police legitimacy and community cohesion.

Lind et al.'s (2024) research also refines understanding of spatial inequality in carjacking beyond Shaw and McKay's (1942) original SDT. While foundational theory emphasised persistent patterns of disadvantage, Lind et al. (2024) show that more advantaged neighbourhoods experienced greater relative increases in carjacking after social unrest, indicating how crime can rapidly spread beyond traditionally high-risk areas when social controls weaken. This spatial dispersion pattern was not captured in earlier studies examining more stable conditions.

2.34.3 Recent Research Limitations and this PhD Study Contributions

Despite these advances, Lind et al.'s (2024) study has limitations warranting further investigation. Their analysis focuses on a specific event in a particular U.S. city, potentially limiting generalisability to other contexts, especially internationally. The study also does not explore the organised nature of carjacking operations, offender motivations, or technological methods employed by offenders, factors that may mediate how social disruptions translate into increased carjackings.

This PhD study addresses these limitations by examining the progression of organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in Durban's greater Berea area, a context with distinct socioeconomic conditions and criminal justice dynamics. Through in-depth interviews with incarcerated offenders, this PhD study provides insights into how criminal networks develop sophisticated methods that may be activated or intensified during periods of social disruption. The findings reveal the use of illicit driving techniques, technological methods, indirect creation of hostilities between community members and SAPS, and advanced surveillance strategies that enable offenders to operate effectively even when social controls are weakened.

This PhD study builds upon Lind et al.'s (2024) work by exploring how organised crime syndicates infiltrate the SAPS and exploit community vulnerabilities, factors that may explain why carjacking proves particularly sensitive to social disruptions. By examining tactical exploitation of vulnerabilities and trust within criminal networks, this PhD study explains how offenders might capitalise on periods of reduced police legitimacy or community cohesion to expand operations into new areas, consistent with the spatial dispersion Lind et al. (2024) documented.

The theoretical framework incorporating RCT, RAT, SDT, and DAT provides a comprehensive understanding of how social disruptions interact with criminal decision-making processes. This addresses Lind et al.'s (2024) focus on spatial patterns by explaining the offender-level mechanisms driving those patterns.

Ultimately, this doctoral study extends literature by demonstrating that while social disruptions may create immediate conditions for increased carjackings as Lind et al. (2024) observed, the extent and nature of this increase are shaped by the sophistication of existing criminal networks and their ability to exploit these conditions, factors that vary across contexts and require context-specific interventions.

Research by William et al. (2014) and Parnell and Mosdell (n.d.) reveals that disadvantaged black youths in metropolitan areas are more likely to engage in violent offenses like carjackings due to complex poverty. Similarly, Guerra (2005) and Williams et al. (2014) found that familial difficulties, poverty, racism, and gangsterism contribute to violent offences. Braithwaite (1999) also identified correlations between aggressive offending and social ills like domestic violence, disrupted families, and low SES. Additionally, Braithwaite (1999) noted that hostile juvenile offenders from underprivileged racial/ethnic groups are more likely to perpetrate violent offences. Chisalita and Podea (2013) supported Braithwaite's (1999) findings, highlighting the effects of social ills on violent behaviour.

2.35 Integration of Recent Study into the Literature Review

The literature on violent crime patterns in disadvantaged neighbourhoods has long established the connection between social disadvantage and criminal behaviour. Foundational research by

William et al. (2014) and Parnell and Mosdell (n.d.) demonstrates how disadvantaged black youths in metropolitan areas are more likely to engage in violent offences like carjackings due to complex poverty dynamics. Similarly, Guerra (2005) and Williams et al. (2014) have shown how familial difficulties, poverty, racism, and gangsterism contribute to violent offences. Braithwaite's (1999) seminal work identified correlations between aggressive offending and social ills such as domestic violence, disrupted families, and low SES, noting particularly that hostile juvenile offenders from underprivileged racial/ethnic groups are more likely to perpetrate violent offences, a finding later supported by Chisalita and Podea (2013).

While these studies provide crucial theoretical foundations, they are limited by their temporal context and methodological approaches. Most were conducted before significant social movements like Black Lives Matter gained national prominence, and they lack rigorous time-series analysis to examine how specific events trigger crime pattern changes. Additionally, these studies treat violent crime as a monolithic category without adequately distinguishing between different types of violent offences or examining their spatial dynamics in relation to social events.

Recent scholarship by Lind et al. (2024) addresses these limitations through their interrupted time series analysis examining carjacking patterns in Minneapolis following George Floyd's killing. Their methodologically sophisticated approach not only confirms the established relationship between neighbourhood disadvantage and violent crime, but also reveals how this relationship manifests differently across crime types and spatial contexts. By comparing carjacking patterns to homicide patterns, Lind et al. (2024) demonstrate that carjackings both increased and dispersed spatially more significantly than homicides after Floyd's killing, with disadvantaged neighbourhoods experiencing the greatest absolute increases while more advantaged neighbourhoods saw greater relative increases. This nuanced finding extends Braithwaite's (1999) work by showing how social disadvantage intersects with specific triggering events to produce differential crime patterns.

Despite its contributions, Lind et al.'s (2024) study has limitations that merit attention. Its geographic focus on a single city limits generalisability, and the relatively short timeframe examined prevents understanding of long-term effects. Additionally, while identifying patterns, the study provides limited explanatory depth regarding the mechanisms behind these patterns

and insufficient analysis of offender and victim characteristics.

This PhD study can address these limitations by building on both foundational and recent research through an in-depth qualitative exploration of offenders' MO and behaviours. Specifically, this PhD study employed in-depth interviews with incarcerated offenders who committed carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban, SA, to understand the progression of the organised nature of their MO used by them. Grounded in a comprehensive theoretical framework integrating RCT, RAT, SDT, and DAT, this PhD study illuminated the complex interplay of factors contributing to the sophistication of offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs, and inter alia, these factors include; technological methods, surveillance techniques, and organised crime networks. By examining the tactical exploitation of vulnerabilities, trust dynamics within criminal networks, and socio-economic influences on behaviour, this PhD study provided the explanatory depth missing in Lind et al.'s (2024) analysis while offering practical insights for law enforcement training, community engagement strategies, and policy development to address these challenges. This PhD study not only addresses the limitations of previous research, but it also contributes to developing more effective and equitable policy responses that extend beyond Lind et al.'s (2024) call to avoid harsh policing and sentencing practices.

Chisalija and Podea (2013) assessed social ills in disorganised communities, affirming Braithwaite's (1999) findings. They found that collapsed social controls in these communities negatively affect children's academic performances, leading to poor proficiency levels and early dropout rates. Moreover, Chisalija and Podea (2013) noted that minors in these communities are drawn to deviance and learn offending behaviours from older youths, contributing to further social disorganisation and serious offenses like carjackings and MVTs. Chisalija and Podea's (2013) study highlights the intergenerational transmission of deviance in disorganised communities, exacerbating social problems.

2.36 Integrated Literature Review

The work of Chisalija and Podea (2013) provides a crucial empirical basis for understanding the theoretical pathways from social disorganisation to criminal behaviour.

2.36.1 Social Disorganisation to Criminal Behaviour: Theoretical Foundations and Research Gaps

Chisalija and Podea (2013) extend Braithwaite's (1999) foundational work by demonstrating how collapsed social controls in disorganised communities create intergenerational cycles of deviance. Their research reveals that minors in these environments not only experience academic disengagement and early dropout but also actively learn offending behaviours from older youths, escalating to serious crimes like carjackings and MVTs. This transmission of deviance exacerbates social disorganisation, creating self-reinforcing cycles of criminal behavior. While this framework establishes structural pathways between neighbourhood disadvantage and juvenile offending, it remains limited by its Western-centric focus and lack of systematic differentiation between family and peer influences as distinct social mechanisms.

Recent scholarship by Abhishek and Balamurugan (2024) strengthens this foundation through a comprehensive systematic review of 53 global studies (2000-2023), confirming that family dynamics and peer associations are the most critical social factors in juvenile delinquency. Their analysis reveals that children experiencing parental abandonment face heightened risk for delinquency, while those in affectionate, encouraging households show greater resilience. Crucially, this review synthesises evidence that negative family environments and delinquent peer associations interact synergistically to drive behaviours like drug abuse and property crime, directly contextualising Chisalija and Podea's (2013) observations about intergenerational deviance transmission within a broader global framework. By systematically isolating family and peer factors, Abhishek and Balamurugan (2024) address Braithwaite's (1999) call for greater specificity in understanding how "social ills" translate into individual offending behaviours.

Despite these advances, both foundational and recent studies exhibit critical limitations. While Braithwaite (1999) established the correlation between "social ills" and violence, the author did not differentiate how family versus peer mechanisms distinctly operate. Chisalija and Podea (2013) similarly identified intergenerational deviance transmission but lacked crime-specific granularity and remained anchored in Western contexts. Abhishek and Balamurugan (2024), despite their methodological rigour in synthesising global evidence, offer no direct offender perspectives, focus predominantly on Indian contexts, and treat delinquency as a monolithic category rather than examining how social factors manifest in specific crimes like carjackings and MVTs.

This PhD study addresses these limitations through its qualitative investigation of incarcerated carjackers and motor vehicle thieves who committed carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area of Durban. The research directly examines how family fragmentation (per Abhishek and Balamurugan, 2024) and peer socialisation (per Chisalija and Podea, 2013) concretely shape the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO used for commting carjackings and MVTs. By integrating RCT, RAT, SDT, and DAT, this study mechanistically explains how parental abandonment fosters trust deficits driving juveniles toward criminal networks for belonging, thus enabling MO sophistication (for example, surveillance evasion, technological adaptation). The research contextualises peer learning within Durban's syndicate structures, revealing how "older youths" transmit tactical knowledge (such as, law enforcement infiltration, illicit driving techniques). Ultimately, this study bridges macro-micro gaps by demonstrating how social factors identified in Indian contexts (Abhishek and Balamurugan, 2024) manifest in SA's carjacking and MVT epidemics, providing the experiential depth missing in systematic reviews and the crime-specific granularity absent in foundational studies.

Chisalija and Podea (2013) found that when community members fail to organise themselves in disorganised neighbourhoods, older youths take advantage of the situation and, afterwards, they control and exploit the behaviours of youngsters who are also instructed to commit offences (such as carjackings and MVTs), so that older indirect offenders can benefit from various crimes. Howell and Lynch (2000) seem to give credence to the supra finding and, the said scholars suggested that youngsters are more susceptible than any age group, because their age-group is targeted by kingpins who easily take advantage and recruit them into criminal groups. Klein (1995) added and stated that youngsters' age-group is a phase where their requirement for identity and acceptance must be satisfied.

2.37 Integrated Literature Review

While the literature review has mapped the individual terrains of vulnerability, exploitation, and criminality, a critical synthesis of their intersection remains necessary, a task this section now addresses.

2.37.1 Integrating Vulnerability, Exploitation, and Criminality: A Critical Synthesis

Chisalija and Podea (2013) established that in disorganised neighbourhoods, older youths exploit systemic vulnerabilities by controlling and indoctrinating younger peers into criminal networks, particularly for carjackings and MVTs, enabling indirect offenders to profit from these crimes. This exploitation dynamic is amplified by developmental vulnerabilities, as Howell and Lynch (2000) note that adolescents are uniquely susceptible to recruitment by criminal kingpins due to their identity-seeking phase, while Klein (1995) emphasises how this developmental stage creates urgent needs for belonging and acceptance. Collectively, these foundational studies identify structural and developmental pathways through which youth are weaponised in disorganised communities, but remain limited by their theoretical orientation and lack of empirical grounding in SA's specific socioeconomic context.

Pillay, Pillay and Sibanda's (2024) recent Durban-based study substantiates these frameworks by empirically demonstrating how sociodemographic risks, particularly low maternal education and household poverty, directly correlate with youth exposure to violence, peer victimisation, and cyber-victimisation. Their findings reveal that internalising disorders (anxiety, trauma, oversensitivity) are both consequences and predisposing risk factors, creating a cyclical loop where violence exposure begets further vulnerability. Crucially, Pillay et al.'s (2024) research contextualises Howell and Lynch's (2000) "susceptibility thesis" within SA's apartheid-legacy inequalities, showing how racialised socioeconomic disadvantage manifests in measurable psychological distress that facilitates exploitation. By quantifying associations between maternal education, peer victimisation, and internalising symptoms, Pillay et al. (2024) transform Klein's (1995) abstract "identity needs" into concrete risk factors that criminal networks exploit in Durban's low-SES communities.

Despite these advances, critical gaps persist. Foundational studies (Chisalija & Podea, 2013; Howell & Lynch, 2000; Klein, 1995) lack empirical validation of how psychological vulnerabilities translate into criminal recruitment, while Pillay et al. (2024), though methodologically rigorous, remain limited by their descriptive focus correlating risks with victimisation but not explaining how these enable criminal recruitment or MO development, their outcome narrowness examining mental health symptoms but not criminal behaviours like carjacking, and their offender absence excluding perspectives of youth engaged in carjacking/MVTs.

This PhD study addresses these limitations through its qualitative investigation of incarcerated carjackers and motor vehicle thieves who committed carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area of Durban. The research directly examines how psychological vulnerabilities identified by Pillay et al. (2024) are exploited via the recruitment mechanisms described by Chisalija & Podea (2013) and Howell & Lynch (2000). By integrating RCT, RAT, Social Disorganisation Theory, and DAT, this study explains how Pillay et al.'s (2024) "internalising disorders" create psychological voids that Klein's (1995) "identity needs" framework positions as recruitment triggers; contextualises recruitment tactics within Durban's syndicate structures; and traces MO progression from victimisation to criminal innovation.

The synthesis of prior studies reveals several critical limitations that this PhD study addresses. Klein (1995) established identity needs as a fundamental vulnerability to criminal involvement, though the analysis remained abstract without specifying criminal outcomes. Howell and Lynch (2000) contributed valuable insights on youth susceptibility to kingpin recruitment, yet their developmental focus omitted psychological pathways. Chisalija and Podea's (2013) work illuminated intergenerational criminal exploitation within disorganised neighbourhoods, yet remained theoretical without South African empirical data. Pillay et al. (2024) provided essential South African empirical data linking poverty and maternal education to victimisation, though their analysis was descriptive without examining criminal behaviour progression.

This PhD study proposes a Vulnerability-Exploitation-Criminality (VEC) Framework, wherein vulnerability follows the pathway from low maternal education to anxiety and ultimately to identity voids, which leads to exploitation where older offenders weaponise these voids via Differential Association, culminating in criminality where victimisation experiences transform into tactical innovation in carjacking. This framework addresses Pillay et al.'s (2024) "cyclical loop" paradox by demonstrating how victimisation becomes criminal expertise through syndicate socialisation, offering policymakers precise intervention points.

Research suggests that adolescents' vulnerability to crime is heightened due to social risk factors and feelings of marginalisation (Howell & Griffiths, 2016; Shaffer, 2009; Branch, 1997). As a result, juvenile offenders are easily recruited into criminal groups where they learn sophisticated offending skills. Additionally, juvenile offenders often have lower intelligence quotients (IQs), which contribute to their susceptibility (Kandel et al., 1988; White et al., 1989).

Intelligence encompasses various skills, including problem-solving, critical thinking, and adaptability (DiLalla, 2000; Gottfredson, 1997). Given their lower IQs, juvenile offenders may lack these essential skills, making them more prone to criminal behaviour. Howell and Griffiths (2016) and Shaffer (2009) and Branch (1997) emphasise the need to address these underlying factors to prevent further criminal involvement.

2.38 Integrated Literature Review

While this integrated review has established the current state of knowledge, it has also revealed a critical gap that this study is uniquely designed to fill.

2.38.1 Positioning this Study within Criminological Literature

Research establishes that adolescents' vulnerability to criminal recruitment is heightened by a confluence of social risk factors, feelings of marginalisation, and individual neurodevelopmental factors, including lower intelligence quotients (IQs) that may limit critical thinking and problem-solving skills (Branch, 1997; Howell & Griffiths, 2016; Kandel et al., 1988; Shaffer, 2009; White et al., 1989). While these foundational studies identify key risk factors, they exhibit critical limitations. They fail to empirically trace how psychological vulnerabilities evolve into the sophisticated tactics of organised crime, lack first-person offender perspectives on the progression of a criminal MO, and offer no mechanistic explanation for syndicate recruitment.

More recent research, such as Bozzini et al.'s (2020) systematic review, advances the field by mapping distal and proximal factors across five risk-behaviour domains. However, this work also retains significant gaps. Its broad behavioural focus lacks the crime-specific granularity required to understand offences like carjacking, it omits an analysis of the progression from general vulnerability to sophisticated criminal innovation, and it excludes the experiential narratives of incarcerated offenders regarding syndicate socialisation.

This doctoral study addresses these persistent limitations through a qualitative investigation of incarcerated carjackers and motor vehicle thieves who operated in Durban's greater Berea area. By analysing the lived experiences of these offenders, the research traces the precise progression of the organised nature of their Mos, from illicit driving techniques and technological methods to advanced surveillance and infiltration of law enforcement. This study integrates RCT, RAT, SDT, and DAT to demonstrate how structural inequalities manifest as

psychological vulnerabilities, which are then tactically exploited by criminal syndicates. This approach directly addresses the recruitment gap identified by Howell & Griffiths (2016) and responds to Bozzini et al.'s (2020) call for deeper exploration of non-socioeconomic factors.

The findings offer policymakers precise, evidence-based interventions such as targeted community engagement programmes, enhanced law enforcement training, and specific technological security solutions, that transcend the generic recommendations of prior research. In doing so, this study establishes a crucial South African evidence base linking neurodevelopmental susceptibility, ecological risk factors, and organised criminal innovation, thereby resolving the gaps related to offender absence, crime specificity, and mechanistic progression that are pervasive in the existing literature.

Research suggests that young members of criminal groups offend more frequently and at higher levels than non-gang-affiliated juvenile offenders (Battin-Pearson et al., 1998; Curry et al., 2002; Esbensen & Huizinga, 1993; Esbensen & Winfree, 1998; Huff, 1998; Loeber et al., 2001; Thornberry et al., 2003). Additionally, studies indicate that juvenile involvement in offences, such as carjackings or MVTs, is strongly linked to poverty and the lack of basic necessities (Bangane, 1999; Starrin, 2006). These findings highlight the connection between gang membership, socioeconomic factors, and juvenile offending.

2.39 Integrated Literature Review

Research consistently demonstrates that gang-affiliated youth offend more frequently and intensely than their non-affiliated peers, with juvenile involvement in crimes like carjacking and MVT strongly linked to socioeconomic disadvantage (Battin-Pearson et al., 1998; Bangane, 1999). While foundational studies established these correlations, they lacked nuance in differentiating offending pathways and understanding underlying mechanisms. Recent research has made significant strides: Ashton, Valentine, and Chan (2021) differentiated expressive from instrumental violence; Cinini and Mkhize (2023) linked adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) to gang involvement; Abrahams (2022) contrasted motivations for MVT versus carjacking; and Lehman (2024) examined systemic failures. However, these studies retain critical limitations, including a lack of geographic specificity beyond the Global North, an absence of primary offender narratives, and a failure to connect psychological vulnerabilities to the sophisticated MO of organised criminal networks. This doctoral study directly addresses these persistent gaps

through a qualitative investigation of the progression of the organised nature of the MO, used by incarcerated offenders for committing carjackings and MVTs in Durban's greater Berea area. By integrating Rational Choice, Routine Activity, Social Disorganisation, and Differential Association Theories, this research traces the progression from structural inequality and ACEs to psychological vulnerability, and finally to the tactical innovation of organised crime. It provides the crucial South African evidence base that connects developmental trauma to syndicate exploitation, offering precise, evidence-based policy interventions that move beyond the generic recommendations of prior work.

Research indicates a link between unemployment and MVTs, including carjackings (Roberts & Block, 2012; Hannon & DeFronzo, 1998; Sallybanks & Brown, 1999). Unemployment is also associated with violent behaviour (Fergusson & Woodward, 2002). Hutchison (1997) found that participants committed carjackings and MVTs due to unemployment. Similarly, Allen (1996), Greenberg (2001), and Tshabalala (2003) found that unemployment leads to increased engagement in crimes like carjackings and MVTs. These studies suggest that unemployment is a significant factor contributing to MVTs and carjackings.

2.40 Integrated Literature Review

Foundational research consistently links unemployment to MVTs and carjackings (Roberts & Block, 2012; Hannon & DeFronzo, 1998). However, this body of work is critically limited by its narrow focus on socioeconomic factors, thereby neglecting the psychological mechanisms of offending, offender perspectives on decision-making, the progression of criminal MO, and the dynamics of organised crime. Recent scholarship has begun to address these gaps but offers only partial solutions. For instance, while Abrahams (2022) provides crucial offender perspectives on motivations, the analysis does not extend to organised crime networks or MO sophistication. Similarly, Maluleke & Dlamini (2019) analyse cross-border theft syndicates but rely on non-empirical statistics, lacking qualitative offender insights, while Gray (2024) focuses exclusively on law enforcement perspectives, omitting the criminal voice.

This PhD study resolves these persistent gaps through a qualitative investigation of incarcerated offenders who committed carjackings and MVTs in Durban’s greater Berea area, tracing the progression of the organised nature of their criminal MO from illicit driving to sophisticated, syndicate-operated networks involving advanced surveillance and police infiltration. By

integrating RCT, RAT, SDT, and DAT, this research demonstrates how unemployment fosters psychological vulnerabilities that are exploited through criminal socialisation. It establishes the indispensable South African evidence base connecting socioeconomic drivers, psychological processes, and organised criminal innovation. In doing so, this study provides the holistic, offender-centric analysis that is absent in both foundational and recent literature, effectively bridging the divide between socioeconomic causation, individual motivation, and the organised evolution of crime.

Research suggests that unemployment is linked to MVTs and carjackings. For example, Oster and Agell (2007) found that a 20% decrease in unemployment in Sweden in the 1990s led to a corresponding decrease in MVTs. Similarly, Fougere et al. (2009) found that youth unemployment had significant effects on property offences like MVTs. Nordin and Almen (2011) discovered that prolonged unemployment substantially affects property offences, including MVTs, and violent offenses like carjackings. According to RCT, high unemployment leads individuals to commit offences like carjackings and MVTs to alleviate financial difficulties (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). Overall, these studies indicate that unemployment is a significant factor contributing to the increase in carjackings and MVTs.

2.41 Integrated Literature Review

A substantial body of research links unemployment to MVTs and carjackings. Foundational studies, such as those by Oster and Agell (2007) and Nordin and Almen (2011), established a strong correlation between unemployment rates and property and violent offences. However, this early research is limited by its primary focus on broad socioeconomic factors, often neglecting the psychological decision-making processes of offenders, the impact of technological advancements, and the influence of organised crime networks.

More recent analyses, such as the NICB (2025) report, address some of these gaps by documenting the technological sophistication of modern theft methods (for example, keyless entry hacks) and identifying geographic hotspots. Nevertheless, the NICB report retains significant limitations, including a lack of offender perspectives on recruitment and criminal progression, a prevention-focused orientation that overlooks behavioural evolution, and an exclusive U.S.-centric context.

This PhD study directly addresses these persistent gaps in the literature. Through qualitative interviews with incarcerated offenders in Durban, SA, this research provides a necessary non-Western context and direct offender perspective. It investigates the psychological pathways linking unemployment to criminality, tracing the progression of criminal MO from opportunistic theft to technologically advanced methods orchestrated by organised syndicates. By integrating RCT, RAT, and SDT, the study demonstrates how socioeconomic vulnerability creates opportunities for exploitation by criminal networks. Ultimately, this research establishes a critical evidence base from the South African context, connecting unemployment, technological innovation in crime, and organised networks to provide a more holistic understanding of MVTs and carjackings.

When unemployment is high, fewer people own cars due to financial struggles. Those who still own cars are more likely to install advanced security devices, making their vehicles less attractive targets for theft and carjacking. This challenges RCT, which suggests that people weigh the costs and benefits of committing a crime. In this case, the costs of stealing a well-secured car may outweigh the benefits, leading to fewer instances of MVT and carjacking. Essentially, high unemployment can ironically lead to a decrease in these types of crimes.

MVT is considered a social offence where juveniles often start offending alone or with assistance from experienced thieves (Mullins & Wright, 2003). Research supports that some juveniles begin MVT solo (Dawes, 2002; Kilpatrick, 1997; Light et al., 1993; Spencer, 1992; Stephen & Squires, 2003), while others are inducted into MVT through interactions with experienced thieves (Fleming et al., 1994). These experienced thieves teach juveniles through a traineeship approach, sharing their capabilities (Fleming et al., 1994; Light et al., 1993; Spencer, 1992). Notably, the frequency of crimes like carjackings and MVTs decreases with the offender's age, and older perpetrators receive harsher punishments than juveniles (Levitt, 1998).

2.42 Integrated Literature Review

Foundational research conceptualised MVT as a "social offense," often initiated by juveniles through either independent acts or mentorship from experienced thieves (Mullins & Wright, 2003; Fleming et al., 1994). However, this perspective is limited by its focus on individual-level social dynamics and its neglect of technological sophistication, organised crime networks,

and non-Western contexts. While recent scholarship has begun to address these gaps, for instance, by examining technological prevention strategies (Kelsay et al., 2024) or police-community dynamics (Morgan & Dodd, 2024), it often retains a prevention-focused or overly narrow lens, lacking the offender's perspective on criminal evolution.

This PhD study addresses these persistent limitations by providing a much-needed offender-centric analysis. Through qualitative interviews with incarcerated offenders in KZN, SA, this PhD study maps the progression of the offenders' MO from individual acts to technologically advanced operations within organised syndicates, which also undergo through several intra-changes. By integrating Rational Choice, Routine Activity, and Social Disorganisation theories, this PhD study demonstrates how systemic vulnerabilities are exploited by criminal networks. This approach not only fills the gaps left by foundational and recent studies but also offers context-specific policy solutions for the South African context, providing a more holistic understanding of modern MVT and carjacking.

Research by Light et al. (1993) found that young motor vehicle thieves in England and Wales were often unemployed, previously victimised, and had poor academic records. Most were not in school or regularly truanted. Similar findings were reported by Briggs (1991) and Tlhoaele (2003), who noted that victims of crime and domestic violence tended to perform poorly in school and engage in property offences like MVT. Duffy and Gillig (2004) also found that youngsters from poor communities struggled academically and economically, leading them to commit crimes like MVT and carjacking to acquire status symbols and improve their social standing (Margo, 2008). However, for McCord (2010), the relationship between MVT and land use becomes less robust when demographic factors such as age, socioeconomic status (SES), and population diversity are considered. Added to this, McCord (2010) argues that incorporating these factors weakens the connection between MVT and land use.

2.43 Integrated Literature Review

Foundational research on MVT in Western contexts established a correlation with individual socioeconomic factors, such as unemployment, poor academic performance, and prior victimisation (Light et al., 1993; Briggs, 1991; Tlhoaele, 2003). However, these studies were limited by their focus on individual offenders, thereby neglecting the evolution of technological

methods, the dynamics of organised crime, and cross-national perspectives. Furthermore, the link between crime and environmental factors like land use was shown to be less robust when controlling for demographics (McCord, 2010). More recent research, such as Glantz, Williams, and Greig's (2025) UK analysis, has begun to address these gaps by documenting the rise of technologically sophisticated theft and organised export networks. Yet, this work retains significant limitations, including the absence of offender perspectives, a UK-centric focus, and a lack of implementation-focused recommendations.

This PhD study is designed to address these persistent gaps. By employing a multi-theoretical framework and qualitative interviews with incarcerated offenders in KZN, SA, this PhD study maps the progression of the offenders' MO from opportunistic theft to organised syndicate operations, which also undergo through intra-changes. It provides crucial insights into technological countermeasures and systemic corruption, areas overlooked in prior studies. Moving beyond Western-centric analyses, this PhD study contextualises these findings within the specific socio-economic dynamics of the greater Berea area, offering concrete, actionable policy recommendations tailored to the local context. In doing so, this work synthesises 30 years of research, advancing the field from a focus on individual pathology to a holistic understanding of organised MVT in a non-Western context.

2.44 The Role of SES in Criminal Behaviour

Research on crime has yielded mixed findings regarding the relationship between socioeconomic status and criminal behaviour. Bursik and Grasmick (1993) found a strong link between low socioeconomic status and crime, identifying it as a key factor in criminality and victimisation. However, Title and Meier (1990) failed to replicate this finding, instead discovering a negative correlation between average family earnings and MVTs. Notably, Title and Meier's (1990) study did not consider opportunity factors, which may have influenced their research findings.

2.44.1 Integrated Literature Review

Foundational research on MVT offered conflicting insights into the role of SES. While some studies established a strong link between low SES and criminality (Bursik & Grasmick, 1993), others found a negative correlation with family earnings, though often neglecting opportunity

factors (Title & Meier, 1990). These early studies were limited by their focus on individual-level factors, thereby overlooking the evolution of technological methods, the dynamics of organised crime, and the progression of criminal careers. More recently, the Council on Criminal Justice (2025) report has begun to address these gaps by documenting the surge in U.S. MVTs linked to technological vulnerabilities and organised networks. However, the CCJ (2025) report retains significant limitations, including its reliance on aggregate data without offender perspectives, a U.S.-centric focus, and generic policy recommendations. This PhD study is designed to directly address these persistent gaps. By employing a multi-theoretical framework and qualitative interviews with incarcerated offenders in KZN, SA, this research maps the progression of criminal MO from opportunistic theft to organised syndicate operations. It provides crucial insights into technological countermeasures and systemic corruption, areas overlooked in prior studies. Moving beyond Western-centric analyses, the study contextualises these findings within the specific socio-economic dynamics of the greater Berea area, offering concrete, actionable policy recommendations tailored to the local context. In doing so, this work synthesises decades of research, advancing the field from a focus on individual pathology to a more holistic understanding of organised MVT in a non-Western context.

Research on MVT at the neighbourhood level has yielded mixed findings regarding the relationship between MVT and SES. Walsh and Taylor (2007a) found a negative connection between MVT and low SES at the street level. Nonetheless, in their later longitudinal study, (Walsh & Taylor, 2007b) revealed that SES was not a significant predictor of MVT level changes over time. However, studies by Pratt (2001) and Sampson and Lauritsen (1994) suggest that low SES communities are more likely to experience violent and property offenses, including MVT. Rice and Smith (2002) also found a negative connection between low SES and MVT, controlling for opportunity factors and demographics, using estimated low market values of houses as a proxy for socioeconomic status.

2.45 Integrated Literature Review

Research on the relationship between SES and MVT has yielded conflicting findings. While some studies linked low SES to higher crime rates (Pratt, 2001; Sampson & Lauritsen, 1994), others, including Walsh and Taylor's (2007a, 2007b) work, found a negative or non-significant connection, highlighting the complexity of this relationship. These foundational studies,

however, were collectively limited by methodological constraints, Western-centric perspectives, and a failure to account for technological advancements and offender career progression. More recent research has begun to address these gaps. Studies like Piza et al. (2017) advanced spatial analysis, while Bhorat et al. (2017) and Nyalungu et al. (2025) provided crucial context-specific insights from SA, linking unemployment to gang recruitment. Yet, even these recent works retain significant limitations: they often rely on aggregate data, lack offender perspectives, and neglect the MVT-specific dynamics of technological countermeasures and the progression from opportunistic theft to organised syndicate operations.

This PhD study is designed to address these persistent gaps. By employing a multi-theoretical framework and qualitative interviews with incarcerated offenders in KZN, SA, this research maps the evolution of criminal MO within syndicate structures. It provides crucial insights into technological adaptation and systemic corruption, areas overlooked in prior studies. Contextualising these findings within the greater Berea area, this work offers concrete, actionable policy recommendations tailored to local conditions. In doing so, this research synthesises decades of scholarship to provide a more holistic understanding of organised MVTs and carjackings, moving beyond individual socioeconomic factors to analyse the interplay of offender progression, technology, and systemic vulnerability in a non-Western context.

Weisel et al. (2006) conducted a study that included various land use opportunity factors, a wide range of demographic indicators, and a spatial lag and it also encompassed MVTs. However, their analysis, which utilised ordinary least squares (OLS) regression, Weisel et al. (2006) omitted low socioeconomic status indicators and inadvertently excluded average family earnings from the model. Weisel et al.'s (2006) study therefore had limitations in its consideration of demographic factors.

2.46 Integrated Literature Review

Foundational research on vehicle crime, such as Weisel et al.'s (2006) study, established important baselines by incorporating land use and spatial factors. However, these early works were significantly limited by methodological weaknesses, including the omission of key socioeconomic indicators from their models and a failure to integrate robust criminological theories. Furthermore, their static analytical approach could not capture the dynamic evolution of criminal methodologies or the progression of organised crime networks. More recent

scholarship has begun to address these gaps. For instance, Bjerregaard et al. (2021) advanced the field by explicitly applying RAT to understand spatial and temporal variations in MVT. Yet, Bjerregaard et al. 's (2021) study remains constrained by its reliance on quantitative data, which lacks offender perspectives, its narrow theoretical focus, and its limited generalisability beyond a Western university context.

This PhD study directly addresses these persistent weaknesses through a multi-faceted approach. Methodologically, it employs qualitative interviews with incarcerated offenders in KZN, SA, to provide unprecedented insights into the progression of criminal MO from opportunistic theft to organised syndicate operations. Theoretically, this PhD study integrates Rational Choice, Routine Activity, Social Disorganisation, and Differential Association theories to create a more comprehensive framework than the single-theory approaches of prior studies. By focusing on the high-crime, non-Western context of the greater Berea area in Durban, this research challenges Western-centric assumptions and examines unique dynamics, such as the infiltration of law enforcement (SAPS) and the use of sophisticated technology. While the qualitative focus and specific context may limit the generalisability of the findings, this study offers a more dynamic and nuanced understanding of MVT. Its context-specific recommendations for law enforcement and policy provide a crucial bridge between research and practice, representing a significant advancement in the study of organised motor vehicle crime.

Roncek and Maier (1991) evaluated the relationship between MVT and various factors, including taverns as an opportunity factor, spatial lag, and demographic features. Roncek and Maier (1991) used average householder property value as a proxy for socioeconomic status. Interestingly, Roncek and Maier's (1991) study found a positive correlation between high socioeconomic status and MVT levels, suggesting that blocks with expensive properties experienced higher rates of MVT. Although Roncek and Maier (1991) did not explicitly discuss this finding, it is notable that MVT was the only offense they investigated, and they subtly revealed this link.

2.47 Integrated Literature Review

Foundational research on MVT, such as Roncek and Maier's (1991) study, offered early insights by linking crime to factors like taverns and property values, even finding a positive correlation

with high SES. However, these studies were limited by oversimplified proxies for SES, a lack of theoretical grounding, and a failure to explore the dynamics of criminal behaviour. More recent scholarship has begun to address these gaps. For example, Bjerregaard et al. (2021) applied RAT to a university context, while Salinas et al. (2016) integrated SDT with spatial analysis in Mexico City. Both studies advanced the field by moving beyond simple demographics to examine multifaceted environmental factors. Yet, these recent works retain critical limitations: their reliance on aggregate data omits offender perspectives, their focus on spatial patterns neglects the evolution of organised crime, and their theoretical applications remain fragmented. This PhD study is designed to address these persistent gaps. By employing qualitative interviews with incarcerated offenders in KZN, SA, this research provides unprecedented insights into the progression of criminal MO from opportunistic theft to organised syndicate operations. Theoretically, it integrates multiple frameworks, Rational Choice, Routine Activity, Social Disorganisation, and Differential Association, to offer a more holistic explanation of criminal behaviour. By focusing on the specific socio-ecological dynamics of the greater Berea area, this PhD study moves beyond Western-centric analyses to provide context-specific, actionable policy recommendations. In doing so, this work aims to bridge the divide between individual offender behaviour and systemic enabling factors, offering a more comprehensive understanding of organised MVT.

Neighbourhood studies on MVTs have limitations in analysing SES. Roncek and Faggiani (1985) and Roncek and Lobosco (1983) included SES factors in their research, but failed to provide detailed explanations and descriptions of demographic findings. Similarly, Saville and Murdy (1988) omitted SES factors altogether. Copes (1999) also had flaws, combining low-income community members with young male participants and misinterpreting SES. These studies' limitations hinder a comprehensive understanding of MVTs and SES.

2.48 Integrated Literature Review

This integrated literature review confronts the persistent limitations in MVT and SES research, mapping the intellectual trajectory from foundational flaws to contemporary advances.

2.48.1 Limitations in MVT and SES Research: From Foundational Flaws to Contemporary Advances

Foundational neighbourhood studies on MVTs established crucial baselines for understanding crime patterns but suffered from significant methodological weaknesses, particularly in their

analysis of SES. Seminal works by Roncek and Faggiani (1985) and, Roncek and Lobosco (1983) incorporated SES factors but failed to provide detailed explanations of their demographic findings, creating theoretical blind spots that persisted for decades. Similarly, Saville and Murdy (1988) omitted SES variables altogether, while Copes (1999) conflated low-income communities with young male populations, misrepresenting the nuanced relationship between disadvantage and crime. These collective oversights hindered a comprehensive understanding of how neighbourhood context influences MVT, perpetuating incomplete frameworks for analysing motor vehicle crime dynamics that failed to account for the complex interplay between place-based factors and socioeconomic conditions.

More recent research has begun to address these foundational limitations, though significant gaps remain. Piza et al. (2016) marked a methodological advance by employing Risk Terrain Modeling (RTM) to examine how micro-level spatial factors intersect with neighbourhood disadvantage, finding that "the spatial influences of criminogenic risk factors significantly vary across neighbourhood contexts." This finding directly challenged the uniform assumptions of earlier studies, offering a more sophisticated understanding of the SES-MVT relationship. However, Piza et al.'s (2016) study exhibits critical limitations: its exclusive reliance on quantitative spatial analysis neglects offender decision-making processes; it lacks a comprehensive theoretical framework to explain interactions between place, disadvantage, and offender behaviour; its focus on a single U.S. city limits generalisability to high-crime, non-Western environments; and its cross-sectional design treats MVT as a static phenomenon, ignoring the evolution of offender methodologies over time.

This PhD study directly addresses these persistent gaps through a methodological and theoretical evolution in the study of motor vehicle crime. By integrating in-depth interviews with incarcerated offenders, this PhD study provides crucial qualitative perspectives on decision-making, motivations, and social contexts that were absent from previous analyses. This approach is complemented by a robust multi-theoretical framework integrating Rational Choice, Routine Activity, Social Disorganisation, and Differential Association theories to provide a more comprehensive explanatory model of criminal behaviour. Furthermore, by focusing on the greater Berea area in Durban, a high-crime environment with distinct socioeconomic conditions and challenges such as organised crime syndicates infiltrating the SAPS, this study counters the Western-centric bias of prior studies. Most critically, by

examining "the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO," this study provides a dynamic understanding of how criminal tactics evolve in response to environmental pressures, a dimension entirely absent from previous static analyses, ultimately generating targeted, practical recommendations for law enforcement and policy development in complex, high-crime settings.

The literature on MVT at the neighbourhood level is relevant to this study, as it highlights the effects of land use and geographical aspects on MVT. However, the reviewed studies fail to address the MO employed by offenders who commit MVTs or carjackings, which is a key aspect of this study. Additionally, the existing research on neighbourhood-level MVT does not explore the specific research problem investigated in this study, indicating a gap in the present literature.

2.49 A Critical Review of the Literature on MVT at a Neighbourhood Level

The greater Berea area, a neighbourhood within eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality, lacks sufficient research on MVT at a local level. Existing literature on MVT at a neighbourhood level is limited and does not address the research problem outlined in Chapter 1. This study fills this knowledge gap by reviewing the available literature, critiquing methodological approaches, and highlighting the need for a more detailed contextual understanding of MVT. By doing so, this research demonstrates its necessity and provides a foundation for addressing the shortcomings in this study.

Literature on MVT often relies on national victimisation survey data from the US and UK, linked to neighbourhood levels, to identify factors associated with MVT (Hope & Hough, 1988; Kennedy & Forde, 1990; Kershaw, Budd, Kinshott, Mattinson, Mayhew & Mayhill, 2000; Miethe & Meier, 1994; Sampson & Groves, 1989). However, these studies have a significant limitation, because they only collect data on MVTs experienced by participants' families and within their own communities, neglecting MVTs involving visitors and employees from other areas. This gap overlooks a crucial aspect of MVT victimisation.

2.49.1 Integrated Literature Review

Literature on MVT has evolved significantly, though foundational studies established crucial baselines while suffering from notable limitations. Early research relying on national

victimisation surveys from the US and UK (Hope & Hough, 1988; Kennedy & Forde, 1990; Kershaw et al., 2000; Miethe & Meier, 1994; Sampson & Groves, 1989) successfully identified neighbourhood-level factors associated with MVT but were constrained by a significant methodological weakness: their data collection was limited to MVTs experienced by residents within their own communities. This approach overlooked thefts involving visitors, employees, or non-residents, creating a partial picture of victimisation patterns. Recent analyses have begun to address this narrow geographic focus. The CCJ (2024) and Glantz, Williams, and Greig (2025) examine broader city-wide and national trends, respectively, revealing a startling reversal of the long-term decline in MVT. These studies document a 105% increase in theft rates across major US cities since 2019 and a 75% rise in the UK over the last decade, shifting the analytical lens from static neighbourhood characteristics to dynamic, large-scale crime ecosystems impacted by technological innovation and international markets.

Despite this broader scope, recent studies introduce new limitations, primarily by offering descriptive rather than explanatory accounts of the MVT resurgence. While the CCJ (2024) provides compelling statistics on rising rates, urban concentration, and plummeting clearance rates, and Glantz et al. (2025) identifies the professionalisation of theft and the challenges faced by law enforcement and manufacturers, both lack the crucial offender perspective. Their quantitative and policy-oriented approaches reveal *what* is happening but offer limited insight into *why* and *how* offenders are adapting their methods. Furthermore, their focus on Western contexts (US and UK) limits the generalisability of their findings to high-crime environments with different socio-economic and policing dynamics. This gap in understanding the decision-making processes and evolving tactics of offenders themselves represents a critical barrier to developing effective interventions.

This PhD study directly addresses these persistent gaps by weaving together methodological and theoretical advancements to provide a more nuanced understanding of MVT. By employing a qualitative methodology with in-depth interviews of incarcerated offenders in KZN, SA, this study supplies the crucial offender perspective absent from previous quantitative and policy-focused studies. This approach moves beyond describing trends to explaining the sophisticated progression of offenders' MO, including their use of technology, surveillance, and infiltration of the SAPS. The study's focus on a high-crime, non-Western environment directly counters the Western-centric bias of prior research and examines unique challenges like organised crime

syndicates. Grounded in a multi-theoretical framework integrating Rational Choice, Routine Activity, Social Disorganisation, and Differential Association theories, this work provides a comprehensive explanatory model for criminal behaviour. Ultimately, by offering a dynamic, context-specific, and offender-centered analysis, the study transcends the limitations of both foundational neighbourhood studies and contemporary trend analyses, generating targeted recommendations for law enforcement and policy development in complex, high-crime settings.

Studies on MVT at the neighbourhood level also focused on socio-demographic factors (Copes, 1999; Miethe & Meier, 1994; Saville & Murdy, 1988; Walsh & Taylor, 2007). These studies relied on law enforcement data, despite a high reporting rate of 95% (National Crime Victimisation Survey, 2003). However, the above-stated thread of research only assessed socio-demographics, neglecting to consider opportunity factors within the communities, such as environmental and spatial characteristics. The abovementioned studies also failed to explore these crucial aspects, leaving a gap in understanding MVT at the neighbourhood level (Copes, 1999; Miethe & Meier, 1994; Saville & Murdy, 1988; Walsh & Taylor, 2007).

2.50 Integrated Literature Review

This integrated literature review is structured to advance beyond the well-documented limitations of foundational research by systematically integrating spatial and behavioural analysis.

2.50.1 Advancing Beyond Foundational Limitations with Spatial and Behavioural Analysis

Studies on MVT at the neighbourhood level have focused extensively on socio-demographic factors (Copes, 1999; Miethe & Meier, 1994; Saville & Murdy, 1988; Walsh & Taylor, 2007). This research often relied on law enforcement data, which is considered reliable for MVT due to its high reporting rate of 95% (National Crime Victimisation Survey, 2003). However, this narrow focus on socio-demographics has produced contradictory findings regarding which demographic factors most strongly correlate with MVT rates, while simultaneously neglecting crucial opportunity factors within communities, such as environmental and spatial characteristics. This omission has left a critical gap in the understanding of MVT at the neighbourhood level.

Mao et al.'s (2018) space-time analysis of MVT in Shanghai directly addresses the disconnection between place and opportunity. By employing GIS-based hotspot mapping, their study reveals how MVT patterns stabilise over time in a rapidly urbanising region, identifying key environmental drivers like population density and traffic volume that earlier demographic studies often ignored. This approach helps resolve foundational contradictions by demonstrating that urbanisation reconfigures opportunity structures beyond static socio-economic measures. However, Mao et al.'s (2018) focus remains ecological, omitting the crucial perspectives of offenders themselves, a gap this study bridges.

This PhD study addresses the final, critical limitation, the neglect of offender agency and organised criminality, while extending Mao et al.'s (2018) spatial insights. Through qualitative interviews with incarcerated offenders in KZN, this study uncovers how offenders progressively adapt their MO (for example, exploiting technological vulnerabilities, infiltrating the SAPS) within high-crime urban spaces. Where Mao et al. (2018) map where MVT clusters, this study explains how and why offenders exploit these zones through organised networks. Crucially, a multi-theoretical framework (Rational Choice, Routine Activity, Social Disorganisation, Differential Association) contextualises how structural conditions interact with daily routines and peer learning to enable criminal innovation. By centering offender progression in a high-crime, non-Western context, this study transforms Mao et al.'s (2018) spatial patterns into a dynamic framework for understanding MVT as a product of human agency within evolving urban ecosystems, thereby contributing a more comprehensive model of MVT that integrates spatial, behavioural, and contextual factors.

Research by Copes (1999), Miethe and Meier (1994), Saville and Murdy (1988), and Walsh and Taylor (2007) explored the connections between neighbourhood demographics and MVTs. However, these studies overlooked opportunity factors, leading to conflicting findings. For example, while some studies suggested that affluent areas experience lower crime rates, Rengert (1997) found that wealthy areas are actually prone to higher MVT rates. Additionally, demographic factors like tenant vs. homeowner ratios can be mistaken for opportunity features, and their effects on social control and crime rates are debated (Schuerman & Korbin, 1986; White, 2001). Other studies revealed that environmental factors like poor lighting and unmonitored parking in low-income areas contribute to higher MVT rates (Clarke & Mayhew, 1994; Mayhew & Braun, 2004; Plouffe & Sampson, 2004; Rice & Smith, 2002).

2.51 Integrated Literature Review

Advancing Beyond Foundational Limitations with Spatial and Behavioural Analysis

Foundational research on MVT produced a fragmented understanding of crime causality. A significant body of work, including studies by Copes (1999), Miethe and Meier (1994), Saville and Murdy (1988), and Walsh and Taylor (2007), explored connections between neighbourhood demographics and MVT. However, this focus often overlooked crucial opportunity factors, leading to contradictory findings; for instance, while some demographic analyses suggested lower crime in affluent areas, Rengert (1997) found that such areas were prone to higher MVT rates. Further debate emerged over whether factors like tenant versus homeowner ratios were true causes of crime or merely proxies for opportunity (Schuerman & Korbin, 1986; White, 2001). Concurrently, other research identified specific environmental drivers, such as poor lighting and unmonitored parking (Clarke & Mayhew, 1994; Mayhew & Braun, 2004; Plouffe & Sampson, 2004; Rice & Smith, 2002), but these insights were not systematically integrated with demographic analyses. Collectively, these foundational studies were limited by their overemphasis on static demographics, their failure to account for urbanisation-driven transformations, and their neglect of offender agency.

A significant methodological advance was made by Mao et al. (2018), whose space-time analysis of MVT in Shanghai directly addressed the spatial and temporal inconsistencies of earlier work. By employing GIS-based hotspot mapping, their study revealed how MVT patterns stabilise in a rapidly urbanising region, identifying key environmental drivers like population density and traffic volume that foundational studies had ignored. This approach helped resolve prior contradictions by demonstrating that urbanisation reconfigures opportunity structures beyond static demographics. However, Mao et al.'s (2018) focus remained ecological, omitting the crucial perspectives of offenders themselves, a gap this PhD study bridges.

This PhD study builds upon this spatial foundation by addressing the critical neglect of offender agency and organised criminality. Through qualitative interviews with incarcerated offenders in KZN, this doctoral study uncovers how offenders progressively adapt their MO (for instance, exploiting technological vulnerabilities, infiltrating the SAPS) within high-crime urban spaces. Where Mao et al. (2018) map *where* MVT clusters, this study explains *how* and *why* offenders exploit these zones through organised networks. Crucially, a multi-theoretical framework

(Rational Choice, Routine Activity, Social Disorganisation, Differential Association) contextualises how structural conditions interact with daily routines and peer learning to enable criminal innovation. By centering offender progression in a high-crime, non-Western context, this research transforms Mao et al.'s (2018) spatial patterns into a dynamic framework for understanding MVT as a product of human agency within evolving urban ecosystems.

Studies on MVT at the neighbourhood level described criminal opportunity features, particularly in urban settings, using tools like Geographical Information Systems (GIS) software (Henry & Bryan, 2000; Plouffe & Sampson, 2004; Rengert, 1997; Sherman et al., 1989). These studies identify areas conducive to MVT, applying theories like RAT and RCT, and highlighting how land use creates criminal opportunities and hotspots. While demographic factors are considered, the focus is on criminal prospects, without fully separating their significance from opportunity factors. Therefore, these studies are helpful but limited in their analysis.

2.52 Integrated Literature Review

This integrated literature review is structured around the convergence of 3 pivotal lenses, spatial, technological, and behavioural to construct a comprehensive and contemporary understanding of MVT

2.52.1 Integrating Spatial, Technological, and Behavioural Perspectives on MVT

Foundational studies on MVT that employed GIS significantly advanced the spatial understanding of criminal opportunities (Henry & Bryan, 2000; Plouffe & Sampson, 2004; Rengert, 1997; Sherman et al., 1989). However, this body of work exhibited 3 critical limitations. First, it possessed a distinct urban bias, neglecting rural contexts where crime patterns, surveillance gaps, and response times differ substantially. Second, it focused on static opportunity factors, such as land use and hotspots, without accounting for the evolving technological methods of theft or the influence of organised crime networks. Third, these studies often failed to disentangle demographic influences from pure opportunity factors, conflating neighbourhood characteristics with situational vulnerabilities. These gaps constrained the development of comprehensive, context-sensitive MVT frameworks.

Recent scholarship has begun to address these constraints. Ceccato's (2022) pioneering work on rural criminology directly resolves the urban bias of foundational studies by demonstrating

how spatial tools can uncover unique MVT vulnerabilities in low-density settings. Simultaneously, Keller's (2024) analysis of global MVT trends and technological theft methods addresses the static view of opportunity by revealing how modern offenders dynamically exploit vulnerabilities like key programming and relay attacks. Together, these studies expand MVT scholarship beyond static urban opportunity structures to include diverse geographical contexts and adaptive criminal methodologies.

This PhD study builds upon these advances by shifting the focus from place and method to the human element. While the preceding research mapped *where* opportunities exist and how technology shapes them, this qualitative examination of incarcerated offenders in Durban reveals *who* exploits these opportunities and *how* their MO progress from basic opportunism to organised syndicate operations. By integrating Rational Choice, Routine Activity, Social Disorganisation, and Differential Association theories, this PhD study untangles the complex interplay between structural conditions, peer learning, and criminal innovation. It provides the crucial "human element" missing from spatial-only analyses, demonstrating how organised networks systematically exploit the environmental and technological vulnerabilities identified in prior research, whether in urban hotspots or underserved rural areas.

Rice and Smith (2002) found a link between vacant parking bays without allocated improvement funds and high MVT rates. By incorporating demographic factors, Rice and Smith (2002) confirmed this connection, supporting the idea that combining demographic and opportunity factors reveals genuine links to excessive MVT rates. This insight is valuable for preventing and reducing MVT and related offenses. For instance, modifying demographic factors like tenant numbers and enhancing car park security can decrease criminal opportunities for MVT, as previously suggested (Clarke & Harris, 1992; Plouffe & Sampson, 2004). Rice and Smith's (2002) study highlights the importance of considering both demographic and opportunity factors in understanding and addressing MVT.

2.53 Integrated Literature Review

This integrated literature review is structured around the convergence of 3 pivotal lenses, spatial, behavioural, and motivational, to construct a more nuanced understanding of MVT.

Integrating Spatial, Behavioural, and Motivational Perspectives on MVT

Foundational research by Rice and Smith (2002) established a critical link between

environmental opportunities such as vacant, unsecured parking bays and MVT rates, particularly when combined with demographic factors. Their work confirmed that integrating these elements reveals genuine drivers of crime, offering valuable preventive insights (Clarke & Harris, 1992; Plouffe & Sampson, 2004). However, this foundational study was limited by its treatment of spatial risk factors as static and uniform across neighbourhoods, its neglect of offender agency and the progression of criminal methodologies, and its failure to distinguish between the spatial patterns of theft versus recovery, which are shaped by different offender motivations.

A significant methodological advance was made by Piza et al. (2016), whose RTM directly addressed the first limitation. By demonstrating that micro-level environmental features exert a varying influence on MVT depending on the socioeconomic context of a neighbourhood, their study resolved the issue of uniform spatial risk. Nevertheless, Piza et al.'s (2016) analysis remained ecological, omitting the crucial perspectives of offender decision-making and the dynamic nature of their operations, a gap this study is designed to fill.

The present study addresses the remaining limitations by building upon these spatial foundations to provide a dynamic, human-centric framework. Through qualitative interviews with incarcerated offenders in KZN, SA, this PhD study uncovers how criminal methodologies evolve from opportunistic theft to organised syndicate operations involving carjacking, police infiltration, and technological countermeasures. Where Rice and Smith (2002) mapped static vulnerabilities and Piza et al. (2016) identified contextual risk variations, this PhD study explains *how* and *why* offenders exploit these zones through organised networks. Crucially, by examining both MVT and carjacking, it reveals how offender motivations (profit vs. utility) directly influence spatial decisions, a distinction foundational studies missed. This multi-theoretical approach contextualises how structural conditions, daily routines, and peer learning interact with the environmental vulnerabilities identified by prior research, providing a comprehensive understanding of criminal innovation.

Research by Roncek and Faggiani (1985), Roncek and Lobosco (1983) and Roncek and Maier (1991) attempted to integrate demographic and opportunity factors to understand MVT. Although their studies contributed valuable insights, their methodologies had limitations. Notably, the above-stated authors found that proximity between secondary schools and taverns

was associated with higher MVT rates, even after controlling for demographic differences and isolating the effects of opportunity factors. Roncek and Maier's work highlights the importance of considering both demographic and opportunity factors in understanding MVT.

2.54 Integrated Literature Review

Foundational studies by Roncek and colleagues (Roncek & Faggiani, 1985; Roncek & Lobosco, 1983; Roncek & Maier, 1991) were pioneering in their attempt to integrate demographic and opportunity factors to understand MVT. Their key finding, that proximity between schools and taverns correlated with higher theft rates, provided a valuable baseline. However, their work was constrained by significant limitations rooted in its temporal context. Conducted decades ago, these studies could not account for modern vehicle security, the internet's influence on crime, or the sophisticated MO of contemporary criminal networks. Furthermore, their likely focus on specific American contexts and methodological limitations of the era meant they offered an incomplete picture, failing to adequately address the organised nature of MVT or the nuanced decision-making of offenders.

Recent research has begun to address these foundational gaps. Kelsay et al. (2024) advanced methodological rigour through interrupted time series analysis of a modern intervention (mobile watchtowers), while Cook (2023) expanded the geographic scope by analysing post-COVID MVT trends in New South Wales, including the novel influence of social media platforms like TikTok. These studies successfully update the opportunity framework for a contemporary era. Yet, despite their contributions, they retain critical limitations. Both studies are geographically constrained, focus primarily on descriptive or intervention-level analysis without exploring causal mechanisms and, most significantly, lack the offender perspective, offering little insight into the organised networks and adaptive strategies that drive modern MVT.

This PhD study directly addresses the cumulative limitations of both foundational and recent research through a focused, offender-centric approach. By conducting in-depth interviews with incarcerated offenders who used the progression of the organised nature of their MO to commit carjackings and MVTs in Durban's greater Berea area, this research provides the crucial human element missing from prior work. It moves beyond static opportunity structures to examine the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO, from basic theft to sophisticated carjacking syndicates that employ technological countermeasures and infiltrate law

enforcement. Methodologically, it integrates multiple theoretical frameworks (Rational Choice, Routine Activity, Social Disorganisation, Differential Association) to create a more comprehensive explanatory model than previous studies, while its focus on a high-crime, non-Western context diversifies the criminological literature beyond American and Australian settings.

The relevance of this study is multifaceted, offering significant theoretical, methodological, and practical contributions. It addresses a critical gap in understanding the increasingly organised and sophisticated nature of MVT, providing a dynamic model of criminal adaptation that static analyses cannot capture. The unique South African context challenges the applicability of Western-centric theories and offers new insights into how crime manifests in different socioeconomic environments. Practically, the findings generate actionable recommendations for law enforcement, community safety initiatives, and policy development by identifying specific vulnerabilities offenders exploit and how their networks operate. Crucially, by examining the infiltration of law enforcement by criminal syndicates, this research sheds light on a critical challenge with implications extending far beyond motor vehicle crime, contributing to broader strategies for addressing corruption and organised criminality.

The foundational studies by Roncek and colleagues (Roncek & Faggiani, 1985; Roncek & Lobosco, 1983; Roncek & Maier, 1991) demonstrate significant strengths in their pioneering approach to understanding MVT. Their work was innovative in attempting to integrate both demographic and opportunity factors, recognising that crime cannot be explained through a single lens. These researchers highlighted the importance of spatial relationships, particularly how proximity between secondary schools and taverns correlated with higher MVT rates even after controlling for demographic variables. Their methodological approach of isolating opportunity factors while accounting for demographic differences provided a valuable framework for future research.

2.55 Integrated Literature Review

Foundational studies by Roncek and colleagues (Roncek & Faggiani, 1985; Roncek & Lobosco, 1983; Roncek & Maier, 1991) were pioneering in their effort to integrate demographic and opportunity factors to understand MVT. Their work established a valuable framework by highlighting spatial relationships, such as the correlation between schools, taverns, and higher

theft rates. However, these studies are now significantly limited by their temporal context, reflecting a pre-internet era of crime and lacking the methodological sophistication to address the organised nature of modern vehicle theft. Their geographic focus on specific American contexts and their failure to consider offender agency or the progression of criminal methodologies mean they offer an incomplete picture of contemporary MVT dynamics.

Recent research has begun to address these foundational gaps. Kelsay et al. (2024) advanced methodological rigour through modern statistical analysis of a specific intervention, while Cook (2023) expanded the geographic and temporal scope by examining post-COVID trends influenced by social media in Australia. These studies successfully update the opportunity framework for the 21st century. Yet, despite their contributions, they retain critical limitations; both are geographically constrained and, more significantly, remain ecological analyses that lack the offender's perspective. They offer little insight into the decision-making processes, adaptive strategies, and organised networks that are central to sophisticated modern MVT and carjacking.

This PhD study directly addresses these cumulative limitations by providing a crucial, offender-centric analysis. Through in-depth interviews with incarcerated offenders in KZN, SA, it moves beyond static opportunity structures to examine the progression of organised criminal tactics, from basic theft to syndicate operations involving technological countermeasures and law enforcement infiltration. Methodologically, it integrates multiple theoretical frameworks to create a more comprehensive explanatory model, while its focus on a high-crime, non-Western context diversifies the criminological literature. The research's relevance is profound: it fills a critical gap in understanding organised MVT, provides actionable insights for law enforcement and policy, and challenges Western-centric theories by revealing how crime manifests within a distinct and challenging socioeconomic environment.

Regrettably, Roncek and Faggiani (1985) and Roncek and Lobosco (1983) failed to deal with spatial autocorrelation in their studies, which may have led to flawed findings due to unaccounted spatial dependencies. Due to this, their findings are suspected to contain mistakes, particularly in multiple regression models. The said oversight is problematic, because neglecting spatial autocorrelation in ecological data has the potential to increase mistakes in regression models (Chainey & Ratcliffe, 2005; Walsh & Taylor, 2007). Roncek's studies would

have benefited from considering spatial lag explanations to mitigate these issues. Roncek and colleagues' studies (Roncek & Faggiani, 1985; Roncek & Lobosco, 1983; Roncek & Maier, 1991) focused on only one of the 2 opportunity features, that is, either secondary schools or taverns and, this limited their ability to investigate the relationship between community opportunity features, demographics, and MVTs. The said constrained scope restricted the studies' potential to explore more comprehensive connections between these factors.

2.56 Integrated Literature Review

This integrated literature review directly addresses the weaknesses inherent in foundational MVT studies by synthesising them with recent research, setting the stage for this PhD study's investigation into the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO.

2.56.1 Synthesising Foundational and Recent Studies on MVT: Addressing Weaknesses Through a PhD Study on the Progression of the Organised Nature of the Offenders' MO

Weaknesses in Foundational Studies and How Recent Research Addresses Them

Foundational studies by Roncek and colleagues (Roncek & Faggiani, 1985; Roncek & Lobosco, 1983; Roncek & Maier, 1991) were instrumental in linking opportunity structures to MVT. However, their work is now significantly hampered by 2 critical limitations. First, they failed to account for spatial autocorrelation, a methodological oversight that likely inflated errors in their regression models and compromised their findings (Chainey & Ratcliffe, 2005; Walsh & Taylor, 2007). Second, their conceptual scope was narrow, often examining only 1 opportunity feature (for example, schools or taverns) in isolation, which restricted their ability to model the complex interplay between multiple community features, demographics, and crime.

Recent research has begun to address these methodological and conceptual weaknesses. Studies by Griffith and Plant (2022) and Maldonado (2024) have provided robust statistical solutions for spatial autocorrelation, while work by Bjerregaard et al. (2021) and Groeneveld and Breetzke (2023) has adopted more comprehensive theoretical frameworks and standardised operationalisations. Despite these advances, a significant gap persists. These recent studies remain largely technical, are often confined to Western or specific institutional contexts (like a US university), and most critically, they overlook the human element of crime, failing to investigate the organised nature of offenders and the dynamic progression of their criminal methodologies.

This PhD study directly addresses this persistent gap by shifting the analytical focus from place to people. Through in-depth qualitative interviews with incarcerated offenders in KZN, SA, it provides the crucial offender narrative missing from prior quantitative work. The research specifically examines "the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO," detailing how criminal networks evolve from opportunistic theft to sophisticated syndicate operations involving technological countermeasures and the infiltration of law enforcement. By situating this analysis within a high-crime, non-Western context, the study offers insights that are directly relevant to environments under-represented in the existing literature.

The contributions of this research are therefore threefold. Theoretically, it integrates multiple criminological theories to provide a more holistic explanatory model of organised MVT and carjacking. Methodologically, it demonstrates the unique power of qualitative offender interviews to reveal the tactical decision-making and network dynamics that spatial patterns alone cannot explain. Practically, the study generates targeted, evidence-based recommendations for law enforcement and community policy, offering concrete strategies to disrupt organised crime networks and enhance public safety in a context where such interventions are urgently needed.

Weisel et al. (2006) investigated MVT in 4 rural North Carolina areas, evaluating opportunity and demographic features. However, Weisel et al. (2006) did not explore the relationships between opportunity feature values. Moreover, Weisel et al. (2006) identified various opportunity features, including residential, business, manufacturing, and office areas. However, Weisel et al.'s (2006) study did not explore the relationships between these features' values. Although findings made by Weisel et al. (2006) were informative, the broad categorisation of opportunity features limited the study's ability to understand how specific locations contribute to offenders' chances of committing MVTs.

2.57 Integrated Literature Review

This integrated literature review advances the understanding of MVT by synthesising 3 distinct streams of scholarship: its foundational theories, its recent empirical developments, and the novel contributions emerging from contemporary PhD research.

2.57.1 Integrated Literature Review: Advancing Understanding of MVT Through Foundational, Recent and PhD Research

Foundational studies, such as Weisel et al.'s (2006) analysis of rural MVT, were instrumental

in linking environmental opportunity features to crime. However, their work was limited by a tendency to treat these features in isolation and to use broad location categories, which obscured the complex, interrelated systems that create criminal opportunities. Recent research has begun to address these shortcomings by embracing more dynamic frameworks; for example, Gray (2024) explored how societal disruptions reshape crime patterns, and the SADC study examined transnational criminal networks. Despite these advances, a critical gap remains, as these studies still lack the offender's perspective and often rely on narrow theoretical lenses, failing to capture the micro-level tactical adaptations and the multi-faceted drivers of organised motor vehicle crime.

This PhD study directly addresses these persistent limitations through a qualitative, offender-centric methodology. By conducting in-depth interviews with incarcerated offenders in KZN regarding the use of the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO before, during and after the commission of carjackings and MVTs in Durban's greater Berea area, this PhD study provides the crucial human narrative missing from prior work, revealing how criminal MO progressively evolve from opportunistic theft to sophisticated syndicate operations. This approach is supported by a robust multi-theoretical framework integrating Rational Choice, Routine Activity, Social Disorganisation, and Differential Association theories. This integration resolves the theoretical narrowness of previous studies by holistically explaining how individual decisions, environmental opportunities, community dynamics, and network socialisation collectively shape the progression of organised MVT and carjacking.

The relevance of this research lies in its transformative synthesis of spatial, systemic, and behavioural perspectives. It bridges the gap between foundational studies that mapped static features and recent work that explored systemic challenges by adding the critical dimension of offender agency and evolution. The findings provide a granular understanding of how socio-economic conditions and community vulnerabilities are tactically exploited, leading to actionable, evidence-based recommendations. By shifting the focus from reactive policing to proactive, resilient safety strategies, such as community engagement to counter disorganisation and specialised law enforcement training, this study establishes a new paradigm for developing effective interventions to reduce motor vehicle crime in complex urban settings worldwide.

Rice and Smith (2002) identified various opportunity factors contributing to MVT, including

empty parking bays, garages, taverns, and shopping malls. Rice and Smith's (2002) inclusion of land usage and demographics in their study was enlightening, but faced 2 significant limitations. Firstly, the aspect which measured total MVTs in an area was biased, and this rendered the Ordinary Least Squares regression method unsuitable. Secondly, the incorporated aspect failed to explain the effects of total MVTs on surrounding streets, making the findings debatable. Moreover, Rice and Smith's (2002) conclusions, suggesting most factors were numerically significant, are therefore questionable.

2.58 Integrated Literature Review

Foundational research by Rice and Smith (2002) was pivotal in identifying opportunity factors for MVT, such as empty parking bays and taverns, but its contribution is significantly undermined by critical methodological flaws. Their use of biased MVT measurements rendered their Ordinary Least Squares regression unsuitable, and their failure to account for spillover effects onto surrounding streets made their conclusions questionable. Recent studies have attempted to address these issues; Luthuli (2022) offered more robust quantitative analysis, and Cartrack (2025) provided current data on modern theft methods like signal jamming. However, these advances are themselves limited. Luthuli's (2022) research is constrained by a small, non-offender sample, while Cartrack's (2025) study suffers from commercial bias, a lack of academic rigour, and the absence of a theoretical framework, leaving a persistent gap in understanding the offender's perspective and the complex drivers of organised crime.

This PhD study directly resolves these cumulative limitations through a rigorous, offender-centric methodology and a comprehensive theoretical approach. By employing in-depth qualitative interviews with incarcerated offenders, it bypasses the statistical biases of foundational work and provides the crucial human narrative missing from recent studies. This is grounded in a multi-theoretical framework integrating Rational Choice, Routine Activity, Social Disorganisation, and Differential Association theories, which collectively explain the complex interplay of individual decisions, environmental opportunities, community dynamics, and network socialisation. This methodological and theoretical sophistication provides a holistic explanatory model that surpasses the narrow or non-existent theoretical foundations of prior research.

The unique contribution and relevance of this PhD study lie in its focus on the progression of

the organised nature of offenders' MO. While previous research examined static opportunity factors or security solutions, this study uncovers the dynamic evolution of criminal tactics, from basic theft to sophisticated syndicate operations involving technological countermeasures and law enforcement infiltration. This granular understanding of how offenders exploit vulnerabilities within specific socio-economic contexts leads to actionable, evidence-based recommendations that address root causes. By advocating for comprehensive strategies like community engagement and enhanced law enforcement training, this research shifts the discourse from reactive security measures to proactive, resilient safety ecosystems, establishing a new paradigm for combating organised MVT worldwide.

Foundational research by Rice and Smith (2002) was pivotal in identifying opportunity factors for MVT, such as empty parking bays and taverns. However, their contribution is significantly undermined by critical methodological flaws. Their use of biased MVT measurements rendered their Ordinary Least Squares regression unsuitable, and their failure to account for spillover effects onto surrounding streets made their conclusions about numerical significance questionable. These limitations created a weak foundation upon which subsequent research would need to build.

2.59 Integrated Literature Review

Recent studies have attempted to address these foundational issues. Luthuli (2022) offered a more robust quantitative analysis using SPSS, while Cartrack (2025) provided valuable current data on modern theft methods like signal jamming and specific high-risk vehicle types. Despite these advances, these studies are themselves limited. Luthuli's (2022) research is constrained by a small, non-offender sample, and Cartrack's (2025) study suffers from commercial bias, a lack of academic rigour, and the absence of a theoretical framework. Consequently, a significant gap in understanding the offender's perspective and the complex drivers of organised crime has persisted.

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Activity, Social Disorganisation, and Differential Association theories, which collectively explain the complex interplay of individual decisions, environmental opportunities, community dynamics, and network socialisation. This methodological and theoretical sophistication provides a holistic explanatory model that surpasses the narrow or non-existent theoretical foundations of prior research.

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The critical review of existing studies on MVTs at the neighbourhood level revealed significant flaws and constraints, largely due to the reliance on quantitative methods (Denzin, 1989). These methods limited the exploration of demographic and opportunity aspects related to MVTs. In contrast, qualitative approaches, like those used in this PhD study, can provide rich and detailed descriptions of participants' emotions, ideas, and experiences (Denzin, 1989). This allows for a deeper understanding of the relationship between demographic and opportunity aspects and the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area of Durban (Denzin, 1989). Denzin (1989) notes that qualitative research yields thorough descriptive explanations of participants' views and interpretations.

2.60 Integrated Literature Review

Foundational research on MVTs at the neighbourhood level has been predominantly quantitative, an approach that, as Denzin (1989) critically notes, has significantly constrained our understanding of the phenomenon. This overreliance on statistical data obscured the rich, nuanced experiences and motivations that drive criminal behaviour, failing to provide the detailed descriptions of offenders' emotions, ideas, and decision-making processes essential for

comprehending the complex evolution of their organised MO. Consequently, a critical explanatory gap persisted between broad demographic trends and the lived realities of the offenders themselves.

More recent research represents a methodological evolution within the quantitative paradigm, offering more sophisticated analyses but still falling short of providing qualitative depth. Farrell's (2025) study, for instance, moves beyond simple statistics to model the mechanisms behind the decline in vehicle thefts, attributing it to technological advancements like immobilisers. Similarly, Okpako's (2025) use of machine learning offers powerful predictive capabilities by identifying complex environmental patterns. Nevertheless, both studies remain limited by their quantitative nature; Farrell's (2025) work lacks insight into offender motivations, while Okpako's (2025) focus on prediction comes at the expense of explanation, leaving the socio-cultural and psychological drivers of crime unexplored.

This persistent limitation is powerfully echoed by scholars like Maluleke and Dlamini (2019), who argue that "statistics are like a bikini, they do not reveal everything." Their assertion that quantitative data cannot capture the full complexity of organised criminal networks reinforces the enduring gap identified by Denzin (1989) decades earlier. Despite advancements in statistical modelling, the inner workings of these networks, the trust dynamics, and the tactical decision-making of offenders remain hidden behind numbers that are often inconsistent and superficial. This underscores the necessity for methodological approaches that can access the lived realities of offenders to truly understand the organised nature of MVTs.

This PhD study directly addresses this enduring gap by employing a qualitative methodology designed to capture the explanatory depth that quantitative studies lack. Through in-depth interviews with incarcerated offenders in the greater Berea area, this research provides the rich, detailed descriptions of emotions, ideas, and experiences that are essential for understanding the progression of organised nature of the offenders' MO. By exploring the social dynamics within criminal networks and the socio-economic factors influencing behaviour, this PhD study provides the crucial offender perspective, bridging the divide between statistical trends and the complex human elements that drive organised MVT.

Furthermore, this PhD study makes significant theoretical contributions by grounding its

analysis in multiple complementary frameworks such as RCT, RAT, SDT, and DAT. This multi-theoretical approach provides a more comprehensive understanding than the single-theory perspectives of recent studies. For instance, while Farrell (2025) focuses primarily on crime opportunity theory, this PhD study integrates this with SDT and DAT to explain how community dynamics and socialisation processes within criminal networks influence the evolution of sophisticated MVT methods, providing a holistic explanatory model.

2.61 Factors Maintaining Carjackings and MVTs Pull Factors

This subsection shows factors maintaining carjackings and MVTs pull factors. In other words, the current subsection reviews studies on MVTs pull factors and factors which maintain carjackings.

2.61.1 Professional/Permanent Motor Vehicle Crime

Clarke (1991) identified pull factors for MVTs, including professional activities like stripping and selling motor vehicle parts or selling complete cars for profit. Clarke (1991) also found that some owners stage MVTs, reporting false cases to the police while selling their vehicles to organised criminal groups (OCGs) and submitting insurance claims for payment. These dishonest owners receive double payments, as insurance companies and OCGs pay for the same allegedly stolen vehicles, unless evidence of fraud is provided.

2.61.1.1 Integrated Literature Review

The following integrated literature review charts this evolution of understanding, moving from foundational theories toward a modern offender-centric synthesis.

2.61.1.2 An Evolution of Understanding: From Foundational Theories to an Offender-Centric Synthesis

Foundational studies, such as Clarke's (1991) seminal work, established the core economic "pull factors" for MVT, including professional stripping for parts and insurance fraud. This research was crucial for framing MVT as a rational, profit-driven crime. However, its primary limitation,

a product of its time, is its focus on the *'why'* without detailing the evolving *'how'* of the crime or the structure of the offender networks, leaving a significant gap in understanding the practical application of these motivations.

Recent research has sought to bridge this gap by examining both the institutional response and modern criminal methods. Akdar's (2024) study, for instance, shifts focus to the law enforcement perspective, identifying systemic factors like resources and inter-agency collaboration that influence investigative effectiveness. Concurrently, the Cartrack (2025) report provides a detailed, contemporary account of sophisticated theft MO, such as keyless relay theft and strategic hijackings. While these studies address foundational limitations, they have their own: Akdar's (2024) work is institutional, not offender-centric, and Cartrack's (2025) analysis is descriptive, lacking a robust criminological theoretical framework to explain the behaviours it documents.

This PhD study directly addresses these collective limitations by providing the crucial missing piece: a deep, qualitative, and theoretically grounded analysis from the offenders' perspective. By interviewing incarcerated individuals in the greater Berea area, this research moves beyond describing *what* they do to explaining *why* and *how* their MO progress in sophistication. Grounded in Rational Choice, Routine Activity, and Differential Association theories, this PhD study reveals the complex interplay of decision-making, network socialisation, and community dynamics that drive organised carjacking and MVT. In doing so, it synthesises the motivations of foundational work, the methods of recent reports, and the systemic challenges of institutional studies, offering the most complete and dynamic understanding of the crime to date and providing a robust foundation for truly effective interventions.

2.61.2 Peer Behaviour and the Culture of Belonging to Organised Gangs of Offenders

Light, Nee, and Ingham (1993) found that peer behaviour pulled or attracted various motor vehicle thieves to MVTs. This link between peer behaviour and criminal activity is supported by various studies (Adeniyi & Jinadu, 2021; Adeniyi & Kolawole, 2015; Aliyu et al., 2016), which show that peer influence and gang integration lead to young people's participation in criminal activities, including motor vehicle theft. Light et al. (1993) also reported that the offenders were trained by their peers about how to use tools in order to enter targeted motor vehicles and, how to start their engines, then drive stolen targets.

Another study by Otu and Elechi (2015) found that social media exposure pressures offenders to use firearms in appropriating properties. Other factors predisposing young people to offenses include indigence, drug abuse, gang integration, and peer behaviour (Namadi & Haruna, 2016). Additionally, Aigbovo and Eidenoje (2016) noted that some offenders are severely mentally ill, leading to violent behaviour. Furthermore, peer behaviour and gang integration increase the likelihood of juveniles committing armed robberies, such as carjackings (Etta & Ojedokun, 2017).

Pedersen (2014) found that young people from poor communities in Denmark join gangs due to poor parenting and exposure to weakened prosocial standards. Notably, 13% of Danish minors aged 13–17 join street gangs, which often engage in armed robberies like carjackings. Bond and Bushman (2017) also revealed that juveniles are more likely to commit MVTs and violent offenses such as carjackings, that is, if their peers engage in similar crimes. These findings suggest that peer behaviour and gang culture drive individuals to commit MVTs and maintain carjacking behaviours.

2.61.3 Ramraiding

Clarke (1991) identified ramraiding as a significant element in MVTs, where stolen vehicles are used to break into businesses and steal valuable goods. Clarke (1991) noted that offenders learn simple tasks related to MVTs before taking on more complex roles, consistent with McCullough et al.'s (1990) finding that initial involvement in MVTs requires observation and learning. Trainee offenders start as lookouts and are quickly promoted to senior positions, exchanging ideas and tasks. Clarke's study highlights the importance of ramraiding and the progression of offenders' roles in MVTs.

2.61.3.1 Integrated **Literature Review**

Foundational studies, such as Clarke (1991) and McCullough et al. (1990), established the conceptual framework for understanding ram-raiding as a significant application of MVT. Clarke (1991) identified it as a distinct criminal act where stolen vehicles serve as tools to facilitate commercial burglary, while McCullough et al. (1990) contributed the crucial insight that offender involvement is a learned process, with individuals progressing from simple roles like lookouts to more senior positions within a criminal enterprise. This work was vital for

framing MVT not just as an end in itself, but as a means to a larger, often more profitable, criminal end. However, the primary limitation of these studies is their age; they provide a crucial baseline but lack insight into the contemporary, technologically sophisticated, and highly organised nature of these crimes in the 21st century.

Recent research has sought to bridge this temporal gap by revitalising the discourse on ram-raiding as a current and escalating threat. Studies like Johnston's (2024) security industry analysis and Ruiz's (2023) journalistic reporting confirm the resurgence of this tactic, detailing its modern application against targets such as cannabis dispensaries and luxury boutiques. These works provide valuable contemporary data on the methods, financial impact, and psychological toll on business owners and communities. They also introduce new dimensions, such as the debate over preventative physical security (bollards) and the perceived influence of justice system policies on offender behaviour. While these recent studies effectively update the *'what'* and *'where'* of ram-raiding, their limitations lie in their descriptive and external focus. They explain the crime from the victim's or security expert's perspective but lack a deep, theoretical understanding of the offenders themselves, their decision-making processes, the internal dynamics of their networks, and how their sophisticated MO actually develop and progress over time.

This PhD study directly addresses these collective limitations by providing the crucial missing piece: a deep, qualitative, and theoretically grounded analysis from the offenders' perspective. By interviewing incarcerated individuals who committed carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area, this research moves beyond the descriptive accounts of Johnston and Ruiz to explain the *'why'* and *'how'* behind the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MOs. It updates Clarke's (1991) and McCullough et al.'s (1990) concept of offender learning by revealing it is not a simple linear progression but a complex evolution driven by Rational Choice, Routine Activity, and Differential Association within sophisticated criminal networks. This PhD study uncovers key themes, such as the tactical exploitation of vulnerabilities, the role of trust within syndicates, and even the infiltration of law enforcement (SAPS), that are entirely absent from other studies. In doing so, it synthesises the foundational understanding of offender roles with the modern context of the crime, offering the most complete and dynamic understanding of ram-raiding and associated MVTs to date and providing a robust, evidence-based foundation for developing truly effective interventions.

2.61.4 Bankrolling Streetlife

Carjackings are committed to fund street culture, driven by a constant need for money to support reckless consumption and material desires (Bourgois, 1995; Shover, 1996; Wright & Decker, 1994). This culture encourages offenders to squander money on luxuries, showing contempt for the community's legitimate needs (Katz, 1988). The street culture and its wasteful consumptions maintain carjackings, with offenders spending on social events, drugs, and expensive items (Shover, 1996; Wright & Decker, 1994). This behaviour is an end in itself, demonstrating disregard for the community's genuine needs, such as using vehicles for income generation.

2.61.4.1 Integrated Literature Review

Structured as an intellectual progression, this integrated literature review follows the trajectory of carjacking research from its roots in cultural explanations toward its contemporary emphasis on offender methodologies.

2.61.4.2 The Intellectual Progression of Carjacking Research: From Cultural Explanations to Offender Methodologies

The literature on carjacking has evolved from a primarily cultural and symbolic explanation to a more nuanced understanding that incorporates structural complexity and empirical trends. Foundational studies by Bourgois (1995), Shover (1996), and Wright & Decker (1994) established carjacking as an act of "street culture," driven by a need for funds to support conspicuous consumption. This perspective was critically enriched by Katz (1988), who argued that this "wasteful consumption" was not merely a byproduct of the culture but an "end in itself," a performative act demonstrating "contempt for the community's legitimate needs." However, while this body of work brilliantly explained the symbolic and motivational *why*, it offered limited insight into the crime's procedural *how*. Recent research has addressed this by reframing the offence; Jacobs and Cherbonneau (2023) conceptualise carjacking as a "hybrid offense" requiring "a fair amount of calculation," while CCJ (2024) provides the empirical weight that foundational ethnographies lacked, using national data to track trends and ground cultural explanations in measurable reality, creating a more sophisticated model that integrates culture, opportunity and evidence.

Despite these advancements, a critical gap remains in the literature concerning the *how* of the crime. While recent studies masterfully map the 'what' of carjacking through quantitative trends

(CCJ, 2024) and conceptual reviews (Jacobs & Cherbonneau, 2023), they are inherently limited in explaining the procedural evolution from the offender's perspective. The quantitative focus of the CCJ (2024) report cannot illuminate the tactical decision-making or the learning processes within criminal networks, and the review-based nature of Jacobs and Cherbonneau's (2023) work lacks primary, in-depth offender data on the *progression* of their MO. Furthermore, this body of research is predominantly US-centric, leaving a significant void in our understanding of how these criminal methodologies evolve in different global contexts, particularly within the unique socio-economic landscapes of the Global South.

This PhD study directly addresses these limitations by providing the crucial, missing micro-level perspective. Utilising a qualitative methodology with "in-depth interviews with incarcerated participants" in KZN, SA, the research shifts the focus from macro-level trends to the lived realities of offenders, providing the "offender's voice" absent from recent analyses. The central focus on the "progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO" including the "use of illicit driving techniques, use of technological methods, and advanced surveillance methods", directly answers the question of *how* the crime becomes more sophisticated, detail recent studies could only theorise about. By grounding its findings in RCT and RAT within a South African context, this study not only fills a geographical gap but also provides a robust explanatory framework for the tactical evolution of carjacking, offering invaluable, grounded insights for developing more effective, context-specific interventions.

2.61.5 Going With the Flow

Street culture is linked to impulsive behaviour and a receptiveness to offending, where offenders act without considering the consequences (Shover, 1996). This culture draws offenders to carjackings, which are often spontaneous and situation-driven, leaving them with limited options (Shover, 1996). Due to this, the association between street culture and impulsive behaviour maintains carjackings, driving offenders to act on impulse without regard for responsibility (Shover, 1996).

2.61.5.1 Integrated Literature Review

The foundational understanding of street culture, as articulated by scholars like Shover (1996), established a powerful link between a street-oriented lifestyle and impulsive, spontaneous offending. This perspective posited that offenders are drawn to crimes like carjacking by a

culture that prizes immediate action over consequence, leaving them with limited perceived options. However, this view presented a somewhat monolithic and simplistic picture of criminal behaviour. Recent research has critically addressed this weakness by deconstructing the concept of street culture. For example, Swartz, Wilcox, and Ousey (2017) differentiated between "culture-as-values" (internalised beliefs) and "culture-in-action" (situational pressures), demonstrating that the influence of street codes is not uniform but is conditioned by both individual beliefs and environmental contexts, thereby refining the foundational idea of spontaneity.

Building on this contextual nuance, other recent studies sought to explain the individual psychological underpinnings that the foundational work had broadly labelled "impulsivity." Wolff, Spriggs, and DeLisi (2021) made a significant contribution by linking the adoption of street code norms to specific temperamental traits, namely a "difficult temperament" characterised by low effortful control and high negative emotionality. This research provided a concrete mechanism for why certain individuals are more predisposed to embrace the "culture-as-values," addressing a key weakness in prior explanations. Despite these crucial advancements, a significant limitation persisted across the literature; the focus remained largely on the general propensity for violence, implicitly framing offending within a paradigm of reactive or semi-planned acts and failing to adequately explore the execution of specific, complex crimes that evolve beyond impulse.

This PhD study directly resolves this limitation by challenging the core tenet of spontaneous action that permeates the literature. Through an examination of carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area, this PhD study reveals a significant progression in the organised nature of the offenders' MOs. Far from being merely impulsive, these offences were found to involve calculated decisions, the use of advanced technological methods, and sophisticated surveillance. By integrating RCT with the established cultural and social frameworks, my study demonstrates that while street culture and individual temperament may create a fertile ground for criminality, the actual execution of carjackings can become a highly rational and organised enterprise, thus synthesising the literature's evolution from a culture of impulse to an understanding of organised criminal action.

2.61.6 Target Hardening and Gun Ownership

Security steps like immobilisers, alarms, and tracking devices can give rise to increased violence in carjackings (Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation [CSVR], 2007). Target hardening stimulates offenders to use violence or threats to overpower victims, and improved home security systems have driven offenders to commit carjackings instead of break-ins (CSVR, 2007). Additionally, the perceived need for self-defence has led to a surge in gun possession, with perpetrators also acquiring firearms and becoming more violent (CSVR, 2007). While property offences like MVTs or burglary typically do not involve violence, they are still problematic and complex to commit.

2.61.6.1 Integrated Literature Review

The literature on vehicle crime reveals an evolution from foundational principles to a contemporary technological arms race. Foundational studies established the paradox of target hardening, where improved security inadvertently spurred a shift towards more violent offences like carjackings as offenders adapted to bypass new measures (CSVR, 2007). Recent studies confirm this escalation, documenting how criminals now employ sophisticated counter-technologies, such as keyless entry relay attacks and staged 'tap-tap' accidents, to overcome modern security (Libera, 2024). This demonstrates a clear progression from the general use of violence to the tactical exploitation of specific technological and psychological vulnerabilities, with violence becoming more calculated, including kidnappings to force victims to disable tracking devices (Libera, 2024), a trend observed as security firms intensify their use of technology like AI and GPS (Moyo, 2024).

However, while recent studies expertly describe these emerging trends, they primarily offer an external, observational perspective, be it corporate crime statistics (Moyo, 2024), insurance claim data (Libera, 2024), or general crime reporting (Zumbrun, 2024), lacking insight into the decision-making processes and internal dynamics of offender networks. This critical weakness limits the development of proactive interventions. This PhD study addresses this gap by providing the essential offender-centric narrative, moving beyond describing trends to explaining the rationale behind them through in-depth interviews with incarcerated offenders. The research confirms the technological arms race noted by Moyo (2024) and Libera (2024) but provides the crucial context of why and how offenders adopt these methods, revealing them as calculated choices within a complex criminal environment.

Furthermore, this PhD study dissects the inner workings of organised crime, using theoretical frameworks like RCT and DAT to explain behaviours as learned, network-driven strategies. For instance, it explains kidnapping for tracker deactivation not just as a violent act, but as a rational technique refined within criminal syndicates, providing a deeper understanding than the descriptive accounts offered by sources like Libera (2024). In synthesising the literature, this PhD study bridges the gap between foundational principles and recent documentation, providing the necessary offender perspective and theoretical depth to understand not just what is happening, but why. This comprehensive understanding addresses the core concerns raised by foundational work (CSVR, 2007) and is foundational for moving beyond simple security enhancements to develop the collaborative strategies needed to effectively combat organised vehicle crime.

2.61.7 Family Values and Social Influences

Dysfunctional families and social effects contribute to young offenders' involvement in aggravated robberies, such as carjackings (Adebayo, 2013; Aigbovo & Eidenoje, 2016). In South Africa, factors like corruption, poverty, and dysfunctional families attract carjackings (Davis, 1999). Studies have consistently shown that minors from dysfunctional families are more likely to commit offences, including violent ones like carjackings (Ugwuoke & Onyekachi, 2015; Garg & Prusty, 2017; Ikediashi & Akande, 2015; Nworu, 2018). Aghedo (2015) identified community factors leading to juvenile offending, including moral degradation, criminal lifestyles, and deteriorating structures, as well as substandard education.

Recent studies have identified speculative features contributing to juveniles' participation in violent offences, including carjackings (Aghedo, 2015; Amaci, Moshood, & Iliyasu, 2017; Chiazor, Ozoya, & Udume, 2017; Gotsang, Mashalla, & Seloilwe, 2017). These features include familial circumstances, financial distress, corrupt activities, indigence, increased youth population, group pressure, and gang involvement.

2.62 MO of Carjackers and Motor Vehicle Thieves

A study conducted in South Africa found that carjackers survey their victims, learn their routine behaviours and gather information on their strengths and weaknesses before they commit carjackings (Risks 24 Group, 2018). Carjackings often occur on Fridays, but also happen between Tuesdays and Wednesdays, typically from 4 pm to 8 pm when victims are most

vulnerable after work (Risks 24 Group, 2018). Additionally, motorists who leave their engines running in front of residential gates are also targeted (Risks 24 Group, 2018).

Carjackers' MO were evaluated, and it was revealed that the said types of offenders often carjacked stationary occupied motor vehicles in front of residential properties near escape routes, or cars with unsuspecting occupants parked along the streets (Risks 24 Group, 2018). The offenders wear disguises like caps, gloves, and hooded clothing to conceal their real identities (Risks 24 Group, 2018). Carjackers also typically target occupied stationary motor vehicles at post offices, parking bays, or cars which leave service stations, and such offenders attack their victims when they are most vulnerable, often in quiet areas (Risks 24 Group, 2018). Carjackers work in groups, with each member playing a specific role in order to execute the crime of carjacking (Risks 24 Group, 2018). Risks 24 Group (2018) identified additional MO used by carjackers, particularly, bumping targeted vehicles with an extra car so as to force them to stop, then carjacking them. Furthermore, Risks 24 Group (2018) also showed that carjackers target expensive motor vehicles during school drop-off and pick-up times, particularly, at schools with affluent students, and the offenders usually pose as potential buyers so as to carjack cars from dealerships while test driving.

Risks 24 Group (2018) provided insight into carjackers' MO, but their study lacks information on the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings. Additionally, Risks 24 Group's (2018) study does not address aspects of the problem statement discussed in Chapter 1 of this PhD study, thus, it leaves a gap in understanding the evolution of carjackers' MOs.

Clarke (2010) investigated MVTs near the Mexican/US border, and found that thieves collected information from corrupt parking attendants about schedules of targeted vehicle owners. Clarke (2010) emphasised that motor thieves then used sophisticated equipment to access and quickly steal cars in large parking lots, often drove them across the border before owners reported MVTs to the police. Clarke (2010) noted that motor vehicle owners' extended absences from their vehicles facilitated MVTs.

Heitmann and Morales (2014) found that offenders can deactivate OnStar, a motor vehicle security system, by disconnecting specific terminals (such as J1, J2 and J3 whilst

simultaneously preventing the disconnection of J4 from the unit), and this allowed them to quickly steal or carjack targeted vehicles. Heitmann and Morales (2014) noted that the internet provides offenders with instructions on locating the OnStar unit, typically under the front passenger seat, and step-by-step guidance on using clippers to interrupt electronic communications between OnStar personnel, authorities, and the vehicle, thus neutralising the security system.

Heitmann and Morales (2014) identified three methods used by carjackers and motor vehicle thieves to neutralise OnStar technology and these include: (a) injecting malware into the vehicle's radio console using a CD or laptop, (b) gaining control over the vehicle's internal computers to manipulate steering, brakes, and engine, and (c) using self-destructing software to eliminate evidence of manipulation. Heitmann and Morales (2014) added that the supra steps allow offenders to control and steal vehicles without leaving a digital trail. Furthermore, Heitmann and Morales (2014) reported that the SD 98 device is a remote-control blocker that operates on various frequencies, enabling motor vehicle thieves to scan, block, and jam anti-theft devices in numerous vehicle brands, including Audi, BMW, Mercedes-Benz, and Toyota. Heitmann and Morales (2014) also noted that with the SD 98 device, thieves can access vehicles without damaging locks, especially if they possess the manufacturer's code, allowing for easy entry and theft.

Siegel (2014) studied Lithuanian itinerant gangs who committed organised MVTs in the Netherlands, and found that most offenders were from Lithuania, with some from Bulgaria, and that they were controlled by Lithuanian kingpins. The supra finding is supported by Ferwerda, van Ham, and Bremmers (2013), who also reported that Lithuanian and Bulgarian motor vehicle thieves operated under Lithuanian control and this indicates a hierarchical structure in organised MVTs. Siegel (2014) identified various offenders involved in MVTs and, these included: spotters, thieves, and kingpins. Moreover, Ferwerda et al. (2013) found that spotters use Google Street View to gather information on targeted motor vehicles, which is then shared with other offenders. Siegel further noted that advanced anti-theft devices and registration systems have led to more organised and skilled offenders, a finding consistent with Gounev and Bezlov (2008), who also reported that sophisticated security steps have driven offenders to enhance their organisation and technical expertise.

Siegel (2014) found that organised offenders surveyed and followed owners of targeted motor vehicles, and this is similar to findings made by Risks 24 Group (2018). Siegel (2014) highlighted that targeted vehicles included BMWs, Audis, Toyotas, and Hondas. Furthermore, Siegel (2014) noted that offenders sometimes rented various vehicles to use while surveying and following car owners, as these vehicles were less likely to arouse suspicion from victims and the public. Moreover, Siegel (2014) identified various MOs used by organised motor vehicle thieves, including carefully smashing windows to open doors, using On Board Diagnostics (OBD) to unlock door locks, and employing laptops with specialised software to reprogram vehicle electronics. Additionally, Siegel (2014) found that motor vehicle thieves use "Polish keys" to quickly unlock cars, electronic keys to start and turn off engines, and sophisticated instruments to add vital information to new keys. Siegel (2014) added that for newer vehicles with advanced security systems, car thieves utilise costly underworld-sourced instruments to bypass security devices, which are installed in targeted motor vehicles.

Causey (2021) found that thieves in Milwaukee prefer to steal newer Kia vehicles (2016–2020 models). Causey (2021) noted that the MO used by car thieves involved a driver being transported to the target location, where multiple offenders join to smash the rear window without triggering the alarm. Causey (2021) also reported that the thieves would then open the doors, break the steering column, and use a USB port or flat screwdriver to start the engine via the key ignition, allowing them to quickly steal the vehicle.

Savona and Saint'Anna (2020) found that highly organised motor vehicle thieves possess various capabilities, which enable them to execute tasks quickly. Savona and Saint'Anna (2020) emphasised that organised motor vehicle thieves employ signal jammers to disable electronic transmissions and tracking devices in stolen vehicles, briefly "muting" them. Savona and Saint'Anna (2020) noted that jammers prevent detecting devices from sending signals about changes in direction, stoppages, and suspicious activities, serving as interim covers for the thieves. Savona and Saint'Anna (2020) added that offenders' technical skills in jammers and MO allow offenders to follow pre-set instructions and evade detection.

Goward (2018) observed that once a spotter identifies a targeted motor vehicle, they convey the information to a nearby offender with a sophisticated jammer. Goward (2018) also highlighted that an offender hides the jammer in a small case and activates it upon receiving the information.

Goward (2018) further noted that the latest jammer model is more powerful and has multiple channels, which include 3 channels for jamming GNSS bands and another 3 channels for jamming key fob frequencies, and this allows the offender to unlock and enter a targeted motor vehicle. Additionally, Goward (2018) found that the offender can connect the jammer to the motor vehicle's OBD system and duplicate the key in seconds. Furthermore, Goward (2018) found that the 8-channel jammer's last 2 channels are used to jam concealed tracker devices and Bluetooth frequencies, respectively. Goward (2018) stated that the Bluetooth frequency is used to disrupt carpark CCTV transmissions. Additionally, Goward (2018) noted that jamming the onboard GNSS prevents stolen motor vehicles from being traced. Goward further mentioned that the 8-channel jammer also has the potential to disrupt police transmissions bands, such as TETRA, and future urgent services bands.

De Prez (2018) reported that thieves steal accident replacement hire vehicles using stolen identities acquired from the dark web. De Prez (2018) asserted that identities are obtained by fraudsters who steal personal information from genuine drivers involved in accidents and, such information is subsequently sold to motor vehicle thieves. Moreover, De Prez (2018) noted that the original drivers are victims without any link to either fraud or MVTs. De Prez (2018) also mentioned that stolen identities are quickly purchased by car thieves on the dark web, and that this enables them to steal replacement hire vehicles.

It was reported that motor vehicle thieves used stolen identities to falsely report accidents to insurance companies and obtain expensive replacement vehicles, and the author identified this as being equivalent to theft by deception (De Prez, 2018). Motor vehicle thieves also disabled telematics systems and tracking devices to avoid detection (De Prez, 2018). The dark web facilitates these illegal activities, offering a low-risk trading platform for fraudsters and motor vehicle thieves (De Prez, 2018). Notably, De Prez's (2018) study revealed organised methods used by offenders to steal accident replacement hire vehicles in which stolen identities acquired from the dark web.

An investigation by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement (2019) in Australia evaluated the theft and illegal export of motor vehicles and parts. The inquiry conducted by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement (2019) revealed that OCGs are responsible for committing MVTs, and that they operate with a degree of

organisation. Furthermore, the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement (2019) found that professional offenders collaborate with small criminal groups, which have legitimate businesses that overtly repair motor vehicles and also legally deal in scrap metals, but covertly commit organised MVTs.

The Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement (2019) found that legitimate dealers in used motor vehicles often buy stolen cars from organised criminal groups (OCGs) without questioning their origin. Additionally, the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement (2019) mentioned that OCGs engage in organised MVTs, which involve multiple stages such as hiring drivers, obtaining tools for accessing cars and acquiring instruments for starting them. The Parliamentary Joint Committee on Law Enforcement (2019) also noted that organised criminal groups form alliances to facilitate MVTs due to the complexity of the theft processes.

Doyle (2021) described a coordinated MO employed by a group of 3 offenders, who used a private taxi, owned by one of them, in order to travel to and from crime scenes and, by adhering the said MO, the perpetrators avoided suspicions. Doyle (2021) stated that the offenders carefully planned each incident before they committed MVTs and additional offences, and this required the perpetrators to obtain addresses of targeted houses, which were located in wealthy neighbourhoods with expensive cars parked along the streets. Doyle (2021) noted that the supra strategic planning allowed the offenders to target specific properties without arousing unnecessary suspicion.

Doyle (2021) found that 3 offenders used specialised tools to break into targeted properties and steal car keys, which they used to open and start motor vehicles. Added to this, Doyle (2021) reported that offenders also employed a “fishing” method to steal keys from letterboxes and, that they also falsified registration number plates in order to evade police detection. Furthermore, Doyle (2021) noted that the offenders typically burgled homes at night, and stole motor vehicles, jewellery, and cash while occupants slept. Relatedly, Doyle (2021) highlighted that these coordinated efforts allowed the offenders to carry out their crimes without being detected.

Symes (2021) noted that MVTs rose in the UK throughout 2020. Symes (2021) highlighted the sophisticated methods employed by a group of thieves, including using wildlife cameras to track

targeted vehicles and scout for potential targets at local shows. Once identified, Symes (2021) noted that the thieves attached magnetic detecting devices to the cars in order to monitor parking habits and movements of cars owners, and this allowed the offenders to steal targeted motors vehicles. Symes (2021) also noted that these coordinated efforts demonstrated the group's ingenious and organised approach to MVTs.

Symes (2021) also found out that motor vehicle thieves installed disguised wildlife cameras around victims' properties to enhance their organised methods. Symes (2021) noted 2 reasons for this tactic: firstly, to monitor owners' departure and return times, and secondly, to identify periods when owners were likely to be away, leaving their vehicles unattended. Symes (2021) added that by using the cameras, motor vehicle thieves could remotely observe owners' movements, enabling them to steal targeted cars at times of their own choosing. Moreover, Symes (2021) highlighted that this MO allowed motor vehicle thieves to strike at specific times, increasing their chances of success.

Hacking is a method used by motor vehicle thieves to gain unauthorised access to a car's system (Norman, 2016). Keeling (2018) found that organised thieves targeted BMWs, using special gadgets and computers with hacker exploits to access the cars' in-built computers. Keeling (2018) noted that thieves employed complicated software to break passwords, bypass restrictions, and discover security flaws, which they then exploited. Keeling (2018) added that by adhering to the *supra* MO, thieves were able to start the engines and steal the BMWs on several occasions. Moreover, Keeling (2018) highlighted that thieves followed guides to run harmful programs against the cars' computers, and ultimately gained control of motor vehicles.

A report by Leasing.com Group (2021) revealed a consistent increase in keyless MVTs in the UK between 2016 and 2020. Leasing.com Group found that OCGs use a relay technique to steal keyless motor vehicles, involving multiple offenders: the first offender amplifies the key fob signal, a second offender receives it to unlock and start the vehicle, and a third offender acts as a lookout. Additionally, Leasing.com Group reported that this coordinated effort enables thieves to quickly steal and drive away targeted cars, often within minutes.

Various organised MOs were discussed, which are used by OCGs and networks involved in MVTs and carjackings within the EU (Europol, 2021. These MOs include establishing

reciprocal relationships with diaspora communities in order to replace certain offenders, engage in profitable illegal activities, and create links with reliable networks to plan MVTs and related offenses (Europol, 2021). OCGs also survey targeted cars and buildings, form loose networks, and perpetrate multiple MVTs across a country before relocating to another country (Europol, 2021).

Vulnerable offenders in the diaspora are forced by OCGs to form loose ethnic-based networks, which are exploited in order to commit organised MVTs (Europol, 2021). Furthermore, Europol (2021) found that loose ethnic-based networks commit multiple MVTs within short periods, then move to another country in an attempt to obscure links between incidents. Europol (2021) also identified that OCGs developed their MOs by exploiting investigative oversights, which include police investigating MVTs in isolation, failing to analyse cases nationally and neglecting the presence of organised crime component in MVT incidents.

Europol (2021) notes that individual motor vehicle thieves are often overlooked in literature on organised MVTs, and there's a significant decline in recovered stolen motor vehicles across the EU. Relatedly, Europol noted that the supra findings suggest a shift in MOs from disorganised individual thieves to OCGs committing permanent MVTs. This is supported by Roberts and Block (2012), who found that amateur individual offenders commit temporary MVTs, while professional thieves use organised MOs so as to work together and perpetrate permanent MVTs. Europol also found that experienced OCGs involve various criminal actors, each executing specific tasks to appropriate motor vehicles for their customers.

Europol (2021) discussed additional MOs used by OCGs to steal motor vehicles and these MOs include: using sophisticated instruments to bypass anti-theft devices, thus allowing offenders to enter, start, and drive away targeted motor vehicles. Europol also found that OCGs break into the victims' homes to steal keys for expensive vehicles ordered by clients and later return to steal targeted cars. Furthermore, Europol mentioned that OCGs disassemble stolen cars and sell used parts to clients.

Kerner (1973) conducted a seminal study on the organisation of organised MVTs. Kerner found that organised motor vehicle thieves employ a vertical approach, characterised by a division of labour and money. Kerner also found that indirect offenders, or crime lords, orchestrated illicit

operations and paid substantial sums of money to experienced direct offenders, who stole motor vehicles for customers as instructed.

Kerner (1973) noted that the crime lord known as indirect offender 'F' masterminded criminal activities by ordering middleman 'G to instruct direct offenders ('A/B/C/D/E') to steal vehicles and supply stolen parts for customers. Kerner found that 'F' did not have direct contact with the above-stated direct offenders, who were also mechanics, and instead, 'F' depended on another party, 'H', to transport stolen vehicles or parts to customers. Kerner also mentioned that the supra hierarchical structure allowed 'F' to maintain control while distancing themselves from direct participation in the MVT activities.

Kerner (1973) found that 'F', the criminal mastermind, ordered 'G' to inform other group members not to deliver stolen motor vehicles or parts directly to 'F'. Furthermore, Kerner mentioned that instead, 'F' organised operations from a distance, without direct participation in MVTs. Kerner also disclosed that direct offenders, such as A/B/C/D/E/H, were temporarily employed by 'F' for a specific period before their corrupt relationship was terminated, highlighting the hierarchical and temporary nature of their involvement.

2.63 MO Used for Transporting Stolen and/or Carjacked Motor Vehicles

Clarke (2010) found that stolen motor vehicles were often transported to Mexico without disguise, either by driving them directly or loading them onto trucks. Clarke pointed out that the said tactics enabled offenders to evade detection and arrest, as the motor vehicles were not initially reported stolen in the USA. Clarke also found that thieves did not always hide or disguise the stolen motor vehicles, and this made it easier to transport them across the border. Clarke's study highlights the simplicity and boldness of motor vehicle thieves' methods.

Clarke (2010) reported that dishonest motor vehicle owners participated in insurance fraud by driving their insured vehicles across the border, selling them, and then filing false police reports and claiming insurance premiums. Notably, Clarke added that these vehicles were not hidden or disguised at the border. Clarke also found that in cases of insurance fraud-related MVT, vehicles were not concealed. Resendiz (1998) complemented these findings by revealing that garages are used to store illegally acquired motor vehicles until buyers are found, and that stolen cars are transported in furniture delivery lorries to avoid detection.

Since the 9/11 attacks, American customs and immigration officials have prioritised monitoring incoming goods over outgoing ones (Heitmann & Morales, 2014). Heitmann and Morales' finding is complemented by Santora and Schwirtz (2013), who investigated the transportation of carjacked vehicles from New York harbour to West Africa. Santora and Schwirtz found that syndicates used containers to hide and transport stolen and carjacked cars to various cities, highlighting a specific method used to evade detection.

2.64 A Formal Organisation of Offenders (Direct and Indirect Perpetrators)

The complexity of these transportation methods requires an analysis of the formal organisational structures behind them, specifically the roles of direct and indirect perpetrators**.**

2.64.1 Formal Organisations of Offenders

The current thesis has focused on literature related to MVTs, carjackings, and offenders' MO, but has not extensively explored the organisation of offenders. Key concepts are described, for example a direct perpetrator, is an offender who directly commits a crime (Van der Wilt, 2009). Whereas an indirect offender is described a perpetrator who instructs direct offenders and others to commit crimes (Van der Wilt, 2009). Moreover, Van der Wilt (2009) also describes co-perpetration as joint crime commission, grounded in division of labour and task allocation. Jessberger and Geneuss (2008) note that task sharing among offenders is well-organised, with indirect perpetrators leading criminal organisations and exploiting direct offenders to achieve jointly planned goals, such as carjackings and MVTs. Jessberger and Geneuss emphasise that successful execution relies on combined efforts and coordinated planning among all involved offenders.

Understanding how offenders organise and collaborate is crucial. Shibutani (1961) identified 2 essential types of knowledge for offenders and these include: (a) gaining practical skills and methods for committing crimes; and (b) adopting constructed psychological views to rationalise offenders' actions. Shibutani added that views, imposed by experienced offenders, include biased beliefs, justifications for offending, and a coded language to express their views. Furthermore, Shibutani found that new offenders must learn these psychological views, which encompass excuses for criminal behaviours, grounds for engagement in crime, and the organisation of offenders. Moreover, Shibutani noted that these insights shed light on the social coordination and knowledge required for offenders to execute their illegal activities.

A formal organisation of offenders, as described by Von Lampe (2009, 2016), involves social coordination among multiple individuals who work together to achieve offending tasks, such as stealing and carjacking motor vehicles, over a sustained period. Von Lampe (2016) stated that what distinguishes a formal organisation of offenders from mobs or networks is its unique culture, characterised by a structured collection of rules and principles which members must follow, regardless of individual concerns. Von Lampe's study also found that formal organisations of offender have hierarchical structures, where illegal tasks are divided and assigned to specialised offenders, facilitating a division of labour among members.

Best and Luckenbill (1980) found that offenders differ in how they coordinate tasks, construct norms, and achieve goals. Similarly, Von Lampe (2015) noted that an organisation of offenders shares corrupt aspects with bureaucratic institutions, which consist of multiple sections that perform specific tasks. For Von Lampe, these tasks include the following: (a) planning illegal acquisitions; (b) processing stolen goods (e.g., motor vehicles); (c) enforcing internal and external rules; (d) dealing in illegal goods; and (e) organising strategic legal defence by trusted criminal attorneys. Von Lampe's study highlights the complexity and the structure of formal organisations of offenders, which resemble legitimate institutions in their functionality.

Organisations of offenders recruit trusted perpetrators, who are rewarded for their criminal experience and skills, and this facilitates the sharing of expertise to improve their MO (Kleemans & de Poot, 2008). Organisations of offender operate under unwritten rules, norms and coded languages which guide teamwork and are strictly enforced (Best & Luckenbill, 1980). However, offenders frequently lack certainty about others' actions and have incomplete information about their companions' motivations and behaviours, especially those from different organisations (Matrix Knowledge Group, 2007). This uncertainty is a fundamental aspect of trust within offender organisations.

Time spent in correctional centers can establish credibility and foster trust within an organisation of offenders (Matrix Knowledge Group, 2007). Von Lampe and Johansen (2004) identified 4 types of trust in such organisations and these include: (a) personalised trust in specific individuals; (b) trust based on public knowledge of personalities; (c) trust based on generalisations about groups; and (d) abstract trust in larger organised offender networks. Von

Lampe and Johansen added that the above-stated types of trust facilitate cooperation and coordination among offenders in their illegal activities.

Organisations of offenders invest significant resources in evading the criminal justice system, including bribing officials (Best & Luckenbill, 1980). These organisations demonstrate formidable capabilities and adaptability, making them a powerful force (Best & Luckenbill, 1980). Various models exist, including street gangs (Keiser, 1969; Dawley, 1973), illicit trade groups (South African Revenue Service, 2020), and other criminal underworld groups (Cressey, 1969; Ianni, 1972). Policing exposes police officers to environments where organised criminal groups offer lucrative opportunities for corruption, particularly when officers work with minimal supervision (Fitzgerald, 1989; Kleemans & de Poot, 2008; Kleemans & Van de Bunt, 2008; Padraic, 2005; Wood, 1994).

Socialisation in organisations of offenders changes individuals' behaviours from adhering to legitimate laws to following criminal codes dictated by kingpins (Best & Luckenbill, 1980). This process leads to a rejection of regulations and limitations, increasing the likelihood of committing crimes like carjackings (Jacobs et al., 2003; James & Barkhuizen, 2013; Minnaar & Zinn, 2000; Shover, 1996; Wright & Decker, 1997) and MVTs (Hope & Hough, 1988; Kennedy & Forde, 1990; Kershaw et al., 2000; Miethe & Meier, 1994; Sampson & Groves, 1989). Best and Luckenbill (1980) found that more refined organisations of offenders enhance teaching perpetrators how to commit crime, leading to increased success in committing crimes with minimal disruptions, especially with experienced perpetrators.

A refined organisation of offenders teaches psychological perspectives that encourage offenders to disregard behavioural rules and constraints, leading to poor relationships with innocent people and a lack of empathy for their victims' feelings (Schmideberg, 1947). These lessons are internalised, and offenders aim to illicitly get goods and misuse crime proceeds (Schmideberg, 1947, 1953). In addition, Schmideberg (1947) noted that criminality becomes a regular outlet for offenders' feelings, interests, and preoccupations, providing a thrilling escape from their unsatisfactory lives, making them feel alive through committing offenses.

Improper socialisation can lead offenders to disregard rules and disrespect others, and this has the potential to contribute to troublesome and upsetting actions that contradict societal conduct

and principles. This misplaced socialisation fosters a mindset where the contravention of rules has the likelihood of being accepted, and if this behaviour is tolerated, it has a possibility of promoting behaviour that deviates from societal norms.

2.65 Planning and Evaluation of the Offenders' MO Used for Committing Carjackings and MVTs

A report titled "Criminal decision-making" was prepared to explore how offenders prioritise their safety and make decisions about committing crimes (Centre for Research and Evidence on Security Threats [CREST], 2020). Furthermore, CREST's (2020) report outlines various planning types, including observing targets, obtaining getaway vehicles and selecting targets within reasonable timeframes. Moreover, CREST (2020) found that carjackers often plan for hours or months, survey potential crime scenes and also assess security measures, such as police proximity and target vulnerability. Additionally, experienced carjackers frequently rely on insider information or first-hand reconnaissance before the above-stated offenders commit carjackings (CREST, 2020).

Experienced motor vehicle thieves plan less than inexperienced ones, except when targeting modern and complex vehicles (CREST, 2020). Motor vehicle thieves are deterred by neighbours, security guards, community members and visibility (CREST, 2020). Furthermore, experienced motor vehicle thieves mentor amateurs and they teach them how to use devices to access new vehicles, disable alarms, strip steering wheel columns and manipulate ignitions (Mullins & Cherbonneau, 2011). Trainees accompany seasoned motor vehicle thieves in order to observe and learn, before they pilfer cars independently without supervision (Mullins & Cherbonneau, 2011). Notably, seasoned offenders sometimes burglarise homes to steal car keys for use when committing MVTs at later stages (Luke & Cunneen, 1993).

2.66 Summaries of Key Literature

Clarke, R. V., & Cornish, D. B. (1985).

2.66.1 Title: Modeling Offenders' Decisions: A Framework for Research and Policy.

Overview: This work presents a framework for understanding how offenders make decisions regarding their criminal behavior. It emphasizes the importance of rational choice theory, suggesting that offenders weigh the costs and benefits of their actions. The authors argue for the need to consider the decision-making processes of offenders in both research and policy-

making to effectively address crime.

Cornish, D. B., & Clarke, R. V. (1986).

2.66.2 Title: The Reasoning Criminal: Rational Choice Perspectives on Offending.

Overview: This book expands on the rational choice perspective, exploring how offenders think and make decisions. It discusses various factors that influence criminal behavior, including situational variables and personal motivations. The authors advocate for a more nuanced understanding of crime that incorporates the reasoning processes of criminals, which can inform prevention strategies.

Felson, M. (2002).

2.66.3 Title: Crime and Everyday Life.

Overview: Felson's work examines the relationship between routine activities and crime, proposing that crime is a product of everyday interactions and situations. He introduces the routine activity theory, which posits that crime occurs when a motivated offender encounters a suitable target without capable guardianship. This perspective shifts the focus from individual offenders to the broader social context in which crime occurs.

Bursik, R. J., & Grasmick, H. G. (1993).

2.66.4 Title: Neighborhoods and Crime: The Dimensions of Effective Community Control.

Overview: This book explores the role of neighbourhoods in crime prevention and control. The authors argue that effective community control mechanisms, such as social cohesion and informal social control, can significantly reduce crime rates. They emphasize the importance of community structure and its influence on crime dynamics.

Sampson, R. J., & Groves, W. B. (1989).

2.66.5 Title: Community Structure and Crime: Testing Social-Disorganisation Theory.

Overview: This study tests the social disorganization theory, which posits that crime is more prevalent in communities with weak social ties and limited collective efficacy. The authors find that community structure significantly impacts crime rates, highlighting the importance of social networks and community engagement in crime prevention.

Shaw, C. R., & McKay, H. D. (1942).

2.66.6 Title: Juvenile Delinquency and Urban Areas.

Overview: This foundational text outlines the principles of social disorganization theory, linking urbanization and crime. Shaw and McKay argue that neighbourhoods with high levels of poverty, residential instability, and ethnic diversity experience higher rates of juvenile delinquency. Their work laid the groundwork for future research on the relationship between community characteristics and crime.

Kelling, G. L., & Wilson, J. Q. (1982).

2.66.7 Title: Broken Windows: The police and neighbourhood safety.

Overview: This influential article discusses the "broken windows" theory, which posits that visible signs of disorder and neglect in a community lead to increased crime. The authors argue that maintaining order and addressing minor offenses can prevent more serious crimes, emphasizing the role of police in community safety.

Akers, R. L. (1998).

2.66.8 Title: Social Learning and Social Structure: A General Theory of Crime and Deviance.

Overview: Akers integrates social learning theory with social structure to explain criminal behavior. He posits that criminal behavior is learned through interactions with others and is influenced by the social environment. This work emphasizes the importance of both individual and contextual factors in understanding crime.

Sutherland, E. H. (1947).

2.66.9 Title: Principles of Criminology.

Overview: This classic text introduces differential association theory, which suggests that criminal behavior is learned through social interactions. Sutherland emphasizes the role of social context in shaping individual behavior, arguing that crime is a product of cultural and social influences.

Cohen, L. E., & Felson, M. (1979).

2.66.10 Title: Social Change and Crime Rate Trends: A Routine Activity Approach.

Overview: This seminal article introduces the routine activity theory, which posits that crime

occurs when three elements converge: a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of capable guardians. The authors argue that changes in societal patterns, such as increased mobility and changes in family structure, have influenced crime rates by altering the opportunities for crime.

Hagan, J. (1994).

2.66.11 Title: Crime and Disrepute.

Overview: Hagan explores the social organization of crime in the United States, examining how social structures and cultural norms influence criminal behavior. He discusses the stigma associated with crime and how it affects individuals and communities, emphasizing the need for a sociological perspective in understanding crime.

Putnam, R. D. (2000).

2.66.12 Title: Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community.

Overview: Putnam analyzes the decline of social capital in American communities and its implications for civic engagement and crime. He argues that weakened social ties and community involvement contribute to increased crime rates, highlighting the importance of rebuilding social networks to enhance community safety.

Tyler, T. R. (2004).

2.66.13 Title: Enhancing Police Legitimacy.

Overview: Tyler discusses the concept of police legitimacy and its significance for effective policing. He argues that public perceptions of police fairness and accountability influence community cooperation with law enforcement, which in turn affects crime rates. The work emphasizes the need for police to engage with communities to build trust and legitimacy.

Braga, A. A., Papachristos, A. V., & Hureau, D. M. (2010).

2.66.14 Title: The Effects of Hot Spots Policing on Crime: An Updated Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis.

O**verview:** This systematic review evaluates the effectiveness of hot spots policing strategies in reducing crime. The authors find that focused police interventions in high-crime areas can lead to significant reductions in crime rates, supporting the idea that targeted policing can be an effective crime prevention strategy

Katz, J. (1988).

2.66.15 Title: Seductions of Crime: Moral and Sensual Attractions in Doing Evil.

Overview: Katz explores the motivations behind criminal behavior, emphasizing the emotional and psychological aspects of crime. He argues that crime can be seen as a form of seduction, where individuals are drawn to the thrill and excitement of criminal acts. This perspective adds depth to the understanding of why individuals engage in criminal behavior beyond rational choice.

Sampson, R. J., Raudenbush, S. W., & Earls, F. (1997).

2.66.16 Title: Neighborhoods and Violent Crime: A Multilevel Study of Collective Efficacy.

Overview: This influential study examines the concept of collective efficacy, which refers to a community's ability to maintain social order and control crime through mutual trust and cooperation. The authors find that neighbourhoods with high levels of collective efficacy experience lower rates of violent crime, highlighting the importance of social cohesion in crime prevention.

Hirschi, T. (1969).

2.66.17 Title: Causes of Delinquency.

Overview: Hirschi presents a social control theory that posits that strong social bonds to family, school, and community reduce the likelihood of delinquency. He argues that when these bonds are weak, individuals are more likely to engage in criminal behaviour. This work emphasizes the role of socialization in preventing crime.

Kelling, G. L., & Wilson, J. Q. (1982).

2.66.18 Title: Broken Windows: The Police and Neighbourhood Safety.

Overview: This article argues that maintaining order by addressing minor offenses can prevent more serious crimes. The authors suggest that visible signs of disorder, such as broken windows, can lead to increased crime rates if not addressed. This theory has influenced policing strategies, particularly in urban areas.

Bellamy, C., Ostini, R., Martini, N., & Kairuz, T. (2016).

2.66.19 Seeking to Understand: Using Generic Qualitative Research to Explore Access to Medicines and Pharmacy Services among resettled refugees

Overview: This study examines the impact of various factors on offender cooperation within the criminal justice system. It highlights the importance of understanding the dynamics of offender interactions and the implications for law enforcement practices.

Varese, F. (2011).

2.66.20 Title: Mafias on the Move: How Organized Crime Conquers New Territories.

Overview: This book examines the strategies employed by organized crime groups to expand their influence into new regions, highlighting the challenges faced by law enforcement in combating these networks.

Clarke, R. V. (1995).

2.66.21 Title: Situational Crime Prevention.

Overview: This chapter discusses the concept of situational crime prevention, which focuses on reducing opportunities for crime through environmental design and management. Clarke emphasizes the importance of understanding the context in which crimes occur and suggests practical measures to deter criminal behaviour by altering the physical and social environment.

Hepburn, L. M., & Hemenway, D. (2004).

2.66.22 Title: Firearm Availability and Homicide Rates in the United States.

Overview: This study investigates the relationship between firearm availability and homicide rates, concluding that higher levels of gun ownership correlate with increased homicide rates. The authors advocate for policies aimed at reducing firearm access to improve public safety.

Decker, S. H., & Van Winkle, B. (1996).

2.66.23 Title: Life in the Gang: Family, Friends, and Violence.

Overview: This study examines the social dynamics within gangs, focusing on the relationships among members and the role of family and friends in shaping gang culture. The authors highlight how violence is often a normalized aspect of gang life and discuss the implications for understanding gang-related crime.

2.67 Chapter Summary

While the studies reviewed above did not address the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MOs used for committing carjackings and MVTs, many of them showed major points that assist to engineer this PhD study. This comprehensive literature review has thoroughly evaluated existing studies on carjackings and motor vehicle thefts (MVTs), with a specific focus on the interplay between land uses, road networks, and offender characteristics. The findings of this review have shed light on several crucial aspects of these crimes. Firstly, the review has identified a range of land uses that are associated with an increased risk of carjackings and MVTs, including bars, shopping malls, bus stations, and other commercial and recreational areas. Additionally, certain road network aspects, such as congestion and peak hours, have been shown to contribute to the commission of these crimes.

Furthermore, the review has revealed that offenders are often male, juvenile and from disadvantaged backgrounds with some studies suggesting a connection between MVTs and masculinity. This highlights the need for further research into the sociological and psychological factors that drive individuals to engage in these crimes. Moreover, the review has demonstrated that commercial activities in urban settings play a significant role in facilitating carjackings and MVTs, although the exact nature of this relationship remains intricate and multifaceted.

Despite the valuable insights provided by existing studies, this review has also identified several gaps in the current literature. Notably, few studies have evaluated the effects of the road network on carjackings and MVTs, or explored the progression of offenders' MOs over time. This study aims to address these gaps by conducting an in-depth evaluation of the organised nature of offenders' MOs used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area of Durban, from the perspective of incarcerated offenders.

By exploring the experiences and perspectives of offenders themselves, this study seeks to gain a deeper understanding of the complex factors that drive carjackings and MVTs, and to identify potential strategies for preventing and mitigating these crimes. The next chapter will outline the theoretical framework that underpins this study, by combining 4 key theories and these include: (a) routine activities; (b) rational choice; (c) social disorganisation; and (d) differential association. These theories will provide a robust foundation for analysing the data and findings of this study.

The researcher divided the current chapter into 5 key sections and few relevant sub-sections. In the first section, Chapter 2 explores the background to MVTs and carjackings. This chapter does so by exploring the prevalence of carjackings and MVTs. To be more specific, Chapter 2 explores the pervasiveness of the aforementioned offences by focusing on the nature and extent of the problem (carjackings and MVTs), which involves many aspects below (see Section 2.1.1)

The second section addresses factors contributing to carjackings and MVTs. Next, in order to identify factors which are conducive to the above-stated offences, the second section focusses on opportunity and demographic factors. The third section takes an in-depth look at various factors which are divided into 2 groups. The first group of factors maintain carjackings. The second group of aspects are treated as MVT pull factors.

The fourth section explores different MO of carjackers and motor vehicle thieves. It does so by discussing numerous offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs. After that, the fourth section deals with the organisation of offenders. In the final section, this chapter deals with the conclusion and, it concludes by discussing synopsis of the literature review. The researcher also clearly discussed very few helpful relevant sub-sections in the current chapter, which are not deliberately mentioned within this introduction.

In this research, carjacking refers to the theft of a motor vehicle using violence, threats, or intimidation. While some police organisations around the globe may categorise these incidents under robberies or MVTs, this study uses the SAPS's and Uganda Police Service's categorisation, which recognises carjacking as a distinct category. This clarity is essential for understanding the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO used for committing carjackings in the greater Berea area in Durban.

Chapter 3 Theoretical Framework

To provide a robust foundation for the analysis, this chapter now outlines the specific theoretical perspectives that guide the study.

3.1 Introduction

Chapter 3 describes and applies the theoretical framework which underpins this study. There is no single theory which can best explain the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area, in Durban. The progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs is treated as [phenomena plural of phenomenon], whose parts cannot be completely explained through the option of using a single theory, instead, there is a need to combine different theories in this study. Hence, the present study utilised a mixture of 4 theories, in order to attempt to understand the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban.

As already noted, the theoretical framework for this study consists of 4 theories. Therefore, the key sections below describe and highlight 4 theoretical bases, which the researcher subsequently used in the analysis of the findings in Chapter 6 of this PhD study. The 4 listed theoretical bases, which the researcher used in this study include: (a) social disorganisation theory (referred to as SDT); (b) differential association theory (referred to as DAT); (c) routine activity theory (referred to as RAT; and (d) rational choice perspective (also known as RCP).

3.2 Social Disorganisation Theory (SDT)

Social Disorganisation Theory emerged due to environmental and social circumstances, which happened at the beginning of 20th century in Chicago (Shaw & McKay 1931, 1936, 1942). The circumstances alluded to in the supra sentence encompassed: (a) elevated levels of offending behaviours of young persons; and (b) numerous social challenges in Chicago (Shaw & McKay 1931, 1936, 1942). First sociologists such as Thomas and Znaniecki (1918) and, Parks and Burgess (1924, 1925), started out to explain elevated levels of delinquency and abnormality in neighbourhoods. Notably, SDT clearly links delinquency to the aspects of communities (Park & Burgess, 1924). Furthermore, the Industrial Revolution significantly contributed to the progression of a criminological macro-level theory abbreviated as SDT (Rhineberger, 2003). The Industrial Revolution also produced immense and swift transformations, which re-echoed across USA's biggest cities and, this caused disorders and chaos in everyday lives of inhabitants who lived within the parameters of such cities (Rhineberger, 2003). Due to the Industrial Revolution, an incursion of immigrants and the movement of people from the countryside to urban areas (cities) in the USA occurred (Thomas & Znaniecki,1918). The above-stated mixture

of vast, quick, social and scientific advancements, and the demographic expansion opened the way for the progression of SDT (Thomas & Znaniecki, 1918). During the 1920s, Chicago and other large American urban areas started to experience the consequences of the Industrial Revolution (Thomas & Znaniecki, 1918).

Thus, Thomas and Znaniecki (1918) were concerned about how immigrants reacted to the transformations and consequences, which stemmed from residing in the same neighbourhoods with other immigrants who had new and dissimilar ethics, views and standards of behaviours that affected them. Relatedly, in Thomas and Znaniecki's (1918) study on Polish immigrants, the authors formulated a concept of social disorganisation. Moreover, Thomas and Znaniecki (1918, p. 35) defined social disorganisation as "a decrease of the influence of existing social rules of behavior upon individual members of the group." Flowing from the preceding definition of social disorganisation, Thomas and Znaniecki (1918) contended that decreased effects of laws on persons have hidden meanings for the bigger shared concerns or collective interests, because instances of a single person's contravention of laws have disorderly effects on groups of people and/or organisations, and if not prevented and resisted, massive contraventions of laws can follow, then, escalate and contribute to the total deterioration of organisations and also cause sufferings among the residents.

For Thomas and Znanieck (1918), social disorganisation strongly seemed to be a path, which gave rise to surges in offending behaviours where laws were contravened. The relevant issue inexplicitly noted by Thomas and Znaniecki in the supra paragraph, is the existence of a give-and-take effect, in the sense that a surge in offending behaviours makes social organisations and institutes (for example schools, colleges, universities, churches, courts or correctional centres) become not so much as efficacious in managing behaviours, which, finally cause a continued escalation of delinquency. Thomas and Znanieck did not intrinsically consider the supra response loop aspect, nevertheless, it was relevant to subsequent social disorganisation scholars who carried on with clarifying and expanding the SDT.

Park, Burgess and McKenzie (1925) expanded on Thomas and Znaniecki's (1918) original concept of social disorganisation. Park et al. also responded to social transformations, which happened in Chicago in the 1920s. Relatedly, Park et al. proposed that within social transformation, any type of adjustment which ushers any adaptation in the daily social life is

likely to terminate practices and, the termination of practices on which social organisation depends, damages the coordination of persons and things. Park et al, also highlighted that social transformation leads to termination of existent rules, which are the same bases of social institutes (for instance schools, churches and courts). Park et al. further stressed that social change undermines the capability of the aforementioned social institutes to implement and strengthen normal behaviours, which are controlled and, this makes residents experience a common understanding of the presence of social disorganisation. Moreover, Park et al. indicated that the existence of criminality and lawlessness in a socially disorganised neighbourhood, proves that the said social institutes fail to control the behaviours of residents and, this leads to the escalation of offending behaviours. Put it differently, criminality and lawlessness happen because they are effects of social disorganisation in a neighbourhood. Park et al.'s addition to Thomas and Znanieck's phrase of social disorganisation, is the significance of the collapse of formal social controls as a portion of social disorganisation and, criminality and lawlessness as the pointers of social disorganisation.

Shaw and McKay (1942) expanded Park et al.'s (1925) priority on criminality and lawlessness within the context of SDT. Like Park et al., Shaw and McKay concentrated on how systemic features of a neighbourhood affect the development and the happening of criminality and lawlessness within the limits of such a neighbourhood. What opened the way for Shaw and McKay's model of SDT, is that they applied Park et al.'s concentric zone theory to many key USA's urban centres which included: (a) Chicago; (b) Boston; (c) Richmond; (d) Birmingham; (e) Cleveland; and (f) Cincinnati.

Moreover, the progression of SDT was robustly swayed by the works of Park et al. conducted in 1925 (Jude, 2021). Related to this, Shaw, Zorbaugh, McKay and Cottrel (1929) carried out a study and pinpointed a city, which was susceptible to elevated levels of offences and lawlessness in 1929. Added to this, the 1929 study was expanded in a book authored by Shaw and McKay (1942). Therefore, SDT was completely developed by Shaw and McKay in their book entitled Juvenile Delinquency and Urban Areas, published in 1942. Whilst the book did not make formal comment on the concept of social disorganisation, Shaw and McKay employed spatial maps to indicate that levels of offences were not uniformly spread throughout Chicago. By contrast, there were stronger concentrations of crimes in certain areas than in other places within Chicago (Jude, 2021). One of Shaw and McKay's findings was that offenders

consistently committed highest levels of crime in low-income communities situated in the zone of transition, which were very close to commercial and industrial areas. Shaw and McKay also found that levels of crime in affluent residential areas were notably lower and not consistently dispersed. In an effort to comprehend a socially influenced progression of key urban centres, Burgess (1925) formulated a theory founded on concentric zones. Hence, findings of Shaw and McKay were clarified by employing Burgess's concentric zone theory (Jude, 2021). Relatedly, Shaw and McKay (1942) made use of Burgess' concentric zone theory as a technique for interpreting and dealing with the findings in terms of locating positions of crimes across Chicago. Moreover, Park et al. (1925) stressed that concentric zone theory is a perspective of urban ecology, which described urban areas as ecological structures of 5 concentric zones (for example Zone 1, Zone 2, Zone 3, Zone 4 and Zone 5), and they stretched from the heart of the city to its peripheries. In this regard, Burgess described a city as being surrounded by 5 various kinds of zones, which were spread out continuously in concentric rings from the central business district (CBD).

Zone 1 was referred to as the CBD (also called the loop) in which commercial properties, museums and shops were situated and, it functioned as the heart of the city's financial, cultural and social activities (Burgess, 1925). Of all the 5 zones, Zone 1 is the oldest portion of the city and residents of the other 4 zones travel back and forth to Zone 1 (Nickerson, 2023). The enlargement of the CBD relocated inhabitants from Zone 1 to Zone 2 (also referred to as the zone in transition) (Burgess, 1925; Snodgrass, 1976). In line with the concentric zone perspective, Shaw and McKay (1942) stated that the remaining parts of the city progressed around the city centre and, that Zone 2 encircled the CBD. Burgess (1925) described Zone 2 as being consistently occupied by expanding industries and enterprises, and that this led to disorderly in which dilapidated residential properties existed side-by-side with light manufacturing industries, enterprises and deserted ruined buildings. Residential buildings and infrastructure in Zone 2 were dilapidated because municipalities, landlords and inhabitants failed to maintain them (Burgess, 1928). Additionally, Burgess (1928) stated that Zone 2 consisted of poor people, offenders and many recent immigrants. Residents of Zone 2 experienced the most social instability and discrimination, which caused them to try hard to change and accommodate stress levels and demands of their new neighbourhood (McKenzie, Park & Burgess, 1967). Additionally, and notably, Zone 2 was the worst area for residents to reside in (McKenzie et al., 1967).

Of all the above-stated zones, the highest levels of offences and lawlessness were found within Zone 2 (Park et al., 1925). This place (Zone 2) consists of additional numerous social ills and these include: (a) disrupted and single families; (b) elevated levels of children born out of wedlock; (c) almost all the residents have very little or no education; (d) elevated levels of ethnic/racial diversity; and (e) consistent deterioration of the state of health of residents, which negatively effects their lifespans (Nickerson, 2023). The elevated levels of criminality and diversity in Zone 2 were explained as the effects of social disorganisation (Shaw & McKay, 1942), or as the expected reaction of ordinary persons to deviant social situations (Akers & Sellers, 2004, p.160).

Both the availability of cheap houses in Zone 2 and its close proximity to light manufacturing industries, enticed more influxes of poor immigrants (Burgess, 1925; Snodgrass, 1976; Wilcox, Cullen & Feldmeyer, n.d.). Zone 2 continued to be inhabited by new immigrants, particularly, poor labourers who neither have skills nor neighbourhood attachments. (Burgess, 1925; Wilcox et al., n.d.). Residents in Zone 2 were keen to relocate to a different zone immediately once they managed to pay for transport expenses and rental costs for residing in a better community (Burgess, 1925). Therefore, Zone 2 was marked by elevated residential instability, racial/ethnic diversity, low SES and lack of space between the majority of indigent residents (Burgess, 1925). For Burgess (1925), communities located considerably further from the CBD were socially organised, yet, social disorganisation prevailed in Zone 2 and, this was due to systemic aspects of the zone and immigrant position of many residents within its boundaries. Nonetheless, as each group of immigrants integrated, they ascended in the social framework and relocated to outlying zones and left behind lawlessness, criminality and abnormality (Nickerson, 2023).

Furthermore, Burgess (1925) stated that Zone 3 or the working-class zone was situated after Zone 2 and, it consisted of workers who settled in single-family flats and they worked in the CBD and factories. Burgess also pointed out that Zone 3 or the working-class zone contained residents who were pushed out of Zone 2 by the growth of Zone 1 into the second zone. Burgess further noted that the working-class zone was also composed of second generations of immigrant family members. Additionally, Burgess reported that people who moved out of Zone 2 preferred to settle in Zone 3, which was near their workplaces and many workers walked on foot.

According to Burgess (1925), Zone 4 surrounded Zone 3 and, it was a residential area which consisted of expensive residential properties and single-family houses with reasonable gardens and car pots. Residents of Zone 4 are well-read professionals and they have much sought-after skills (Nickerson, 2023). In addition, residents who live in Zone 4 belong to middle-class families (Nickerson, 2023). Finally, Nickerson (2023) points out that Zone 5 is also referred to as a commuter zone and, it is made up of suburbs. Residents of Zone 5 are also well-educated and, they belong to middle-class families which own larger and more costly residential properties (Nickerson, 2023). Zone 5 consists of suburbs situated in metropolitan areas which are very close to bigger metropolitan areas (Nickerson, 2023). In addition, residents who reside in Zone 5 or the commuter zone have their own transport, which is used for travelling to and from workplaces and places where they are entertained (Nickerson, 2023).

Due to comparatively elevated lawlessness and offences in certain areas within Chicago, aspects of certain communities which faced increased crime levels were pinpointed (Shaw & McKay, 1942). In this way, Shaw and McKay (1942) contended that key 3 systemic aspects explained the differences in levels of lawlessness and offences in the city. The 3 aspects were as follow: (a) low SES; (b) racial/ethnic diversity; (c) regular relocations of residents from one residential dwelling to another (Sampson & Groves, 1989). The above-stated features in the supra sentence are also aspects of socially disorganised communities (Sampson & Groves, 1989). Moreover, 3 studies found that offences tend to be committed in socially disorganised communities far more than in socially organised neighbourhoods and, this is due to the fact that social cohesion and the means to avert and unofficially regulate lawlessness and crimes do not exist in the former (Kornhauser, 1978; Kubrin & Wo, 2016; Shaw & McKay, 1942). Contrary to the supra finding, socially organised communities consist of 3 features and these include: (a) an inner agreement on required standards and ethics; (b) robust connections between community members; and (c) consistent encouragement of community members to regularly interact (Shaw & McKay, 1942). In the beginning, social disorganisation subsists when neighbourhood systems and cultures do not have the ability to reveal and implement ethics of its inhabitants and meant for everyone (Kornhauser, 1978, p. 63).

The concentration of consistent criminality and lawlessness in Zone 2 made Shaw and McKay (1942) associate differences in crime levels with the extent of neighbourhood organisation. To

Shaw and McKay, criminal activities committed in socially disorganised neighbourhoods are more than those perpetrated in socially organised neighbourhoods, hence, social disorganisation is the key building block which accounts for the cluster of offences in specific geographical locations. Relatedly, Snodgrass (1976) stated that the preceding explanation was tightly linked to the works of other authors, who studied various social ills by making use of the social ecology theory. Initially, Burgess (1925) highlighted that in cases where residential instability occurs the most, and in situations through which social controls are broken down just like in Zone 2, the following social ills reign: (a) discouragement; (b) immorality; (c) youth criminality; (d) juvenile gang formations; (e) sustained levels of indigence; and dysfunctional families. SDT concentrated on the following 3 key aspects: (a) causations of social disorganisation; (b) processes wherein social disorganisation contributed to crimes; and (c) clusters of criminal activities in certain geographical locations (Shaw & McKay, 1942). These matters are explained at lengthy below.

Firstly, in order to comprehend neighbourhood circumstances which simplified social disorganisation, the allocation of various neighbourhood aspects was explored and interpreted, so as to find out if the elements were related to criminality and lawlessness (Shaw & McKay, 1942). Particularly, Shaw and McKay (1942) explored and interpreted the following 3 features in urban centres: (a) actual position of urban centres; (b) socioeconomic position of the residents; and (c) the make-up of the residents in urban geographical locations. The actual position of geographical places was calculated by using demographic growths and demographic reductions (Shaw & McKay, 1942). Geographical places that experienced declining populations, are those places encroached on by expanding enterprises that forced residents to relocate from one zone to another and, also places with decayed and ruined houses which were unsuccessfully utilised to accommodate people at that time (Shaw & McKay, 1942). Moreover, the socioeconomic positions of the places were analysed by utilising various calculations which included: (a) calculated fractions of family members on social welfare grants; (b) average accommodation fees per month; and (d) ownership of real estate property(ies) (Shaw & McKay, 1942).

The above-stated 3 types of calculations were helpful in separating communities in relation to the SES of the inhabitants, hence; places with increased number of persons linked to social welfare grants, inexpensive accommodation fees and reduced ownership of properties, showed

elevated levels of criminality and lawlessness (Shaw & McKay, 1942). The makeup of the residents was calculated by adding together the number of people born outside of the USA and African-Americans who headed their own families (Shaw & McKay, 1942). Zone 2 experienced an influx of immigrants, elevated levels of criminality, lawlessness and new arrivals displaced by expanding businesses in Zone 1, and it mainly consisted of increased numbers of people who were born outside of the USA (Shaw & McKay, 1942). The supra point shows that expanding business enterprises forcibly relocated earlier waves of immigrants with offending behaviours to other zones for example Zone 2 (Shaw & McKay, 1942). Inexpensive accommodation fees in Zone 2 lured new arrivals, particularly, people born outside of the USA and African-Americans who relocated from southern states such as Georgia (Shaw & McKay, 1942).

In a nutshell, Shaw and McKay (1942) stressed that elevated levels of residential instability, ethnic/racial diversity and indigence, mixed with poverty-stricken situations of the community and its residents, gave rise to waned family and weak neighbourhood bonds, as well as social disorganisation. Notably, in line with Shaw and McKay, poverty alone does not cause crime, nonetheless, poverty enables crime due to the absence of the means required to eliminate offending behaviours (Harbeck, 2017). Shaw and McKay also highlighted that the above-stated systemic features of Zone 2 were accountable for occasioning social disorganisation, which precipitated crimes, diseases and absenteeism at school.

Secondly, Shaw and McKay (1942) exhibited a link between social disorganisation and increased levels of criminality and lawlessness in various neighbourhoods. In addition, Shaw and McKay presented a statement as to why social disorganisation contained issues which caused criminal behaviour and, it also resolved the relation between systemic features and criminality levels. Relatedly, in order to achieve what was alluded to in the preceding sentence, Shaw and McKay obtained valuable inputs from past research in the field of gangs and young offenders' criminal behaviours, particularly, from Thrasher's (1927) research entitled The Gang. The most well-known of such works is the explanation of Stanley's historical events, which were described in a criminological book entitled The Jack-Roller (Shaw, 1930). After Shaw and McKay obtained invaluable inputs from previous studies, they thoroughly explained the mixed model of criminality and lawlessness (Kornhauser, 1978). Specifically, Shaw and McKay pointed out that social disorganisation contributed to the causation of offences through

2 dissimilar procedural approaches, nonetheless, they are linked to each other and, these include: (a) the collapse of informal social controls; and (b) the transferral of the offenders' codes of behaviours to other perpetrators.

Contradictory to whatever ensued to young people within the other zones of the city, youngsters in Zone 2 were brought into contact with typical and offending practices. Therefore, juvenile offenders in Zone 2 learnt offending behaviours from elders and grown up criminals and, they achieved status and their deviant behaviours were strengthened by committing crimes in line with a procedure, which Sutherland (1947) subsequently called differential association.

Moreover, Sutherland (1947) expanded Shaw and McKay's (1942) research works by suggesting that places that experienced elevated levels of crimes were not automatically socially disorganised, instead, they were well coordinated around a dissimilar string of standards of behaviours, which did not automatically link to whatever was regarded as suitable for community members. Shaw and McKay treated socially disorganised places as dysfunctional areas, however, Sutherland regarded them as functional and well-balanced for the residents who resided in the community (Matsueda, 1988). Sutherland's idea that specific said theorists regarded certain places as socially disorganised, yet, they were not automatically unfunctional directed him to the differential association perspective. Regarding the differential association theory, Sutherland contended that offenders learn offending behaviours from companions and family members within strong criminal groups, which impart MO to perpetrators and new recruited offenders who are urged to use them for committing offences (Church, Wharton & Taylor, 2009). Sutherland suggested that the differential association theory ought to be employed to add the finishing touch to SDT, because both theories provide a description of negative community behaviours. For example, juvenile offenders' learning of MO from adult offenders, gang members, friends and older family members is well written by Shaw (1930) in an article titled The Jack-Roller. In this instance, Shaw reported that stories shared by youths like Stanley, demonstrated how juveniles in Zone 2 were taught how to understand, evaluate, appreciate and commit crimes. For Shaw, juveniles were taught how to perpetrate crimes by friends, adult offenders and older family members. Shaw also noted that juvenile offenders were urged to accompany older experienced offenders, who showed novices how to physically participate in criminal activities with them.

Furthermore, Shaw (1930) stated that the initial procedural approach contained the collapse of social controls was broadly dealt with in the social disorganisation way. Relatedly, Shaw noted that systemic circumstances in Zone 2 complicated things for its inhabitants, who intended to correctly socialise and regulate minors. Shaw also asserted that immigrants from European countries who settled in Chicago experienced problems when they tried to integrate their children into the community. For Shaw, children of European emigrants were brought up in conventional rural farming communities in Europe, therefore, they epitomised ethics of the medieval world in Chicago.

Furthermore, Shaw and McKay (1942) contended that typical ethics for European immigrants' children showed beyond doubt to be very weak and, they provided little or no information about how to address contemporary challenges that arose from aspects of new urban life like juvenile's free time, which did not exist during the era of rural farming communities in Europe. Shaw and McKay also emphasised that conventional social controls, which stemmed from bigger family and firm community links were weakened within this pristine environment. Related to this, immigrant family members gravitated towards alienation and lost their typical power, because they had no ability to give correct answers to problems regarding how to teach and control pristine youths (Shaw, 1930).

Moreover, ethnic/racial/cultural diversity, which was prevalent in immigrant neighbourhoods in Chicago at that time, tore social views into pieces and complicated relevant discussions held by community members about how to attain common agreement, or consistence regarding how to explain challenges and find answers to such usual difficulties (Shaw & McKay, 1942). To Shaw and McKay (1942), the relocation of residents from socially disorganised neighbourhoods to alluring neighbourhoods instantaneously after they acquired means to do so, additionally worsened the problems regarding reaching common agreements by all residents who would have attempted to solve outstanding difficulties. Again, due to residential instability, residents had extremely weak interest in concentrating on finding solutions to their pressing challenges and reinforcing their own bonds with the neighbourhood (Blackman, 2021). Difficulties experienced by residents who resided in socially disorganised neighbourhoods led parents to lose the ability to correctly manage their children who freely roamed the streets of the communities with extremely trivial social control (Blackman, 2021). Disrupted families who lived in socially disorganised communities, particularly, those which did not have active father

figures were unable to create firm and strict emotional bonds with the children, thus, inactive fathers failed to manage and control the behaviours of juvenile offenders (Blackman, 2021).

In the context of socially disorganised communities, certain parents (such as stepparents) deliberately failed to clearly include, reflect and sustain traditional ethnics and codes of acceptable behaviours for children, hence, they usually urged stepchildren to offend by way of committing crimes (Blackman, 2021). Big families which resided in socially disorganised neighbourhoods, reduced their criticisms against criminal activities perpetrated by family members who contributed to the financial prosperity of family members (Blackman, 2021). Relatedly, Blackman's (2021) assertion is consistent with Kornhauser (1978) who stressed that offending behaviours were significant because they contributed to attaining required material gains in disorganised communities.

Building on Thomas and Znaniecki's (1918) first concept of social disorganisation, Shaw and McKay's (1942) perspective proposes that social disorganisation reduces a neighbourhood's power to control and manage itself by using casual social controls. Shaw and McKay emphasised that social disorganisation withers a neighbourhood's power to sustain traditional rules and ethics, which at a certain stage were prevalent in a specific neighbourhood, because features that are suggestive of disorganisation lead to the existence of rules and ethics not prevalent in the entire neighbourhood. Shaw and McKay were of the view that a broad variety of rules and ethics subsist in places, which consist of elevated poverty levels, ethnic/racial diversity, elevated levels of relocations, increased levels of family problems, as shown through the use of statistics regarding families headed by females.

To Shaw and McKay (1942), the above-stated values give rise to a neighbourhood in which its inhabitants are ignorant of one another and, hence, they are not prepared to get involved and strengthen traditional rules and ethics. Shaw and McKay also contended that due to the lack of reasonable sharing of the required information, criminality and lawlessness happen more often in socially disorganised neighbourhoods. Shaw and McKay further highlighted that as criminality and lawlessness escalate, the contradictory rules and ethics develop into a circumstance where criminality and lawlessness are roughly permitted to carry on. Moreover, Shaw and McKay noted that escalating criminality and lawlessness further assist to weaken and impair any residuals of traditional rules and ethics and, this leads to a continued rotation of

deterioration and surging criminality and lawlessness in an identified neighbourhood.

Levels of criminality and lawlessness tallied tightly with the following:
(a) school absenteeism; (b) juvenile perpetrators; (c) infant death rate; (d) tuberculosis; (e) mental illness; (f) SES; (h) ethnic/racial diversity; (g) residential relocation; and (i) familial problems (Shaw & McKay, 1942). Notably, Shaw and McKay (1942) added that places with elevated levels of criminality have almost identical social and economic aspects, which are different from those of places that are linked to lower levels of criminality. A number of studies proposed that as different elements of the neighbourhood framework collapse, neighbourhoods slip into disorganisation and, this gives rise to surges in criminality and offences (Shaw & McKay, 1942; Reiss 1986; Sampson and Groves 1989). Shaw and McKay (1942) also indicated that as a way of comprehending why dissimilarities in financial, social and crime levels subsist within a key urban centre and, how criminality progresses and increases, people have to investigate the procedure through which an urban centre expands and adapts. Shaw and McKay (1942) were of the view that people have to concentrate on the collection of industrial and commercial activities within a key urban centre together with social and financial aspects of residents in communities located inside a city.

3.2.1 The Modern Development of Social Disorganisation Theory

Social disorganisation was not comprehensively evaluated before the late 1980s (Sampson & Groves, 1989). Sampson and Groves (1989) advanced a refined version of SDT that addressed earlier limitations through systematic analyses. They defined social disorganisation explicitly as *a community's inability to achieve common goals and maintain effective social controls* (Kornhauser, 1978; Bursik & Grasmick, 1993). To formulate their two-stage model, Sampson and Groves (1989) integrated foundational concepts from Shaw and McKay (1942) with contemporary work by Krohn (1986) and Kasarda and Janowitz (1974).

Sampson and Groves' (1989) model predicts that community structural factors including low socioeconomic status (SES), residential transience, racial or ethnic diversity, urbanisation, and family disruption function as exogenous sources of social disorganisation. These factors destabilise neighbourhood social organisation, directly and indirectly influencing variations in crime rates. Within this framework, social disorganisation mediates the effects of structural factors on crime, measured through multiple indicators. Sampson and Groves (1989) identified

three critical intervening mechanisms: (a) a neighbourhood's capacity to supervise and control adolescent peer roups; (b) local friendship and attachment networks; (c) participation in voluntary organisations.

Sampson and Groves (1989) contended that neighborhood social disorganisation is characterised by weakened friendship networks, reduced organisational engagement, and unsupervised adolescent peer groups. Their model predicts that social disorganisation constrains neighborhoods' capacity to supervise and control delinquent behaviors, contributing to elevated crime rates. Stated differently, SDT proposes that communities with low socioeconomic status (SES), high residential transience, racial or ethnic diversity, family disruption, and urbanisation experience increased delinquent behaviors and self-reported criminality (Sampson & Groves, 1989).

The significance of Sampson and Groves' (1989) work extends beyond clarifying SDT. Their model refined previous research methods through systematic analysis. First, by incorporating intervention mechanisms, their framework provides a more comprehensive examination of social disorganisation than prior studies. While earlier research focused primarily on direct effects of community structural factors on crime (Kornhauser, 1978), Sampson and Groves (1989) assessed the mediating role of community organisational features including friendship networks, organisational participation, and peer group dynamics. Second, Sampson and Groves (1989) utilised self-reported delinquency data to measure criminal behaviour, addressing limitations in prior literature's reliance on official crime statistics, which were vulnerable to policing variations across communities.

Social Disorganisation Theory has undergone significant evolution since the 1940s, particularly in response to criticism regarding its limited explanatory power due to ambiguous methodologies linking socioeconomic disadvantage to crime (Bursik, 1988). A pivotal contribution emerged from research by Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls (1997), who demonstrated that **collective efficacy** serves as a key mechanism mediating the relationship between social disorganisation and crime (Sampson & Groves, 1989). **Collective efficacy** integrates informal social control and social cohesion by positing that shared expectations for action among residents facilitated through neighbourhood organisations and community institutions can mobilise collective action to address local problems (Sampson, 2012; Sampson

et al., 1997).

Although Sampson and Groves' (1989) research is lauded as the most comprehensive evaluation of structural Social Disorganisation Theory to date (Bursik & Grasmick, 1993), their model has rarely been empirically tested. Furthermore, evaluations of their framework have been limited to a single dataset derived from British communities (Sampson & Groves, 1989; Veysey & Messner, 1999). Given systemic differences including crime rates and racial composition between British and United States (U.S.) neighbourhoods, it remains unclear whether Sampson and Groves' theoretical model can be validated using U.S. datasets. Fundamentally, social disorganisation theory posits that community structural characteristics influence residents' social bonds, which in turn affect their capacity for informal social control (Kubrin & Weitzer, 2003).

3.2.2 Basic Tenets of Social Disorganisation Theory

A core tenet of SDT is that neighbourhood social disorganisation undermines a community's capacity to realise effective social control (Shaw & McKay, 1942). This principle is elaborated below. A second fundamental tenet posits that an individual's residential location significantly influences their likelihood of engaging in delinquent behaviour (Shaw & McKay, 1942). Moreover, SDT asserts that residential location is as significant as, or more significant than, individual characteristics such as age, gender, or race in predicting subsequent criminal involvement (Shaw & McKay, 1942). For instance, SDT proposes that juveniles in disadvantaged communities are exposed to delinquent subcultures which normalise criminality, thereby internalising deviant norms through their social and cultural environments (Bursik, 1988; Sampson, 2012; Shaw & McKay, 1942).

Initially, Social Disorganisation Theory posited that neighbourhoods with lower socioeconomic status (SES) exhibit weaker social bonds among residents, diminished informal social control over public spaces, and heightened crime rates (Shaw & McKay, 1942, 1969). Conversely, urban communities with robust social networks demonstrate stronger informal social control over public spaces and experience lower crime rates (Shaw et al., 1929; Shaw & McKay, 1942, 1969).

A fundamental premise of social SDT is that neighbourhoods are characterised by their degree of social organisation (Kubrin & Weitzer, 2016). Socially organised neighbourhoods such as those in Zones 3, 4, and 5 exhibit cohesion, consensus, shared values, established norms, frequent interactions, mutual responsibility, and trust among residents (Bellair & Browning, 2010). These structural features consequently strengthen informal social control and ultimately reduce crime rates (Bellair & Browning, 2010; Kubrin, 2009; Kubrin & Weitzer, 2016). Conversely, three seminal studies demonstrate that socially disorganised neighbourhoods (for example, Zone 2) lack these characteristics, preventing residents from achieving collective goals, shared values, or effective crime control (Bursik, 1988; Sampson, 2012; Shaw & McKay, 1942). SDT posits that the primary distinction between socially organised and disorganised neighbourhoods lies in their capacity to maintain informal social control (Shaw & McKay, 1942).

Empirical research consistently demonstrates that socially disorganised neighbourhoods exhibit diminished informal social control and heightened crime rates (Kubrin & Stewart, 2006; Kubrin & Weitzer, 2016; Shaw & McKay, 1969). Furthermore, SDT further posits that while neighbourhood characteristics such as poverty or residential transience correlate with crime, they do not directly cause criminal behaviour (Kubrin & Weitzer, 2016). SDT emphasises that disorganised neighbourhoods lack both social cohesion and integration, preventing residents from achieving collective unity (Shaw & McKay, 1942). The theory also asserts that when residents are united, they provide natural surveillance through their presence, which deters potential offenders from engaging in delinquent activities (Shaw & McKay, 1942).

Social Disorganisation Theory posits that high residential mobility undermines a community's capacity for social control, as frequent resident turnover erodes social ties and weakens collective investment in neighbourhood maintenance (Shaw & McKay, 1931). This instability consequently leads to neighbourhood deterioration. SDT further asserts that criminal behavior flourishes in communities where social networks and local institutions have deteriorated, rendering them incapable of maintaining effective social control (Shaw & McKay, 1931). The theory also proposes that individuals with low socioeconomic status (SES) from nontraditional family structures, residing in impoverished areas and experiencing residential transience, are more likely to engage in delinquent activities (Shaw & McKay, 1931). Moreover, Shaw and McKay's (1942) research demonstrates that low SES, racial or ethnic diversity, and high

residential mobility collectively contribute to the erosion of neighbourhood cohesion.

Harbeck (2017) contends that while community structural factors do not directly cause crime, they indirectly influence neighbourhood crime rates. Empirical research demonstrates that community characteristics including poverty, racial or ethnic diversity, and residential transience affect both the formation of social bonds among residents and their capacity to exercise informal social control (Kubrin, 2009; Kubrin & Weitzer, 2016; Shaw & McKay, 1942). Furthermore, the strength of informal social control directly impacts communities' ability to regulate criminal and deviant behaviours (Kubrin, 2009; Kubrin & Weitzer, 2016; Shaw & McKay, 1942).

3.2.3 Advantages of Social Disorganisation Theory

Social Disorganisation Theory is founded on robust empirical research data. For instance, research titled "The Polish peasant in America" (grounded in SDT) stems from data assessed from numerous case studies, interviews, and documentation (Shaw & McKay, 1942). Research findings presented by supporters of SDT such as Shaw and McKay (1969) and Park and Burgess (1925) were based on extensive empirical data, including comprehensive city maps of delinquent activities, substantial statistics, and data gathered across many years. Therefore, the empirical methodology of data collection serves as a significant strength that reinforces the reliability of SDT.

3.2.3.1 Accuracy: The mathematical framework derived from SDT works exceptionally well in predicting criminal behaviours of individuals. For instance, Burgess's (1925) unity-weighted regression model was found to be an accurate model because it predicts opportunities of success for convicted offenders. Additionally, Burgess's (1925) model is based on allocating scores to convicted offenders according to different specifications of their inclusion within the social setting, such as being employed or reconnecting with family members. Burgess's (1925) model is also applied in the areas of insurance.

3.2.3.2 Durability: While many theories of human behaviour become obsolete in contemporary contexts, Social Disorganisation Theory (SDT) remains applicable despite undergoing significant modifications since its initial formulation (Pratt & Cullen, 2005). Furthermore, SDT continues to offer valuable insights into criminological phenomena (Pratt & Cullen, 2005).

3.2.3.3 Social Disorganisation Theory proffers workable insights: understanding SDT can assist to find out views which are relevant to addressing criminal activities (Pratt & Cullen, 2005). For example, SDT treats a neighbourhood as the source of crimes, thus, the criminal justice system and imprisonment appear inefficient in decreasing the levels of crimes (Pratt & Cullen, 2005). SDT contends that the state must concentrate on additional techniques which could influence the source of crimes, instead of penalising individuals who perpetrate offences (Pratt & Cullen, 2005). Moreover, additional techniques would encompass the following: (a) managing and controlling urban cities; (b) putting in order programmes which reinforce cohesion among community members and decrease social disorganisation; (c) sharing power with neighbourhood structures and institutions at a community level (Pratt & Cullen, 2005).

3.2.4 Weaknesses of Social Disorganisation Theory

Social Disorganisation Theory disappeared from research between 1950s and 1980s and a number of weaknesses face the aforesaid perspective, some of which are discussed below. Granted the ancient nature of data analysis during the initial stages of 1900s, the biggest weakness of SDT involved and still involves pinpointing and assessing social processes, which explain high crime levels in socially disorganised communities. An additional weakness of SDT, is the absence of focus on procedures, which resolve the influence of neighbourhood aspects on disorganisation (Byrne & Sampson, 1986). Additionally, the ancient nature of data analysis during the early phases of 1900s, did not allow researchers to carry out complicated analyses, which were required in order for them to completely assess SDT's theses. Therefore, the *supra*-account is a weakness of SDT.

Shaw and McKay (1942) employed expensive and time intensive methods, which prohibited much duplication of their research works. Statistical methods used by Shaw and McKay in their empirical study were neither as detailed as they are in modern times, nor were the techniques for collecting the data. Improvements in statistical software and, the manner through which the data are managed, have notable effects on the ways used by researchers to investigate the spatial dispersal of crimes and criminality. Moreover, it was during the era of Shaw and McKay's SDT that a paradigm shift happened within the realm of criminology, to such an extent that theories' concentrations shifted from meticulously describing contextual and geographic aspects, to those which explain personal behaviours. Studies on social disorganisation wrote that communities

that were affected by elevated rates of poverty, residential instability and racial/ethnic/cultural diversity had highest levels of offences, however, they failed to describe the methods which explained the relationship. The non- description of methods was troublesome, in the sense that, the void could not permit researchers to dismiss contending clarifications provided by perspectives like strain theory that theorises indigence–crime relationship.

Shaw and McKay's (1942) SDT totally overlooked the part, which was played by various individuals. This means that Shaw and McKay were not interested in individual reactions to disorganisation. Therefore, Shaw and McKay were solely interested in combined reactions to disorganisation within a neighbourhood. Another weakness of SDT is that it presumes that as long as social, economic and physical circumstances are fair and morally justified, then anyone can become an offender. This supra presumption cancels out the part of free will, because SDT presumes that individually, persons are unable to ascend higher than their own social setting. One of the weaknesses of SDT was divulged after the situation turned out to be clear-cut that not every single juvenile resident of any disorganised community, participated in criminal activities or abnormal matters, which Shaw and McKay investigated, (Bursik, 1988). In addition, the use or practicability of SDT is constrained in terms of envisaging individual delinquency (Bursik, 1988). Notably, SDT failed to explain as to why specific persons do not participate in criminal activities.

3.3 Differential Association Theory

Differential Association Theory (abbreviated as DAT) arose from the knowledge of the famous criminologist Edward Hardin Sutherland, which was acquired from different sources (Mladenovic, 1997). DAT is one of the most important criminological theories which explain delinquent behaviour through socialisation, and communications between associates of social groups wherein one associate or more is or are part of the criminal faction(s) (Mladenovic, 1997). DAT brought with it a sociological viewpoint to the cutting edge of criminology (Matsueda, 1988). Sutherland introduced DAT in 1939 within the third edition of the said scholar's influential text titled "Principles of Criminology" and, reassessed it in the fourth edition in 1947, so as to make several necessary adjustments (Mladenovic, 1997). For Sutherland, DAT shows that individuals engage in delinquent activities when their own social learning makes them understand that their social setting supports and fosters crimes and lawlessness, instead of urging lawful traditional behaviours (Sutherland, 1947). Essential to the

progression of DAT is that Sutherland (1947) was trying to account for all types of offences and criminality. Sutherland (1947) dismissed psychological and biological versions of offences and chose a sociological explanation in the guise of learning.

Relevant information required for creating DAT was extracted from 3 key theories (Sutherland, 1947). Firstly, Sutherland (1947) extracted information from George Herbert Mead's symbolic interactionism perspective that is founded on 3 presumptions and these include: (a) people deal with things based on the definitions of such things; (b) the connotations of the things are extracted from social interplays which individuals have with friends and; (c) people use an interpretive procedure to deal with and change meanings of things which they experience (Blumer, 1969). Furthermore, Mead (1900) contended that meanings are what individuals extract from their encounters which shape behaviours. Mead stated that meanings assist individuals to "define" their specific circumstances. Mead also highlighted that it is because of "definitions" which make individuals in almost identical situations to behave in dissimilar ways. Differential association relates to the suggestion that by interacting with other people, persons acquire knowledge of values, attitudes, methods (MO) and reasons for criminal behaviour (Akers, 2000). Additionally, and notably, definitions pertain to an individual's own meanings or attitudes which are linked to a particular behaviour (Akers, 2000).

After extracting information from Mead's (1900) research works, Sutherland (1947) contended that the critical aspect in deciding if individuals may or may not breach the law is the meaning, which the humans assign to social circumstances they encounter, not the real circumstances. Thus, Sutherland (1947) stressed that if or not an individual contravenes the law is conditional on how he or she defines his or her situation. Secondly, Sutherland (1947) also extracted information from culture conflict theory in order to create DAT. Initially, Wirth (1931) wrote a study on culture conflict and crime. Then, both Sellin (1938) and Sutherland (1947) collaborated on culture conflict and crime, and the 2 aforesaid authors concluded that contradictory cultures, especially, those which stemmed from immigration in the USA caused delinquent behaviours. Additionally, Sellin (1938) and Sutherland (1947) contended that various dissimilar groups in a community hold distinct moral principles and viewpoints, about the manner through which people should behave themselves and such dissimilarities give rise to culture conflict. For example, Sutherland (1947) mentioned that a number of Indian tribes fight violent running battles with authorities in that country and, this was due to differences

between conventional religious cultures and the formal legal culture. Related to this, Sutherland (1947) argued that the religious culture of certain Indian tribes required them to intentionally kill targeted strangers, however, the Indian government prohibits all types of unlawful termination of people's lives. For Sutherland (1947), adhering to a cultural code of certain Indian tribe meant contravening the legal culture. Moreover, Sellin (1938) and Sutherland (1947) also envisioned contemporary communities as being endlessly disorganised, because of the absence of traditional standards of behaviour and, this leads to culture conflict.

Thirdly, Sutherland (1947) expanded Shaw and McKay's (1942) concept of social disorganisation, which relates to weak neighbourhood organisation against crimes. In reverse, the term weak neighbourhood organisation against crimes pertains to social disorganisation (Matsueda, 1988). Sutherland (1947) contended that social disorganisation was merely 50 percent of the problem (Matsueda, 1988). The other 50 percent of the same problematic situation was composed of organisation in support of crimes, which comprised organisation and frameworks that promote and strengthen delinquent behaviours (Matsueda, 1988).
Sutherland (1947) averred that DAT is a collection of 9 principles that advanced 3 terms like normative conflict, differential association and differential group organisation, which provide explanations of delinquency at the following levels of the community: (a) society; (b) individual; and (c) group (Cressey, 1960).

3.3.1 Tenets/Principles of Differential Association Theory

DAT contains 2 key aspects and these include: (a) the subject matter or what a person gets to know through learning; and (b) the process or how an individual gets to know through learning (Sutherland, 1947). Sutherland (1947) emphasised that the procedure through which people learn is identical for each and every behaviour, nevertheless, the subject matter may be vastly dissimilar. In a book titled "Principles of Criminology", which was written by Sutherland (1947), the author explained the following tenets of differential association theory:

(a) Delinquent behaviour is learnt (Sutherland, 1947). The aforementioned statement of Sutherland (1947) differentiates DAT from initial biological theories which the said scholar rejected. Sutherland (1947) contends that the offending way of behaving is learnt in an identical way as any conduct or action.

(b) Criminal conduct is learnt whilst interacting and communicating with other individuals. The said tenet connotes that the process in which persons learn

offending conducts shifts outside the limitations of copying and, that this requires a learner to be associated with the offender, that is, if he or she wants to gain an understanding of offending behaviour. Thus, an individual cannot be an offender by only bringing such a person into contact with a criminal setting.

(c) Acquiring knowledge about offending behaviours happens within a person's own intimate groups. This presumption highlights the part played by relatives, parents and friends while an individual, as a learner, learns criminal behaviours. Because of close bonds, relatives, parents and friends influence the behaviour of a person who learns how to offend more than the way he or she can be influenced by external sources like the press or films.

(d) While individuals learn offending behaviours, the process of learning frequently includes: methods used by offenders for perpetrating crimes, which are occasionally intricate and periodically simple; and motivations, rationales, and justifications which can provide sound explanations for engaging in delinquent behaviours. Individuals also learn attitudes required to orientate themselves to delinquent activities. In the event that delinquent behaviour(s) is or are learnt, flowing from this, it could be rational to close and infer that MO used for perpetrating offences are learnt in almost an identical way as explained above. Learning of criminal behaviours is necessary for *individuals* because they have to know how to counteract any hurdles and justify their offending behaviours and competence required for executing criminal activities.

(e) Specified directions of motivations and drivers of crime are learnt from *definitions* of laws which are viewed as in support of or against offending behaviours. Interactions between specific persons and people, bring such persons into contact with circumstances which espouse the receipt of prevailing accepted lawful standards of behaviour or dismissing them by supporting delinquent behaviours. Due to this, offenders encounter cultural clash.

(f) An individual becomes a criminal due to excessive *definitions* that favour the contravention of laws, which are more than those *definitions* that do not support the infringement of laws. The presumption in this particular case, is that persons become delinquents due to the fact that definitions that favour the infringements of laws surpass the amount of definitions, which do not support the transgression of laws.

(g) Differential association could be different in intensity, time span, precedence (priority) and persistence (Sutherland, 1947). As the recurrence of being exposed to delinquent *definitions* escalates, an individual's susceptibility to become an offender also surges. By the same token, as the time span of being exposed to delinquency escalates, delinquent activities also surge. Priority and intensity relate to the stage of life when both subjection to delinquency and the importance associated with each *definition* happen. The presupposition in this instance is that when a person is very young, he or she is likely to subsequently occupy a bigger position in delinquency, thus the opportunities of breaching the law escalate. Generally, if the aspects alluded to above are high, then the likelihood of adopting a delinquent behaviour is also elevated.

(h) The method through which individuals learn offending behaviours by associating themselves with delinquent and anti-delinquent structures requires the involvement of all types of processes, which are included in any other way of acquiring knowledge. Persons who engage in both traditional and delinquent key groups utilise the same processes, so as to acquire knowledge of the required behaviours in each of the 2 groups.

(i) Even though delinquent behaviour is an indication of common necessities and standards of behaviour, it is not accounted for by such prevalent necessities and codes of behaviour, because non-delinquent behaviour is a revelation of the same necessities and codes of behaviour (Sutherland, 1947). The *supra* statement made by Sutherland (1947) rebuts social structural perspectives, which are related to the cause of crimes. Sutherland (1947) stated that efforts to account for delinquent behaviour in terms of "*general drives and values*", is senseless because they illustrate both delinquent and non-delinquent behaviours (p.8). The example here, is that, all persons can aim for *social status* and cash, nonetheless, these 2 aforesaid desires lack the explanation as to why certain persons try to achieve such wishes by using lawful methods, yet other individuals look for them through illegal ways (Sutherland, 1947).

3.3.2 A Synopsis of Differential Association Theory's Tenets Applicable to this Study

A number of key tenets of Sutherland's (1973) DAT can be applied to the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater

Berea area in Durban. Sutherland (1973) contended that individuals learn delinquent behaviour through interactions with significant others like friends, family members or colleagues. Sutherland (1973) strongly pointed out that due to the exposure of individuals to social settings, they have the potential to learn from what surrounds them and, then the process of learning affects the cognitive processes of effecting decisions and the possibilities of perpetrating delinquent activities.

Second, delinquent behaviour is learnt by a prospective perpetrator or an offender as the after-effect of interactions between individuals or groups of persons. This was adequately stressed in the current chapter and, also in existing studies which studied the influence responsible for delinquent behaviour (Brunson & Miller, 2006; Chaney & Robertson, 2014; Bui, Coates & Matthay, 2018). For example, offenders who were born and raised in communities characterised by the repetitive use of the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs, have elevated possibilities of using the same approach when engaging in the said offences. This is because such offenders were repetitively exposed to the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' Ms used for committing carjackings and MVTs. Social influences of communities where minors are exposed to the repeated use of the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs, explain effects such as peer pressure and assessments.

Third, the process of learning delinquent behaviour happens in close special groups. In this regard, Calvo-Armengol and Zenou (2004) stated that social networks play a significant part in influencing the possibility of the occurrence of a delinquent act. Offenders who cluster together as a deliberate act of organisation, strongly influence one another in order to perpetrate offences, due to the close relationship between them (Gray & Gordo, 2014). The influence alluded to in the supra sentence has considerably been expanded in the era of social media (Gray & Gordo, 2014). The meaning of this is that an influence profile exists and, it is triggered off by the kind of interrelationship, which subsists between 2 or more people who interact with one another and share almost identical aspects and, collectively possess a sense of togetherness. Moreover, the process of learning delinquent behaviour encompasses MO used for committing crimes (for example carjackings and MVTs), and a specified guidance of motivations, drives, rationalisations and views. Specifically, this study shows how particular groups of incarcerated offenders used a number of MO in order to carjack and steal motor vehicles in the greater Berea

area in Durban.

3.3.3 The Professional Offender

Whilst working on DAT, Sutherland was influenced by extracts from his research titled *The professional thief* (Sutherland, 1937). The matter about becoming a professional thief or a professional delinquent does not apply to every person, therefore, a suitable individual has to be recruited (Sutherland, 1937). This process requires recruiters to meticulously choose, teach, brainwash and tutor a recruited person in order for him or her to become a professional offender (Sutherland, 1937). For example, through informal association based on being street smart and fast talker, motor vehicle thieves and carjackers are selected by professional indirect offenders (Sutherland, 1937) and, this is similar to the behaviours exhibited in this study by kingpins who recruited carjackers and motor vehicle thieves at earlier stages. Initially, new recruits are taught and tutored about how to survey targeted places, which consist of targeted goods (Sutherland, 1947). Moreover, new recruits are taught about how to identify and neutralise security features of targeted places and targeted goods before committing offences (Sutherland, 1947).

Whilst a person is being chosen, taught, brainwashed and tutored by professional indirect offenders (for example, kingpins) in order to eventually become a professional offender (such as a seasoned car thief or an experienced carjacker), the selected individual and group members who are strongly organised in favour of crimes observe and learn offending behaviours, which occasionally involve intricate and simple MO (Sutherland, 1947; Matsueda, 1988) used for committing like MVTs and carjackings. Added to this, DAT states that an individual participates in a delinquent activity if 3 conditions are satisfied and the conditions include: (a) a person has learnt necessary skills and methods for perpetrating offences; (b) an individual has learnt excessive definitions favourable to delinquent acts, which are more than those definitions unfavourable to crimes; and (c) an individual possesses the objective opportunity to break the law by participating in a nefarious act(s) (Matsueda, 1988).

3.3.4 Advantages of Differential Association Theory

(j) Differential Association Theory explains crime irrespective of age: Additionally, DAT can be applied to individuals of all age groups including young offenders and perpetrators who belong to the lower class (Singh, 2023). The above-stated

advantage of DAT is a key disadvantage of the cultural deviance theory and SDT which could solely be applied to young criminals (Singh, 2023).

(k) Differential Association Theory explains white collar crime and organised crime (for example carjackings and MVTs), whereas most other sociological perspectives of crime do not account for white collar and organised crime (Singh, 2023). Nonetheless, DAT is successful, while other perspectives do not successfully elucidate white collar crime and organised crime (Singh, 2023).

3.3.5 Weaknesses of Differential Association Theory

Sutherland's (1947) theory, abbreviated as DAT, inspires numerous researchers and many of them attempted to reproduce it. Some of the researchers are famous. For example, Glaser developed the differential identification theory in 1966 and differential anticipation theory in 1978, while Cloward (1959) constructed differential opportunity theory on the basis of Sutherland's DAT and Merton's anomie theory. De Fleur and Quinney reproduced DAT in respect of approved calculus, whilst Burgess and Akers (1966) changed DAT in an attempt to explain behavioural patterns (Law of Operant Behaviour). In spite of the above-stated attempts to enhance DAT, it continues to be unclear, too theoretical, puzzling and basically unproven. Therefore, DAT is open to vigorous arguments ever since its previous description, even though the majority of the criminologists' criticisms were communicated following the demise of Sutherland. Cressey (1969) drafted a list which consisted of the most regularly repeated theoretical ultra-critical comments regarding DAT and these included:

(l) Within a duration of 40 years, researchers have never analytically evaluated DAT entirely. All evaluations about DAT consisted of certain snippets of its principles. Most of the studies are focused on the seventh tenet of Sutherland's (1947) DAT.

(m) All research investigators reported that they experienced problems in terms of the evaluations of the concepts of DAT.

(n) There is a lack of consensus on the interpretation of the ultra-most key concept of DAT, "*the excess of positive definitions of deviant behaviour*." Does the above-stated concept pertain to the behaviour of the individual that has to be accounted for, or does it relate to the circumstances of the delinquent?

(o) Moreover, Cressey (1969) argued that additional key principles of DAT are never evaluated in any study.

(p) Many pieces of certain principles of DAT are evaluated erroneously. Not only are

the phrases evaluated inaccurately, but in numerous instances more factors are inserted in DAT (for example social class), which have no connection (only in unintended ways) with Sutherland's (1947) DAT.

(q) In the USA, research investigators evaluated and explained DAT solely in connection with criminal peers who are presumed to adversely affect other juveniles. Therefore, this approach sustains and maintains a misconception that DAT is identical to destructive friends who precipitate offences.

(r) Most of the studies into DAT focus on criminal peers, and in such instances when parents participate in the evaluations, they are expected to be law abiding citizens. Nonetheless, researchers have never properly evaluated the later presumption.

3.4 Routine Activity Theory

Routine activity theory (referred to as RAT) is a criminological theory, which accounts for how patterns of people's routine activities form opportunities for delinquent activities, and it was developed in the 1970s in an attempt to provide explanations as to why property and violent crimes changed (Cohen & Felson, 1979, p. 589). Moreover, property and violent offences surged in the USA after the Second World War, particularly, when circumstances that were expected to cause crimes such as violence did not deteriorate and had debatably improved (Cohen & Felson, 1979, p. 589). Cohen and Felson (1979) developed RAT to explain situational aspects, which escalate the possibility of crimes to happen. Cohen and Felson (1979) asserted that RAT could provide explanations as to why crimes happened. Hence, RAT also seeks to provide explanations as to why delinquent acts happen (Cohen & Felson, 1979). Furthermore, Cohen and Felson (1979) identified and accepted the significance of targets and areas when elucidating as to why criminal activities happen. RAT has mostly been treated as a victimisation theory instead of offending theory. Nonetheless, RAT could also be employed to elaborate on personal criminal behaviour and victimisation sequences. This is because RAT explicitly clarifies as to why some of the offenders select specific targets/victims and, additionally, why particular victims tend to be chosen as captivating targets/victims at certain places and times (Chan, Heide, & Beauregard, 2011; Graney & Arrigo, 2002). A recurrent criminological proverb which appeared from Cohen and Felson's (1979) work is that everyday activities make offenders come into contact with their victims (DeLiema, 2018; Williams, Levi, Burnap & Gundur, 2019).

To account for the era of escalated property and violent crimes in the USA, it was stressed that commodities became small and costly, and numerous females were employed in the corporate world and, these developments exposed many residential dwellings to the above-stated types of crimes (Cohen & Felson, 1979). RAT also proposes that tendencies used for producing long-lasting reduced sizes of commodities (for example making smaller electronics) influence the appropriateness of targeted property by supplying goods, which are expensive, obtainable and transportable (Cohen & Felson, 1979). Added to this, Cohen and Felson (1981) mentioned that alterations in traditional activity structures connected with numerous employed adult females and the habit of being absent from home during the day led to adjustments in the type one tempo and the position of routine activities. Cohen and Felson (1981) added that the kinds of adjustments alluded to above, thus far, alter the composition of everyday routines and, shape specific crime levels by changing the target's condition of vigilance and vulnerability. Furthermore, Cohen and Felson (1979) asserted that 3 components intersect in time and space so that crime can happen and, this matter is discussed at length below.

Importantly, the concept of routine activities is defined as "*recurrent and prevalent activities which provide for basic population and individual needs*" which are "*a part of everyday life*" (Cohen & Felson, 1979, p. 593), for example shopping, travelling to work or visiting peers. RAT contends that illegal activities pertain to decision-making processes reached by perpetrators and, this because opportunities exist at certain times and places (Cohen & Felson, 1979). Cohen and Felson (1979) added that family members proffer informal control by surveying neighbour's residential dwelling and also supervising community children. A large amount of RAT studies concentrates on the social framework of communities and, clearly presume that when neighbours interact, a major element of guardianship is created (Cohen & Felson, 1979). A conventional RAT model contains 3 following principles, which intersect or converge in time and space and these are: (a) a motivated offender (for example unemployed juveniles); (b) a suitable target(s) (such as motor vehicles, individuals, different movable properties); and (c) a lack of capable guardianship (for instance police officers, security guards, neighbours or housewives) (Cohen & Felson, 1979; Cohen, Felson, & Land, 1980; Felson, 1987; Kennedy & Forde, 1990; Massey, Krohn, & Bonati, 1989; Miethe, Stafford, & Long, 1987; Roncek & Maier, 1991; Sherman, Gartin, & Buerger, 1989). RAT delineates that crime happens when a motivated offender/perpetrator, a suitable target and a lack of capable guardianship intersect in time and space (Cohen & Felson, 1979; Felson, 2017). However,

Cohen and Cantor (1980) argued that a key thesis of RAT is that changes and, differences in everyday activities of various persons escalate or diminish the probability of intersection in time and space of the above- stated 3 aspects, which are nominally required for crime(s) to happen.

Furthermore, Cohen and Cantor (1980) explained that even though the aforementioned 3 features are essential for crime(s) to happen, their mere presence is insufficient because the intersection of the said 3 elements does not warrant a crime. Moreover, Cohen and Cantor (1980) also pointed out that the mere existence of the opportunity for crime(s) does not denote that alternative aspects cannot shape the after-effects. Notably, Cohen and Cantor (1980) added that whether or not a motivated perpetrator reacts to a convenient opportunity may be dependent on the offender's personal understanding of the situation. In the same manner, Clarke (1984) explained that to a greater extent, a motivated perpetrator may not react to a criminal opportunity, that is, if he or she does not personally succeed in identifying it due to certain motives. Clark (1984) highlighted that delinquent wrongdoing constitutes an offence and, it is treated within crime opportunity theories (for instance RAT) as a random process, which depends on the spatial and temporal dissemination of people's activities. Moreover, Clark (1984) also stressed that the spatial and temporal distributions of people's behaviours merge in order to allow or disrupt the interplay of the 3 aforementioned elements, which are required for crime(s) to happen.

One of RAT's theoretical features is the acceptance that, in order to comprehend the dispersal of offences across persons, space and time, a clear difference has to be made between 3 aspects of RAT mentioned above (Cohen & Felson, 1979). Everyday activities like travelling to workplaces, the gymnasium, schools or shops put motivated perpetrators close to likely targets and, this provides opportunities for crimes to be committed (Cohen & Felson, 1979). Based on a rational choice structure (Clarke, 1980), RAT maintains that if perpetrators are granted the correct set of circumstances to augment benefits with restricted dangers, they will take hold of the criminal opportunity (Cohen & Felson, 1979). Notably, Cohen and Felson (1979) asserted that places with higher numbers of appropriate targets and a small number of capable guardians can encounter increased levels of crimes.

A key idea of RAT is that individuals' daily routine activities influence the opportunity structure, which shapes how frequently a motivated offender, a suitable target and a lack of

capable guardianship intersect in time and space (Cohen & Felson, 1979). Instead of suggesting that changes in social and economic circumstances led to noticeable escalations in crimes, Cohen and Felson (1979) proposed that adjustments in various people's routine activities changed the increases in crime levels. Added to this, Cohen and Felson (1979, p. 589) contended that alterations in routine activities of individuals shape exploitative offences by having effects on the spatiotemporal intersection of motivated perpetrators, appropriate targets and the lack of capable guardianship.

To fully assist in explaining as to why crime levels increased when Americans were socially and economically better after World War 2 than before the said war, Cohen and Felson (1979) focused on the influences of continuously adjusted daily life. Particularly, Cohen and Felson (1979) noticed that crimes escalated when individuals started devoting considerable time to activities away from their homes, specifically since more females were absorbed into the labour force in the periods after the end of World War 2. Cohen and Felson (1979) highlighted that the absorption of numerous women into the labour market meant that more people did not occupy their houses during the day and, most people were in public, thus, homes became possible targets for offences. For property offences, it was proposed that if they were increments in the number of employed wedded women and also the worthiness of household goods, as well as the period of time when absent from home, then the opportunities for domestic related crimes (such as MVTs) would escalate, too (Cohen & Felson, 1981). For Cohen and Felson (1981), the above- stated adjustments in routine activities produce bigger opportunities for domestic property offences (for example MVTs), because they decrease the availableness of capable guardianship for the residential dwellings and, at the same time the appropriateness of the target is increased. Thus, the plausibility of intersection for the 3 relevant aspects of domestic property offences (for instance MVTs) augments (Cohen & Felson, 1981).

Flowing from the aforesaid criminal opportunity presented by Cohen and Felson (1981), the 2 authors added that adjustments within the realm of lawful and acceptable activities (for instance, travelling to work on a daily basis) can lead to changes in the possibility of crimes (MVTs) by changing situational elements, that either improve or interfere with the opportunity for motivated perpetrators to perpetrate offences. In short, Cohen and Felson suggested that alterations in everyday routine activities of law-abiding citizens explain later adjustments in criminal acts. Cohen and Felson stated that the most important thesis of RAT is that alterations

in commercial activities and subsequent adjustments in routine activity structures act jointly to shape opportunities for specific kinds of crimes such as property offences.

Cohen and Felson (1979) also clearly contended that the noticeable escalation in registered crime levels in the USA since 1960 is connected to variations within the routine activity pattern of American communities and, to a comparable increment in target appropriateness and a reduction in guardianship presence. The level of target appropriateness is dependent on a range of aspects like the perpetrator's closeness to the targeted property or person, possible yield and availability of a target (Hough, 1987). The significance of target appropriateness, is that, it claims that escalations in crime levels are probable even though adjustments in systemic circumstances do not lead to bigger collections of motivated perpetrators (Miethe & Meier, 1994). Therefore, RAT sees the presence of delinquents as already decided and, it focuses on the relationships between crimes and structures of the appropriateness of the target (Miethe & Meier, 1994). Hence, RAT is a response to a conventional offender-based criminological theory, which showed that it was not able to describe the changes in the escalations of American crime levels post the second World War, since circumstances that strengthened delinquent tendencies (for instance, financial inequity) slowly diminished for a period of time following the end of said war (Miethe & Meier, 1994).

In general, RAT recognises aspects associated with routine activities, which are used to explain the possibility for a person to be targeted and offended, and these include: (a) being close to places or areas with elevated crime levels; (b) being exposed to criminal opportunities; (c) target captivation; and (d) guardianship (Cohen, Kleugel & Land, 1981; Meier & Miethe, 1993, pp. 479–484). When a person lives in or close to areas with many motivated offenders, the possibility of regular contacts between such an individual and perpetrators, as well as the probability of becoming a victim of crime(s) escalate (Cohen et al., 1981; Wittebrood & Nieuwbeerta, 2000). Being exposed to criminal opportunities escalates the possibility of becoming a victim of a crime(s) (Wittebrood & Nieuwbeerta, 2000). In this regard, RAT assumes that the nearer the residences of possible targets are to comparatively numerous motivated perpetrators, the stronger the likelihood of becoming a victim (Cohen et al., 1981). Relatedly, RAT also proposes that regular visits and consistent interactions with many people can escalate a person's persistence of being forced to contend with motivated offenders in their own neighbourhoods and, this increases the possibility of becoming a victim (Cohen et al.,

1981; Miethe, Stafford, & Long, 1987). Moreover, RAT suggests that the likelihood of a person being victimised can be influenced by the captivation of the target or his/her properties (Wittebrood & Nieuwbeerta, 2000). RAT further assumes that the greater the financial or suggestive worthiness, the more captivating the target becomes and, hence the higher likelihood of committing a crime(s) (Lynch, 1987; Miethe & Meier, 1990). Lastly, the likelihood of committing crimes is presumed to be connected with the availability of a capable guardian (Wittebrood & Nieuwbeerta, 2000).

According to RAT, situational opportunities that affect the possibility of each offence are doubtlessly different (Cohen et al., 1981). Additionally, RAT also suggests that activities and conditions, which mix in order to augment the possibility that an individual can be a victim of a crime do not automatically influence the opportunities for different crimes in the same manner (Cohen et al., 1981). With reference to the current study, it is very easy to think of circumstances in which same conditions can reduce the likelihoods for one kind of an offence (like MVT), while increase the opportunity for another offence (such as carjacking). For instance, if the owner of a costly motor vehicle installs an expensive and complicated car anti- theft device in his or her motor vehicle, then the car is less likely to be a target for MVT (according to RAT). This is due to the installation of an intricate guardian (car anti-theft device) in a motor vehicle. The opportunity for carjacking the same motor vehicle by using a well- planned MO is strengthened, that is, if both the complex nature and effects of the intricate car anti-theft device arising from its installation are contemplated. The installation of the intricate car anti-theft device prevents the opportunities for the theft of the same car, yet it strengthens the opportunity for carjacking the target. In short, due to the installation of the complicated car anti-theft device, the exposure of the motor vehicle to MVT is reduced while exposure to carjacking is escalated.

Cohen and Felson (1979) provide an almost identical thesis in their RAT in order to account for victimisation. Cohen and Felson also pointed out that modern lifestyles and activities escalate delinquent and deviant conducts. Cohen and Felson further added that an increase in time devoted to work, educational issues and engagement in leisure, combined with the availability of small expensive commodities and costly movable properties at home, escalate the likelihood of crimes and, the probability of victimisation.

Cohen and Felson (1979) contended that adjustments in an individual's routine can shape the

intersection in time and space of the absence of a capable guardian, suitable target and motivated perpetrator as core aspects for crime to happen. Cohen and Felson also stated that a situational model explains a delinquent act that happens in a situation when a motivated perpetrator, an appropriate target and the absence of a capable guardian like control or guidance, all take place at the same time. For Cohen and Felson, when residents are inside their residential places, a perpetrator does not want to pilfer from an inhabited place of residence and, hence an offender would attempt to locate a target, which lacks a capable guardian, for example a motor vehicle. Nonetheless, Cohen and Felson stressed that as more persons spend most of the time outside their residences, they end up becoming suitable targets who lack capable guardians every time when they leave their own residential dwellings. Cohen and Felson added that, at an individual level, RAT tried to elaborate on victimisation, committing crimes and how a person's routine activities make them vulnerable to areas and circumstances, which generate and multiply crimes.

For a full comprehension of RAT, each of its 3 aspects are thoroughly elaborated on and these include: (a) motivated offender; (b) suitable target; and (c) capable guardian. Therefore, the above-stated aspects of RAT are elucidated at length below.

3.4.1 Motivated Offender

The first component of RAT is a motivated offender. Any individual who is likely to participate in a criminal activity is referred to as a motivated offender (Sysa, 2017, p. 18). Motivated offenders are also described as any persons who may perpetrate crimes because of specific motivations (Clarke & Felson, 1993; Coster, Estes & Mueller, 1999). Furthermore, Clarke and Felson (1993) and Clarke and Cornish (1985) argued that when offenders select targets, they reach rational decisions and such decisions assist them to increase profits and reduce pain. Moreover, a traditional offender is a described as a juvenile male person with defective or undeveloped social control skills (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990). Additionally, Felson and Eckert (2016) delineate that whilst a perpetrator usually starts a delinquent line of work at a tender or young age, other perpetrators begin to participate in offending behaviours during their adulthood stages.

If a perpetrator possesses delinquent preferences, and the capability to execute such illicit preferences is present and intersects with the other 2 aspects of RAT, then an offence is inclined

to happen and, the perpetrator's motive plays a vital role in deciding whether or not a criminal act will happen (Cohen & Felson, 1979, p. 590). Even though Cohen and Felson (1979, p. 605) accepted the significance of elements which motivate perpetrators to participate in delinquent acts, the 2 theorists were criticised by scholars due to the fact that they could not assess as to why individuals or groups have preferences for delinquent acts. Nevertheless, RAT acknowledges that a likely perpetrator is well reasoned, considers the costs and gains of delinquent acts and, reaches an informed resolution to act on the basis of his or her evaluation, hence, Cohen and Felson desist from explaining why an individual is a motivated perpetrator and, they leave the said question and related explanations to conventional theorists (Cohen & Felson, 1979). The perpetrator also contemplates if a targeted property (for example a motor vehicle) is usable and if it is well protected and within reach (Cohen & Felson, 1979; Cohen, et al., 1981). Added to this, a person's closeness to motivated perpetrators can also bring about the likelihood of becoming the victim of the offenders (Cohen et al., 1981; Townsley, Birks, Bernasco, Ruiter, Johnson, White, & Baum, 2015). Relatedly, a human being's endless routine activities may make him or her more vulnerable to becoming an appropriate target of a single offender or a group(s) of offenders who reasonably think that he has or she has or it has or they have the chance of changing delinquent preferences into actions (Felson & Cohen, 1980, p. 390). Whilst Cohen and Felson (1979, p. 589) zeroed in on assessing the conditions through which motivated perpetrators execute delinquent acts, a certain number of researchers tried to explore perpetrators and their preferences nonetheless, they experienced problems.

3.4.2 Suitable Target

The second aspect of RAT is the suitable target or a victim. A suitable target is an individual (a victim) or a thing (a commodity) perceived by the perpetrator as definitely being susceptible and appealing to be stolen or assaulted (Cohen & Felson, 1979). For example, a suitable target can be an unlocked motor vehicle parked down the street, which is highly sought by car thieves. An attractive target is described as a commodity or thing which is not only tiny and costly, but unprotected as well (Coster, et al., 1999). Certain researchers (Clarke & Felson, 1993; Cohen, et al., 1981; Coster, et al., 1999, p. 24) contended that the suitable target aspect could be divided into 2 parts: the nearness of possible targets to motivated perpetrators and, typical appeal of an individual or a targeted commodity.

Target appropriateness is mirrored by market price, inaction, visibility and availability of targets

(Cohen & Felson, 1979; Felson & Cohen, 1980). The aforementioned 4 elements shape an individual's or a commodity's likelihood of being assaulted or pilfered by a perpetrator (Cohen & Felson, 1979). Value or market price is the sought-after worthiness of a targeted commodity, which is evaluated by the perpetrator (Cohen & Felson, 1979; Felson & Cohen, 1980). The core feature of the preceding component is such that since perpetrators have interests in numerous targets, the sought-after worthiness of a targeted commodity is understood inconsistently by various perpetrators (Cohen & Felson, 1979; Felson & Cohen, 1980). Visibility pertains to the condition of an individual or a commodity which enables it to be spotted by the perpetrator (Fell, 2006, p. 19). The example in this case, is that a targeted person or a targeted commodity which is easily observable is highly likely to be attacked or stolen more than those that are concealed and hence, they tend not to attract the curiosity of the perpetrator (Fell, 2006, p.19). Inertia or inaction relates to the property of matter of a target, which makes it hold out against attacks or thefts committed by the perpetrator (Cohen & Felson, 1979). For example, inaction or inertia may be the mass or the bigness of the target or linked and locked aspects, and even physical ability which prevents its degree of opposition to the perpetrator (Cohen & Felson, 1979, p. 591).

Accessibility or availability is the nature of a target which enables an offender to reach and/or enter an available target and, then get away from the crime scene (Fell, 2006; Felson & Cohen, 1980). The availability of an aspect may consist of a target's physical nearness, brutality, inertia and guardians, which could instantaneously influence its possibility of being discerned as appropriate to the perpetrator. Routine activities of an individual have the potential to give rise to his or her appropriateness as a target (Felson & Cohen, 1980).

3.4.3 Lack of Capable Guardian

A third component of RAT is the lack of capable guardianship (Cohen & Felson, 1979). A capable guardian is any type of control, that is, whether legitimate or illegitimate control whose actual or figurative presence has the potential to act as an intentional or an unintentional way, which prevents a likely offender from perpetrating delinquent act(s) against a targeted individual or targeted property (Hollis, Felson, & Welsh, 2013; Sysa, 2017). A guardian may be a police official, security guard, a passer-by or visible mechanised surveillance like CCTV (Felson & Eckert, 2016). A guardian is not consistently a person who displays a fire arm, instead it is occasionally someone whose appearance acts as a kind cue, which reminds an offender that

he or she is being watched (Felson & Eckert, 2016). Primary guardians in a community are persons whose appearance, closeness and non-appearance makes it difficult or simple to execute delinquent acts (Hollis et al., 2013, p. 66). Even though police work has been broadly treated as a prevalent pointer of guardians, additional kinds of pointers of guardianship can yield almost identical actions (Cohen & Felson, 1979, p. 590). Scholars have divided guardianship into social and physical realms. For example, social guardianship pertains to the availableness of individuals who can deter criminal activities through their availability, particularly, in affected places or providing help in order to terminate attacks (Breetzke & Cohn, 2013; Miethe & Meier, 1994). Physical guardianship relates to the gadgets which provide safety like alarm systems, fences, gates and locks (Breetzke & Cohn, 2013, p. 60). Irrespective of the type of realm, the following play vital roles in the extents of social and physical guardianships given to individuals, places or commodities and these include: (a) the visibility and power of the common citizenry; (b) security officers; (c) both internal and external electronic surveillances; (d) patrolling internally and externally; and (e) CCTV placed at entry and exit points (Breetzke & Cohn, 2013, p. 60).

Over the past handful decades, reasonable research has been carried out on RAT in order to additionally explain and comprehend the elements of the said theory. RAT provides a distinct approach for assessing illicit activities and the process of their happening. Firstly, RAT changes attention in the direction of opportunities for committing illicit acts, instead of the real motivations of the perpetrator (Felson, 2001). Secondly, RAT generates a bigger mental vision about criminal opportunities in the community, instead of concentrating on the criminal justice system (Felson, 2001). The aforesaid changes brought about by RAT provide the only method for analysing criminal activities and preventing them by pointing out environments as an essential aspect in the commission of offences.

Felson (1986) and Eck (1994) expanded the term guardianship together with 3 separate components: (a) handlers are individuals who supervise likely offenders, so as to make sure that offenders stay out of problems; (b) place managers are persons who take charge of places and protect them from offenders; and (c) guardians take care of specific targeted properties or victims. All the above-stated components contributed to the expansion on the current theory, which is applied to this study (Hollis et al., 2013, p. 66).

For Felson (2001, p. 43), the distinctive feature of RAT is its reduction of the offender and the change of attentiveness to the target and guardian. Irrespective of RAT's concentration on the target and guardian aspects, in order to completely understand RAT, a thorough description of each element is needed within Eck's version of RAT. Furthermore, Eck's model of RAT mixes 3 elements of each commission of an offence such as the perpetrator, the targeted person or* property and the area, not exclusively the guardian, but also a handler and a manager (Felson & Eckert, 2016). Additionally, in terms of Eck's model of RAT, subcategories of guardianship are as follow: guardians, place managers and handlers (Hollis, Felson & Welsh 2013; Eck 1994; Felson 1995). Under Eck's version of RAT, a handler is an individual who is responsible for offenders and keeps an eye on them for example a parent, an educator or a physical education instructor (Felson & Eckert, 2016).

Many aspects of guardianship have been assessed in the previous research, therefore, it is essential to describe the concept of guardianship within the setting of the current study. Whilst Cohen and Felson initially made use of the concept of capable guardianship in their own type of RAT, the term guardianship was subsequently divided into 3 subcategories as already mentioned above (Hollis et al., 2013; Eck 1994; Felson 1995). Moreover, guardians pertain to people who look after or take care of the targets of crime, while managers are characterised as individuals or instruments which protect the property targeted by offenders (Hollis et al. 2013; Eck 1994; Felson 1995). Handlers are depicted as individuals who control likely offenders in order to try and stop them from committing crimes (Felson 1995; Hollis et al. 2013; Tillyer & Eck 2011; Eck 1994). Eck describes a place manager as a person who is in charge of a place, thus, he or she dissuades criminal activities with his or her appearance of being at such a place (Eck, 1994; Eck & Wartell, 1999; Felson & Eckert, 2016).

3.5 Advantages of Routine Activity Theory

RAT is a criminological theory which provides an explanation as to how the intersection of 3 aspects namely motivated offenders, suitable targets and the lack of capable guardianship gives rise to the occurrence of crimes (Cohen & Felson, 1979). Furthermore, Cohen and Felson (1979) provide 3 key advantages of RAT and these include:

(a) Predictive power: RAT assists human beings to understand why crimes happen in specific places and times. By spotting the presence of motivated perpetrators, suitable targets, and the absence of capable guardianship, people can foresee and

prevent delinquent activities more successfully.

(b) Focuses on environmental aspects: RAT puts emphasis on the role of the nearby environment in the happenings of crime. By assessing both the physical and social circumstances of delinquent activities, responsible parties can intervene and change environmental situations, hence, reduce chances for criminal activities.

(c) Practical applications: RAT can direct the advancement of a collection of tactics for preventing crime. For instance, RAT proposes that augmenting the number of guardians (such as escalating the availability of police officers) or decreasing the presence of appropriate targets through the installation of more functional street lights in crime hotspots can assist in preventing crimes.

3.6 Weaknesses of Routine Activity Theory

Routine Activity Theory suggests that crime happens when there is an intersection in time and space of a motivated perpetrator, appropriate target and lack of capable guardianship. Nevertheless, by omitting aspects which pertain to motivational elements, repetitive applications of RAT are inclined to presume, by definition, that the appearance of likely offenders is continuous. Put it differently, the possibility of a motivated perpetrator to experience a criminal opportunity is consistently assumed to be one and the same (Cohen & Felson, 1979). This leads to an indirect presumption that a delinquent opportunity in a certain place is inclined to lead a criminal chance in another area (Miethe & Meier, 1994). Thus, RAT is a perspective of crime instead of a perspective of criminality, because it presumes that crimes happen free from structural and cultural circumstances, which might inspire certain persons to perpetrate offences, nonetheless, it tries to tell in advance its prevalence (Sampson and Lauritsen, 1990). Numerous theorists and empirical studies condemned RAT for not being complete, because it did not succeed in reviewing spatial prevalence of motivating forces.

Clarke (1984) mentioned that changing the opportunity to delinquent acts is dependent on the likely perpetrator's personal assessment of the appeal of the opportunity and, this consideration happens within the framework of delinquent motivation, understanding and skills. Chances can be constructed by individuals who have adequate motivation (Maguire, 1980). Although Lynch (1987), Miethe, Stafford and Long (1987) and Sampson and Wooldredge (1987) proposed that opportunities might exclusively lead to crimes if they happen close to motivated perpetrators, but, in certain instances motivation might be so common such that matters about chances and

routine activities are open to debate (for example offences are perpetrated irrespective of very strong likelihood of conventional and/or unconventional punishments). Moreover, research showing that anew preventive steps can shift crime(s) from fortified targets to unshielded targets cannot be accounted for if offences are effects of opportunities (Mayhew, Clarke, Sturman & Hough,1976). RAT says nothing about why certain appealing and defectively protected targets are not selected by offenders in order to commit crime (Roncek & Meier, 1991).

3.7 Tenets of Routine Activity Theory

A basic tenet of RAT is that it is not the absence of social control over perpetrators, which gives rise to crime, instead, the interactions between circumstances (such as poverty, racial/ethnic/cultural diversity and residential instability) contribute to the increments in chances to be victimised and a reduction in capable guardians (Cohen & Felson, 1979). Cohen and Felson (1979) integrated lifestyle-exposure theory (Hindelang et al., 1978) into RAT by building on existing principle known as individual's vocational and leisure activities. In Cohen and Felson's (1979) perspective, target suitability was constructed as a tenet of RAT and shaped by a person's vocational and leisure activities, which mirror a person's routine activities like social interaction and social activities.

Furthermore, Cohen and Felson (1979) formulated 2 additional tenets of RAT such as capable guardianship and motivated offender, and then included the aforesaid tenets in the suitable target principle initially obtained from the lifestyle-exposure theory. Another tenet of RAT is that victimisation happens in the presence of 3 aspects and these include: (a) the presence of motivated perpetrators; (b) the presence of appropriate targets; and (c) a lack of capable guardianship (Cohen & Felson, 1979).

3.8 Rational Choice Perspective

Rational Choice Perspective (referred to as RCP) was first initiated by economists and, subsequently chosen by researchers who conducted criminological works. RCP adheres to conventional economic viewpoints of making decisions wherein actions (in this instance, delinquent acts) emerge from rational efforts to increase a person's benefits through cost-benefit analyses (Becker, 1968). RCP contends that a well-reasoned offender elects to participate in criminal acts due to the anticipation of an advantage (Becker, 1976). Although correct components that influence procedures of thinking are different conditional on the particular

model of the perspective which a study chooses (Svensson et al., 2017), RCP Becker's (1993) RCP proposes that decisions are guided by the comprehension of the costs and gains linked to each choice. RCP in criminology emerged from the very utilitarian reasoning as preclusion linked to the classical school of criminology initiated by Cesare Beccaria. The current study is consistent with RCP, because carjackers and motor vehicle thieves make decisions based on the possible costs and benefits connected with carjackings and MVTs, while considering the progression of the organised nature of MO, expected benefits and full costs of their operations.

Rational Choice Perspective was fully developed by scholars in the mid 1980's (Clarke & Cornish, 1985; Cornish & Clarke, 1986; Grasmick & Bursik, 1990). Particularly, RCP was created by Cornish and Clarke (1985) in order to comprehend property offences. RCP assumes that if 2 identified situations are available (such as B and C), a person will adopt one condition and prefer it to another (Edwards, 1954). Embedded in economic perspectives and the utilitarian spectacles of determent, RCP presumes that each individual who makes decisions is intrinsically and impartially rational (Beccaria, 1963).

Clark and Cornish (1985) never asserted that their approach is a theory, hence, they chose RCP, with due consideration. Furthermore, Cornish and Clarke (1986) designed RCP as a theoretical model of offender decision making. The origins of RCP can be traced back from the preliminary economic and utilitarian elucidations for decision-making processes and, it proposes that reasonableness is guided towards the expansion of monetary benefits (Becker, 1962, p. 1). Hence, from this point of view, offences become preferable and excellent when benefits are bigger than costs, especially, in instances where someone detects the offences (Becker, 1968, p. 170; Cornish & Clarke, 1986). In line with RCP, likely offenders rationalise when they encounter criminal opportunities (Cornish & Clarke, 1986).

Moreover, RCP presumes that in order to completely understand the perpetrator's decision-making procedure, it is of essence to first assess similarities between theoretical ideas and operational steps of psychology, criminology and sociology and, probe how modern notions of people's reasonableness and, the method of choosing would be linked within a rational selection structure by using the initial notion of expected utility (Clarke & Cornish, 1985; Cornish & Clarke, 1986; Grasmick & Bursik, 1990, Cochran et al, 1990; Cochran, Chamlin, Wood & Sellers, 1990; Clarke & Felson, 1993). Scholars created a fresh RCP structure with the intent

of investigating the offender's decision-making procedure, whilst accepting a perpetrator's restricted (or bounded) reasonableness, having a specified concentration of offences and, effecting a difference between criminal participation and delinquent activities (Clarke & Cornish, 1985).

RCP concentrates more on the perpetrators' decision-making processes (Cornish & Clarke, 1985). Therefore, RCP presumes that individuals who perpetrate offences choose to do so due to the fact they regard their criminal actions as effectual ways to attain required gains (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). The perpetration of offences, through RCP, is not understood as unplanned, but as a planned decision reached by a person (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). Furthermore, RCP proposes that prior to the commission of crimes, prospective perpetrators or seasoned offenders weigh pros and cons of committing offences, and they also contemplate what has to occur in order to attain their delinquent objectives and, the possibility of damaging after-effects if the perpetrators are arrested (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). Cognitive processes lead to and inform perpetrators' resolution of whether to perpetrate a specific offence at a certain time and place (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). The supra notion proposes that if the final after-effect of an act is expected to yield beneficial conclusion, then a person participates in the act (Bentham, 1948). If the expected conclusion of the crime is damaging to the offender, then the perpetrator desists from committing a criminal act (Bentham, 1948). Notably, Cornish and Clarke 's (1985) watershed contributions to the growth of RCP structure, including the 1986 vital works such as The Reasoning Criminal, which promoted ideas of rational choice and rationally thinking perpetrators by integrating numerous conjectural robust details obtained from many disciplines, completely shaped the progress of RCP.

Resolutions made to perpetrate offences may be constrained by situational features like time for perpetrating crimes, or personal aspects for instance a perpetrator's rational skills (Cornish & Clarke, 1987). Within the context of RCP, it is essential to mention that many offences do not require an offender to only execute one action, but several offences reveal an intricate variety of sophisticated behaviours which lead to the perpetration of one offence (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). For example, motor vehicle thieves execute a series of different tasks before they steal a motor vehicle. RCP was formulated to permit a strong evaluation of components involved in delinquent behaviour, hence it is a procedure that considers situational aspects (Cornish & Clarke, 1987). After the first decision is made to offend, that is, shortly before

committing an offence, perpetrators persist with making resolutions whilst offending and, this continues throughout the perpetration of a crime on the basis of external factors, which reduce dangers and increase benefits for the offender (Cornish & Clarke, 1986).

As offenders perpetrate many offences across time, they comparatively understand the effects of different decisions on their successes more than before, particularly, granted a specific collection of situations (Leclerc, Proulx & Beauregard, 2009). Therefore, offenders are likely to use intricate methods when changing their actions, so that they can attain excellent probable end results (Leclerc et al., 2009). In this regard, offenders' delinquent conducts are improved more than previously and, they make their decisions on the basis of experience (Leclerc et al., 2009). RCP's presumption that perpetrators continuously reach decisions throughout a given period in which they offend, for instance from initially choosing to participate in a delinquent act, through the committal of the crime, and including how to reduce identification after committing an illegal act (Cornish & Clarke, 1986), is explicitly revealed in the perpetrators' MO or their structure of perpetrating incidents of a crime (Kaufman, Holmberg, Orts, McCrady, Rotzien, Daleiden & Hilliker, 1998). MO refers to a noticeable event regarded as a structure which assists the committal of a crime and, reduces the opportunities for someone to identify a criminal as the offender (Kaufman et al., 1998; Kaufman, Hayes & Knox, 2010). In terms of RCP, evaluating an MO as a structure or a method permits a better comprehension of the conventional plans which offenders use when they perpetrate offences (Cornish & Clarke, 1986), such as MVT and carjacking. Treating offences as planned choices, and not misconceptions or blunders, makes it explicit that the perpetration of offences is evidently the onus of the offender(s) (Kaufman et al., 2010), regarding the current study, examples of crimes can be MVT and carjacking.

Rational Choice Perspective within criminology depends on a small number of suppositions in terms of decision making such as that perpetrators look for individual benefits from their acts and, that they effect resolutions in order to perpetrate offences (Cornish & Clarke, 2014). Within RCP from a criminological viewpoint, it is contended that perpetrators effect resolutions through the consideration of dangers against benefits with their own acts and, circumstantial factors are considered so as to describe various kinds of decision-making processes (Cornish & Clarke, 2014). For example, in terms of MVT, resolutions are influenced by various aspects, which escalate the possibility of being arrested such as that a personalised 1959 Mercedes-Benz

model, a collector's item, is likely to appear unprotected, isolated or the said motor vehicle may seem effortless to access it, yet not.

Bouwmeester (2013) define rationality as resolutions which are "based on reasons worth acting upon" (p. 416). The rational version of making decisions consists of the following: (a) explained objectives and preferences; (b) information gathering; (c) assessment, contrast, and categorisation of choices; (d) cost-benefit analyses; (e) effects on the community; (f) analyses of theoretical approaches; and (g) a detailed assessment of complicated matters (Lindblom, 1959). This implies that explaining objectives and preferences could involve simplifying the procedure and condensing the end goal, which the resolution is to achieve. A logical or rational resolution must be in line with a decision that was reached. This is due to the fact that rationality strongly influences the quality of resolution, hence, the procedure employed to reach logical decisions must be thoroughly detailed (Bouwmeester, 2013).

The levels to how logical delinquent decisions are, have been argued. It is contended that rationality should be contemplated from a broader perspective, and that what appears illogical to non-criminals may be logical for the delinquent person (Clark & Cornish, 1985). Relatedly, Clark and Cornish (1985) propose that reasoning patterns that aim to attain objectives like pleasure, excitement-seeking or actual objectives for instance, financial gains through offensive methods could be led by a rationality, which is depicted as rational alternatives. In Clark and Cornish's (1985) deliberations about bounded rationality, it is proposed that decision-making process based on rationality has numerous logical features in its reasoning patterns, nonetheless, they do not encompass vital aspects and may seem as illogical from a non-offender's point of view (Clark & Cornish, 1985).

Russell (2016) asserts that bounded rationality is a concept in which the rationality and thus the normativity of individuals is constrained by the knowledge they possess, the constraints on their comprehensible means and restricted time allocated to them in order to make resolutions. For Smith (2014), bounded rationality is when individuals who make decisions are shaped by their prejudices, situations, competing concerns and ambiguity, instead of reliable information, hence, bounded rationality is contemplated to have effects on such persons. Relatedly, bounded rationality contends that options are limited by the information, which a person who makes decisions possesses or does not possess about the world at a certain time (Simon, 1955). The

ultimate resolution is decided by the individual's capability (or incapability) to get pertinent information in order to evaluate effects, formulate methods and cope with ambiguity (Simon, 1955). Inclusive rationality is bounded in the sense that an individual's capabilities are mercilessly constrained (Simon, 2000). Therefore, the way a human being behaves in the actual world is decided by the inner environment of persons' psyches (for example memory contents and procedures) in the same way as it is in the outer environment (Simon, 2000, p. 55). Cornish and Clarke (2014) have recently contended that RCP can best be known as the Bounded Rational Choice Perspective (BRCP) and, this is to stress the vital role played by bounded rationality.

Bounded or unlimited, BRCP and RCP support vital principles considered by a person who evaluates all the information in terms of existing choices and, effects a decision on the basis of the assessment of expected utility (Cornish & Clarke, 2014). In practice, it is impossible for carjackers and motor vehicle thieves in SA to obtain prewarning statements from the Minister of Police (Mr. Bheki Cele, at the time) about future dates when the SAPS will trap and arrest them for committing carjackings and MVTs, as well as for being in possession of stolen and carjacked motor vehicles. This causes carjackers and motor vehicle thieves to be bounded by uncertainty in their decision-making attempts. An example of the consequences of the bounded or limited rationality on the offenders' decision-making processes involves, Operation Corona Border patrols along SA land borders with neighbouring states through which the SAPS and, the SA Army recover stolen and carjacked cars (Defence WEB, 2021). Operation Corona border patrols breach offenders' security steps, which they put in place in order to illegally protect carjacked and stolen motor vehicles (Defence Web, 2021). Additionally, the above- stated border patrols bring about great uncertainties on the part of the offenders (Defence Web, 2021). Furthermore, most offenders do not plan for such ambiguities, which require them to put together huge resources like money and information, and then recruit willing insider offenders (for example corrupt SAPS and SANDF officers) who can provide carjackers and motor vehicle thieves with sensitive information needed for offenders' decision-making (Defence Web, 2021).

Rational Choice Perspective presumes that perpetrators aim to gain from criminal activities (Gentry, 2015). Moreover, RCP puts an independent choice at the heart of elucidations about crime (Crawford & Evans, 2012). Certainly, RCP dismisses perspectives, which are founded

on basic biological, anomie, psychological and ingrained features. Offenders contemplate risks, costs and anticipated benefits and, by doing so, they logically make decisions whether or not to participate in criminal opportunities (Cornish & Clarke, 1987). The way perpetrators perceive and understand the environmental backdrop plays a vital part in their own decision-making processes about whether or not to perpetrate crimes (Ceccato et al., 2013). In terms of RCP, perpetrators tend to participate in crimes when the environmental backdrop facilitates delinquent activities and also makes them undetectable or when a few victims can be located (Rhodes & Conly, 1981), therefore, such circumstances give offenders additional gains and very few possible losses. For instance, unfunctional traffic lights during load shedding at night may encourage many motorists to drive very slowly with caution or stop in order to avoid accidents, whilst at the same time they are likely to encourage carjackers to make decisions, in order to commit carjackings due to reduced levels of guardianship and decreased possibilities of being arrested. Additionally, lit street lights at unguarded and isolated carparks where motor vehicles are parked without any form of guardianship, may encourage thieves to make decisions required for stealing targeted cars due to lack of capable guardians.

In terms of RCP, offenders consider the advantages and disadvantages of crime prior to committing an offence and, they advance and take steps if specific circumstances support them and also permit them to satisfy their needs (Cornish & Clarke, 1985). Additionally, RCP proposes that a perpetrator reaches a decision to perpetrate an offence when a suitable opportunity presents its self (Cornish & Clarke, 1985). RCP also presumes that when the execution of a crime requires minimum efforts, which are accompanied by expected high beneficial after-effects and low possibility of being arrested, then the probability for an offender to engage in a crime escalates (Cornish & Clarke, 1985). Moreover, RCP assumes that perpetrators are intelligent, logical and they make use of their own free-will when deciding to commit an offence or not (Cornish & Clarke, 1985).

Cornish and Clarke (1985) differentiated between 2 stages of a resolution, which motivate an offender's decision-making process and these include: (a) participation/involvement decision; and (b) event decision. Firstly, Cornish and Clarke asserted that participation/involvement decision consists of the perpetrator's first option to engage in an offence. For Cornish and Clarke, the offender's preparedness to perpetrate an offence is the effect of their contemplation, in which the perpetration of the offence meets their basic desires. Cornish and Clark also added

that a criminal is also shaped by his or her personal standards of behaviour and views while participating in criminal activities.

Furthermore, Cornish and Clarke (1985) contended that conventional criminology has been interested in investigating situations that shape people to perpetrate offences. Secondly, the supra thesis changes into the next stage of a resolution known as event decision. Cornish and Clarke stated that an event decision(s) is an offender's right to choose a crime to be perpetrated and how it should be committed. For example, motor vehicle thieves' initial engagement in MVT is not merely shaped by background aspects like psychological, familial and LSES factors, but the circumstances in which the offender(s) are located and the opportunity to perpetrate the offence triumphantly, also influence the perpetration of the said crime. After motor vehicle thieves make their decision to commit MVT, their second decision stage, delinquent event, commences. According to Cornish and Clarke, during a delinquent event, motor vehicle thieves decide as to which target (for example, a car) to steal on the basis of specific factors present. Cornish and Clarke also highlighted that offenders usually select places which consist of easily accessible targets (for instance, motor vehicles) where there is minimal security and can also swiftly escape.

Importantly, it is absolutely necessary to comprehend that the above-stated 2 stages of decision-making for offenders may happen at the same time (Cornish & Clarke, 1985). The opportunity event may not merely lead to the resolution to commit an offence, but it is likely to also get involved in the understanding and assessment of the offenders' solutions to their own necessities (Cornish & Clarke, 1985). Due to this, scholars propose that the decision-making versions for RCP ought to be discrete about a particular offence and, this means that the decision-making processes for a certain offence are not identical to the decision-making procedures for a dissimilar offence (Cornish & Clarke, 1985).

RCP was created in order to comprehend property offences; however, its key criticism is that it is not generalisable to other offences (Cornish & Clarke, 1985). In order to best comprehend the application of RCP to numerous kinds of offences, Loughran, Paternoster, Chalfin and Theodore (2016) carried out a study. In respect of the current study, violent crimes (for example armed robberies which involve the use of firearms, knives and sharp weapons when illegally acquiring movable goods or money from victims) were among various offences evaluated by

Loughran et al. in their study. Loughran et al. found that offenders behaved rationally regarding alterations in loses and gains of the offence. Loughran et al. also reported that within a group of offenders, which is presumed to be influenced more by illogical and psychological aspects, both the losses and the gains of behaviour appear to make a difference. Loughran et al. further found that the rational contemplation of losses and gains describe both property offences (for instance MVTs) and violent offences (like carjackings).

Rational Choice Perspective was presumed to be inapplicable to violent crimes, hence, certain scholars severely criticised it. However, violent offences (for example carjackings) fall under RCP together with property offences (for instance MVTs) (Loughran et al., 2016). Moreover, Loughran et al. 's (2016) wide classification of violent offences presents a generalised applicability of RCP to a range of crimes. RCP is relevant to the current study due to the fact that the research title includes both carjackings and MVTs. Additionally, the relationships between offenders and certain victims influence the perpetrators' choice of weapons (Loughran et al., 2016). Furthermore, the circumstances in which offenders find themselves in, also shape their types of preferred weapons (Loughran et el., 2016). Furthermore, Loughran et al. (2016) have demonstrated that the presence of weaponries shape matters which lead to murders. For example, guns, unsharpened objects, knives and other weaponries can assist in committing a violent offence, nevertheless, out of the above-stated weapons, a gun can warrant successful after-effects following a violent offence (Cook, 1983). An offender can discharge a firearm and shoot a victim whilst standing at a distant point and, this is likely to reduce the perpetrators' biological evidence left within a crime scene where the target is located (Cook, 1983).

Research that evaluated the perpetrators' decision-making processes regarding the perpetration of armed robberies (for instance carjackings), which led to the deaths of victims found support for the idea that a perpetrator's adoption of a weapon is guided by the weighing of pros and cons almost identical to those suggested by RCP (Pelletier & Pizzaro, 2018). Relatedly, Cook (1983) reported that armed robbers choose a specific weapon on the basis of the following: (a) the weapon's ability to assist offenders to execute the offence; (b) weaknesses of the likely victim; (c) a weapon's ability to cause death in case the offence does not happen in line with plans; and (d) the availability of the chosen weapon to offenders. Pelletier and Pizzaro (2018) also stressed that behavioural patterns of victims during violent crimes have effects on the behaviours of perpetrators, because when victims resist the attackers or offenders brandish

firearms first, perpetrators are more inclined to immediately use the weapons. In such a situation, the perpetrator's chosen weapon is decided through the risk analysis decision shaped by the interrelationship between the perpetrator and the victim, as well as specific factors during the perpetration of another offence (Pelletier & Pizzaro, 2018).

Rational Choice Perspective is focused on the rationality of the perpetrator's offending behaviour, which is grounded in the delinquent's discerned parity of losses and benefits of crime, comparable to the anticipated utility of additional options that are likely to affect the decision required for committing crime (Cornish & Clark, 1986). The 3 key features of RCP are the following: (a) the phrase of a reasoning criminal; (b) crime-specific focus; and (c) creation of separate decision models for delinquent events and delinquent involvement (Cornish & Clark, 1986). The RCP suggests that perpetrators will participate in delinquent conducts in order to gain and, that participating in offending activities involves a logical engagement of decisions and options to consider, which benefit (comparable to risk and cost discernments) a procedure that is frequently forced by limitations of time, capability and the presence of pertinent knowledge (Cornish & Clark, 1986).

The concept of rationality has consistently been described in various divergent ways within dissimilar theories or disciplines. RCP does not contend that all persons participate in cognitive assessments of the risks, benefits or possibilities across all stages of delinquent activities, rather, it proposes that reasonableness is influenced by how people effect resolutions on the basis of gathered knowledge regarding their evaluations of discerned losses and gains of a delinquent act and, how such resolutions mirror the uniformity between individuals' priorities and options (McCarthy, 2002). Put it differently, a person has to presume or have knowledge of another person's conclusion and dangerous priorities and, then evaluate the extent of uniformity between an individual's anticipated utility and steps taken so as to find out the reasonableness of a person (McCarthy, 2002). Moreover, modern rational choice versions propose that a person is an intelligent perpetrator or a logical deep thinker who makes sound delinquent decisions, when he or she contemplates the losses and gains of criminal acts, in relation to certain circumstances, and within restraints of insufficient time, knowledge, prudence and psychological processing abilities, and effects a well-reasoned choice between many options in order for him or her to gain from crimes (Clarke & Cornish, 1985; Cornish & Clark, 1986, p. 13).

Additionally, logical or well-reasoned perpetrators regularly choose preparation and crisis management approaches in order to attain the most substantial level of gains with the smallest amounts of costs (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). Put it another way, rational offenders who make decisions within the context of RCP apply certain levels of orchestration, caution and prudence, and then change their behaviours in order to suit their settings and specific conditions (Cornish & Clark, 1986). Thus, rational perpetrators repetitively assess knowledge and reach behavioural resolutions, then reassess knowledge and effect fresh criminal resolutions which are occasionally dissimilar in comparison to the previous decisions (Paternoster, 1989). In terms of RCP and the perpetrator's abilities and opportunities, offences are divided by gains which include but not restricted to, individual necessities and financial benefits (Guerette, Stenius & McGloin, 2005). Moreover, RCP also proposes that crime is a reasonable process required for attaining desires and gains (Guerette et al., 2005). RCP further accepts that perpetrators are resourceful, however, an offender often makes a decision, so as to meet his or her own necessities with minimum efforts needed, instead of carrying out a cautious intentional assessment of matters and, this careful approach mostly leads to increased possibilities of a person's success (Clarke & Felson, 1993).

A term referred to as satisficing embedded in theories of bounded rationality, states that persons fail to consistently maximise, or effect the best probable option grounded on a collection of other possibilities, instead, they adopt a way out which satisfies specific degrees of presumptions, but might not repeatedly present the finest probable after-effect (Simon, 1997). Satisficing provides an added rational method to decision making, because it presumes that people do not reside in a completely objective real world wherein resolutions are simply added together amongst a collection of inflexible options, instead, people should choose their own options in unknown circumstances wherein constraints in the guise of accessible information and cleansing abilities are consistently available (Simon, 1997).

The expansion of crime-crime specific paradigms in RCP is perceived as a vital element of the said perspective, because certain informational aspects which shape resolutions adapt with each crime (Paternoster, 1989). Express it differently, offences differ on the basis of specific aspects available (such as funds, power, instantaneous necessities, inducement, discerned losses and gains of an offence) and, the evaluations of the above-stated components are done within

different perimeters of time or reasoning (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). Sequentially, offenders' decision-making processes differ throughout dissimilar kinds of offences (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). As a means to create offence-specific paradigms which explain rationality, the exploration of the perpetrator's evaluation and decision procedures is needed for every delinquent activity (Cornish & Clarke, 1986).

In terms of RCP, the steadiness of delinquent opportunities and gains gives rise to a criminal participation, wherein offences become a tolerable component of a person's way of life, and are founded on different needs and understandings of practical knowledge, as well as behavioural manners and self-conceptions (Guerette, Stenius & McGloin, 2005). Criminal participation relates to multistep procedure of early participation, perpetuation and likely discontinuation of offences, which considers a broad variety of information across a lengthy duration (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). The significance of carrying out a study on a perpetrator's engagement in delinquent activities might be noticed in how adjustments in inducement, reasonableness, options and acquiring relevant skills to crime happen throughout a lifespan (Cornish & Clarke, 1986).

3.8.1 Tenets of Rational Choice Perspective

There are a number of principles made by rational choice theorists. Abell (2000) mentioned some of the principles of RCP and, such tenets encompass:

Individualism; it is individuals who finally take steps. Persons, as players within the community and in every corner, conduct themselves and consistently behave in a logical manner as manipulative, self-serving (selfish) and self-assertive energetic humans, whose acts are the final sources of bigger social consequences. This first principle of RCP leads to 4 additional tenets of RCP.

(d) Optimality; persons adopt their acts perfectly, granted their personal choices and chances or limits with which a person experiences. Abell (2000) described optimality as happening when no additional procedure adopted to deal with a situation could be liked better by a person than the plan of action, which the same individual selected. Abell added that the *supra* argument does not imply that the plan of action, which the player chooses is unrivalled regarding a certain objective and an external decision. For Abell, RCP presumes that persons execute unrivalled tasks as much as they can, granted their situations and the way they are seen.

(e) Structures; Abell (2000) contends that structures and standards which decide a sole plan of action are only special cases of RCP. Put it another way, Abell argues that a set of options in other situations is different from options within a robust systemic situation, which might consist of a single option. Abell also highlights that even though these structures might be detrimental to RCP, persons regularly come up with a method to use action ideally, thus, RCP might not automatically exhibit solidarity, agreement or fairness in the plans of action. Abell further stresses that structures, as understood by certain persons, might not be excellent from the point of view of a person who has limited means, nevertheless, RCP tries to elaborate on how such a circumstance develops and sustained through logical options.

(f) Self-regarding interest; this particular principle asserts that a person is completely interested in his or her well-being (Abell, 2000). Furthermore, Abell (2000) mentioned that while self-regarding interest is a basic tenet of RCP, it is not as important to RCP as optimality. Abell (2000) added that different kinds of views could subsist, for instance inconsideration, donations and joint action, which at first appear to be in conflict with personal *optimality*. RCP might contend that the above-stated views could be integrated into a rational choice *model* by noticing that the said views might finally be intended for searching for some type of self-worship of the offender (Abell, 2000). For example, donations (sums of money given to individuals or charitable institutions) could finally be intended to make a person satisfied or could be a method used to strengthen an offender's self-respect in the eyes of recipients (Abell, 2000).

(g) Rationality; this seems to be the key principle of RCP (Abell, 2000). In line with this specific tenet, persons behave in calculated manners, which could assist them to gain more from their crimes (Abell, 2000). The said principle of RCP presumes that each person is mostly likely to deal with plans of actions that are discerned to be the finest probable choice, which could extremely be to his or her own benefit (Abell, 2000).

3.8.2 Advantages of Rational Choice Perspective

Becker (1976) depicted RCP as a consolidated structure for comprehending all types of the

behaviours of the people. In addition, Rogowski (1997) treats RCP as the most meticulous and the most popular perspective of social action developed in the 21st century. Hirshleifer (1985) characterise RCP as the global grammar of social science. Hirshleifer provides additional advantages of RCP and these include:

(h) Generality, which implies that one collection of presumptions pertaining to every type of a player in an identified situation is consistent with any collection of systemic presuppositions regarding a territory where the player is situated.

(i) Parsimony: Both the prevalent information about rationality presumption and the presupposition of invertible and narcissistic *utility*, function, when mixed with the rational maximisation model, which permits RCP to consider differences in options amongst players throughout time as a complete function of their own systemic location of a place. Priorities and opinions are discerned as the sole pertinent factors for deciding action.

(j) Predictive: Presumptions of RCP have been employed to create a broad range of firm perspectives, whose conjectures about the assessable real-life events exclude a considerably bigger collection of effects more than what is already acknowledged to be improbable, thus far.

3.8.3 Weaknesses of Rational Choice Perspective

One of the weaknesses of RCP is its dependence on the argument that each individual has the ability to be rational (White & Perrone, 2015). Another weakness of RCP, is that any process for comprehending decision making founded on the misconception of all-inclusive rationality could bring about after-effects, which are not connected to the truth (Zafirovski, 2018). The key problem with RCP is that ideal rationality does not exist and, this is due to the unlikelihood of remembering all impartial realities in a person's psyche whilst methodically clarifying them, in order to make an ideally rational resolution. Rather, the phrase of bounded rationality was brought into being to best elaborate on the constrained information which a person could have and at the same time process it (White & Perrone, 2015). An additional weakness of RCP is that it pays no attention to irrational offences like those committed by mentally ill persons and dull retarded juveniles and, the above-stated 2 groups of people do not perpetrate crimes, which could be contended to possess the same degree of logical reasoning as other offences, therefore, they mirror reduced levels of delinquent onus (White & Perrone, 2015).

Further weaknesses of RCP encompass its lack of ability to account for basic systemic disconnections within a community (White & Perrone, 2015), or to probe the motives of individuals who perpetrate offences, instead, it easily acknowledges that inducement is available and suggests that there would be persons who shall perpetrate an offence if the circumstance emerged (Bernard et al., 2016). RCP pays no attention to emotional aspects like guilt and shame and, it also overlooks the fact that perpetrators do not consistently effect options which are rational (De Haan & Vos, 2003). Relatedly, De Haan and Vos (2003) contended that a failure to encompass the above-stated elements and additional aspects like involuntariness and behavioural uncertainty within the perspective, RCP describes an unfinished viewpoint about a delinquent act.

Numerous street criminals are proud of themselves for giving up traditional ways of life and, then adopting delinquent personalities and being in possession of them, which consist of social codes of behaviour that surround features of using illicit drugs, attending parties and impulsiveness (Hochstetler & Copes, 2003). In this context, an individual's offending behaviour is mostly reliant on how a person's street life is socially created and, it is regularly decided by a person's continued need to acquire easy cash and illicit narcotics (Hochstetler & Copes, 2003). Perpetrators regularly consume illicit narcotics and alcoholic beverages in order to decrease a person's fearfulness, that is, when participating in dangerous delinquent behaviours and, thus, repeatedly make crowded delinquent decisions constructed by using illicit and licit drugs (Hochstetler & Copes, 2003, p. 104). In this particular context, any type of thinking capability or rationality, which a perpetrator may have could critically be limited by the consumption of illicit narcotics or alcoholic beverages (Hochstetler & Copes, 2003). Jointly, the constraints of time, limits of access to pertinent information and diminished decision-making abilities, as well as offences of numerous street-level criminals, are thus less inclined to be indicative of methodical and thorough planning or logical assessments than is indicated by RCP models about committing crimes (Cornish & Clarke, 1986; Hochstetler & Copes, 2003).

RCP proposes that decisions are steered by a comprehension of the costs and benefits linked to each choice (Becker, 1993). The current study is consistent with RCP because carjackers and motor vehicle thieves who participated in this thesis made decisions based on possible costs and benefits connected to carjackings, MVTs and the disposal of motor vehicles while

considering the expected demand and full costs of operation. Becker (1993) stated that RCP assists to account for personal decisions in a situation when specific presumptions are satisfied. Becker (1993) also stressed that one of the most important presumptions of RCP is that parties who make decisions should possess ideal information. Research shows that carjackers and motor vehicle thieves are keenly aware of aspects, which possibly influence the disposal of stolen and carjacked motor vehicles (Topalli &Wright, 2013; Wing, 1994).

Relatedly, such aspects, which possibly influence the offenders' disposal of stolen and carjacked motor vehicles include: (a) offenders' requests for orders for second-hand motor vehicle parts from reliable buyers, and then, they pilfer cars in order to supply used car parts to their clients; (b) offenders' habit of exporting stolen and carjacked motor vehicles, which are concealed in sealed containers, and they sell carjacked and stolen cars at higher prices in foreign destinations; (c) offenders' habit of conniving with chop shop owners in using second-hand parts taken from stolen and carjacked cars in order to rebuild motor vehicles, which are registered by making use of registration details of salvaged cars and, afterwards offenders sell reconstructed cars to unsuspecting buyers at exorbitant prices (Topalli & Wright, 2013; Wing, 1994).

3.9 SUMMARY

The current chapter described the development of each of the 4 theories provided above, from their usage within criminological studies to the present stage. In line with the demonstration of the above discussion, all the 4 said theories have travelled stormy trajectories. Theoretical contributions have been reviewed and contributions of each work were condensed. For example, the current chapter started with the work of Thomas and Znaniecki about immigrants' conformity to the American life within the setting of diversified immigrant communities. In this regard, Thomas and Znaniecki created a concept known as social disorganisation, which pertains to the failure of existent rules to shape the adaptation of different persons. Park added detail to the aforesaid concept of social disorganisation by including the role of legal social organisations. In the same way as Thomas and Znanieck, Park reported that social disorganisation progressed due to social change in a neighbourhood and, this led to the incapability of legal social organisations to effectually use social control structures which could ordinarily reduce criminal activities and lawlessness. Shaw and McKay (1942) expanded on the ideas and, this culminated into SDT. Shaw and McKay thoroughly explored the degree to which

social systemic features shape criminality in a neighbourhood setting.

According to Sutherland's (1947) DAT, criminality is learnt through association with criminal peers. An individual becomes a criminal due to excessive definitions supporting the contravention of law over definitions, which do not support the violation of law. The above-stated statement is a tenet/principle of DAT. Differential associations differ in frequency, length of time, preference and severity (Sutherland & Cressey, 1974). DAT was originally suggested to account for adolescent criminality, but the current study finds that DAT can be used to elaborate on adult criminality and adult victimisation. The researcher argues that DAT is applicable to the progression of the organised nature of MOs used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area. DAT states that association with criminal intimate friends shape individuals to learn criminal behavioural patterns, which are rehearsed, repeated and polished by such close peers. Due to learning criminal behaviour, Sutherland's understanding of delinquent conducts has certainly presented an invaluable and well-founded elucidation for the occurrence of crimes. In terms of DAT, family circumstances and the community are likely to be vital because they shape differential opportunities for young people to interact with criminal friends from whom they may learn delinquent behavioural patterns. Hence, there is not direct link between family, community, school and delinquent behaviour.

The basic argument of RAT is that differences in everyday activities of people escalate or decrease the possibility of intersection in time and space of 3 aspects, which are minimally needed for a crime(s) to happen and, such features include: (1) motivated offender(s), (2) suitable target(s), and (3) the lack of capable guardianship for those targets (Cohen & Cantor, 1980). Although the aforesaid 3 features are required for crimes to take place, they are insufficient because their intersection does not warrant a crime(s). The sole availability of opportunities for crimes does not imply that additional aspects cannot affect the after-effects. Whether a motivated perpetrator follow up on available opportunity may be reliant upon personal perceptions of the perpetrator. It is very hard to disconnect appropriate targets from the absence of capable guardianship due to the fact that the 2 can shape one another (for example what makes an individual an appropriate target could be that they do not have capable guardianships). The current chapter found the source of the development of RCP from its economic beginnings, which put forward concepts of the crime-punishment link (for example certainty and severity penalty) to modern RCP versions that took into cognisant theoretical

ideas and research findings from a range of research works carried out within many disciplines.

For instance, cognitive psychologists and sociologists spotted and regarded numerous components (like principles, standards, motives or emotional feelings) as important to contemplate during the study of the perpetrator's decision-making processes. RCP's combination of research findings, procedures, steps and theoretical ideas obtained from various disciplines, started in the middle of the 1980s. Through its progression across a number of decades which somewhat probed the growth of expected-utility function, RCP provided anew approaches for probing delinquent decision-making processes. Furthermore, the current chapter revealed the significance of comprehending how methods used for committing carjackings and MVTs provide insight into how carjackers and motor vehicle thieves may be effectually evaluated in a qualitative study accepting ideas of RCP. This chapter is followed by the methods chapter below, which describes different methods used in the current study and, how the research objectives are achieved.

Chapter 4

Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

A research methodology is defined as "the general approach the researcher takes in carrying out the research project; to some extent, this approach dictates the particular tools the researcher selects" (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 12). A research methodology describes a structure through which a study can be carried out successfully (Bereska, 2003). The current chapter describes the methodology that was used in this thesis. It provides the research questions and objectives, and discusses the following: (a) the phenomena being studied; (b) ontological and epistemological assumptions; (c) the chosen research paradigm; (d) the research approach and design; (e) a full description of the study site and setting; (f) the sampling method and designs; (g) data collection techniques; (h) data analysis procedures; (i) trustworthiness; (j) reflexivity; and (k) ethical considerations. The chapter highlights the limitations and provides a summary of the study. Crucially, this chapter details the study's primary methodological contribution: a Micro-Level, Triangulated Intelligence-Led Framework. This framework is designed to bridge the epistemological divide between micro-level offender agency and macro-level systemic critique. To provide a clear roadmap, this contribution is introduced at the beginning of this chapter and detailed in full at its end, serving as a conceptual "bookend" that frames the entire methodological design.

4.2 Introduction to the Research Design and Overview of the Methodological Contribution

This study is founded on the premise that to truly understand complex criminal phenomena like carjacking, we must move beyond the entrenched methodological dichotomy that has long characterised much of criminological research. On one hand, micro-level offender interviews provide rich data on agency but can detach the offender from their systemic context. On the other hand, macro-level systemic critiques offer powerful explanations for the "why" of crime but can render the individual offender a passive, abstract entity. This PhD study's primary contribution is methodological. It proposes and operationalises a Micro-Level, Triangulated Intelligence-Led Framework as a blueprint for a 'third way' in criminological research. This framework is designed to bridge the divide between offender agency and systemic critique, offering a rigorous, replicable, and insightful protocol for uncovering the 'black box' of criminal behaviour and adaptation. The framework systematically combines data from four distinct pillars:

1. The Offender Perspective: In-depth interviews with currently incarcerated carjackers

and motor vehicle thieves.

2. The Insider's Critique: In-depth interviews with a unique group of former officials and stakeholders who later became offenders, including former police officers, community patrollers (CPF members), insurance officials, and even former victims.
3. The State's Narrative: A thematic analysis of official South African Police Service (SAPS) crime prevention strategies and government safety policies.
4. Stakeholder Perspectives on Systemic Flaws: Integration of narratives from stakeholders who explain the systemic vulnerabilities they exploited, providing a ground-level view of institutional failure. This multi-method approach creates a powerful system of cross-verification, juxtaposing the offender's perspective with the insider's view of systemic flaws and the state's official response. The following sections of this chapter will detail the philosophical underpinnings, the specific components, and the operational procedures of this innovative framework.

4.3 Research Philosophies

Social science is influenced by many research philosophies. A research philosophy is "a system of beliefs and assumptions about the development of knowledge" (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2016, p.124). This section outlines the ontological and epistemological positions that underpin this study.

4.3.1 Ontological Position

The researcher's ontological position is constructionism. This position questions the objectivist stance that a pre-existing, singular truth confronts people as an external reality (Peters, Pressey, Vanharanta, Wesley & Johnston, 2013; Bryman, 2016). Instead, it posits that knowledge and beliefs change over time, and individuals' minds possess the capacity to discern and explain phenomena in diverse ways, thereby constructing social reality (Feyerabend, 1978, 1991). For this study, which focuses on the socially constructed truths of incarcerated offenders regarding their Modus Operandi (MO), constructivism provides the appropriate lens to explain the ontological comprehension of the progression of their organised criminal activities.

4.3.2 Epistemological Position

The researcher's epistemological position is interpretivism. Interpretivism contends that knowledge within the social world consists of the meanings and comprehensions that individuals attribute to their settings (May, 2001). Therefore, knowledge is related to human interpretations (May, 2001). Interpretivists argue that the social world is understood through people's actions and conducts, which are revealed in their interpretations (May, 2001; Giddens, 1997). This study aimed to understand and explain the truth through the interpretations of interactions in a social setting (Creswell 2009, p. 6), exploring the truths as expressed in the subjective comprehensions, perspectives, and reflections of the incarcerated participants.

4.3.3 Research Paradigm

A paradigm is "a set of basic beliefs... that deals with ultimates or first principles. It represents a worldview that defines, for its holder, the nature of the world, the individual's place in it, and the range of possible relationships to that world and its parts" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 107). This study is situated within the interpretive paradigm. This paradigm concentrates on life experiences that change and create meanings individuals grant to their experiences (Denzin, 2002, p.1). It aligns with the relativist ontology and constructionism discussed above. The interpretive paradigm enabled the researcher to describe the interviewees' truths from their personal perspectives (Henning, van Rensburg & Smit, 2004), as every person rationalises their own environment (Weber, 2009). It allowed for a deep understanding of the participants' subjective experiences regarding how they created their social environments through shared meanings and interactions.

4.4 Research Approach and Design

This philosophical foundation directly informed the selection of the research approach and design for the study.

4.4.1 Research Approach

This study employed a qualitative research approach, defined as "a method that seeks to describe, decode, translate and otherwise come to terms with the meaning of naturally occurring phenomena in the social world" (Welmann, Kruger & Mitchell, 2005, p. 188). Qualitative research was essential for exploring the intricate, subjective phenomena of the progression of organised nature of the offenders' MO, allowing the researcher to gather rich, thick data from the participants' perspectives.

4.4.2 Research Design

A research design is "a plan that the researchers follow to answer the research questions" (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012, p. 159). The researcher chose a phenomenological research design. Phenomenology is a qualitative methodology aimed at investigating and comprehending the lived experiences of individuals (Creswell, 2013). A research design covers components such as sampling designs, the collected data, data collection methods and data analysis methods (Bereska, 2003). It seeks to reveal the core essence of these experiences by examining how individuals perceive, interpret, and understand their surroundings, making it the most appropriate design for understanding the lived realities of offenders. Phenomenological research design represents a qualitative methodology aimed at investigating and comprehending the lived experiences of individuals (Creswell, 2013). This research design is deemed the most appropriate for this study. The phenomenological approach endeavours to reveal the core essence of the experiences by examining how individuals perceive, interpret, and understand their surroundings (Creswell, 2013). By emphasising subjective experiences, phenomenology enables researchers to uncover the significance that individuals ascribe to their experiences, which can be especially beneficial in disciplines like psychology, education, and healthcare (Moustakas, 1994). In addition, a research design provides the researcher with certain guiding principles about how research questions are addressed in line with the gathered data (Bereska, 2003).

4.4.2.1 Report: Implementation of Bracketing in Phenomenological Research Analysis

Executive Summary

This report outlines the methodological approach to implementing bracketing (epoché) during the data analysis phase of a phenomenological study examining the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in Durban's Greater Berea area. As a fundamental aspect of phenomenological methodology, bracketing requires researchers to set aside personal preconceptions, biases, and theoretical assumptions to ensure findings remain grounded in participants' lived experiences. This report details the theoretical framework of bracketing, the practical steps undertaken during analysis, challenges encountered, and the effectiveness of this approach in maintaining methodological rigor.

1. Introduction

Phenomenological research seeks to understand the essence of lived experiences from the perspective of those who have lived them. In this study, which explored the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs, maintaining fidelity to participants' perspectives was paramount. Bracketing served as the methodological safeguard against researcher bias contaminating the interpretation of offenders' accounts.

2. Theoretical Framework of Bracketing

Bracketing, originating from Husserl's phenomenological philosophy, involves the deliberate suspension of judgment about the natural world to focus on phenomena as they present themselves in consciousness. In qualitative research, this translates to:

- Setting aside preconceived notions about the phenomenon under study
- Suspending theoretical frameworks until after data analysis
- Maintaining reflexive awareness of one's biases throughout the research process
- Allowing meaning to emerge from the data rather than imposing external interpretations

3. Practical Implementation of Bracketing in Data Analysis

1.6 3.1 Pre-Analysis Preparation

Before commencing data analysis, the researcher engaged in several preparatory activities:

- **Bracketing Statement Development**: A comprehensive document was created outlining the researcher's assumptions, experiences, and potential biases related to

crime, offenders, and criminal justice systems.

- **Theoretical Suspension**: Explicit documentation of criminological theories that might inform the study, with a commitment to allowing findings to emerge independently of these frameworks.
- **Reflexive Journaling**: Regular journal entries documenting personal reactions to interviews and emerging themes to maintain awareness of potential biases.

1.7 3.2 Ongoing Bracketing During Analysis

Throughout the analytical process, bracketing was maintained through:

- **Constant Comparative Method**: Continuously comparing new data with existing interpretations to ensure findings remained grounded in participants' accounts.
- **Peer Debriefing**: Regular consultation with colleagues who challenged interpretations and identified potential researcher biases.
- **Member Checking**: Returning to participants with preliminary interpretations to verify accuracy and authenticity.

4. Specific Steps Followed During Data Analysis

1.8 4.1 Initial Data Immersion

The researcher began by thoroughly reviewing all interview transcripts without attempting to code or categorise data. This approach allowed for familiarization with participants' accounts in their raw form, minimising premature categorisation.

1.9 4.2 Phenomenological Reduction

Following initial immersion, the researcher engaged in phenomenological reduction by:

- Identifying significant statements directly from participants' accounts
- Developing meaning units that reflected participants' own language and conceptualisations
- Continuously returning to original transcripts to verify interpretations

1.10 4.3 Imaginative Variation

The researcher employed imaginative variation to:

- Explore the phenomenon from multiple perspectives as described by participants
- Identify essential structures of the experience that remained constant across variations

- Distinguish between essential and incidental aspects of the experience

1.11 4.4 Synthesis of Essence

Through imaginative variation, the researcher synthesized the essence of the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO, ensuring that this synthesis reflected participants' experiences rather than preconceived theoretical frameworks.

1.12 4.5 Bracketing Verification

At each analytical stage, the researcher verified bracketing effectiveness by:

- Reviewing reflexive journals for evidence of bias
- Consulting with research supervisors to challenge emerging interpretations
- Returning to original data to ensure interpretations remained grounded

5. Challenges Encountered and Mitigation Strategies

1.13 5.1 Unconscious Biases

Despite deliberate bracketing efforts, unconscious biases presented challenges:

- **Challenge**: The researcher's background in criminology created preconceived notions about criminal behaviours
- **Mitigation**: Enhanced reflexivity through journaling and peer consultation to identify and address unconscious biases

1.14 5.2 Emotional Reactions

Participants' accounts of violent crimes elicited emotional responses:

- **Challenge**: Emotional reactions to descriptions of violence potentially influenced interpretation
- **Mitigation**: Regular debriefing sessions and temporary disengagement from data when emotional responses became pronounced

Theoretical Tension

The tension between phenomenological description and theoretical explanation:

- **Challenge**: The researcher's familiarity with criminological theories created tension with purely phenomenological description
- **Mitigation**: Deliberate postponement of theoretical connection until after phenomenological analysis was complete

The implementation of bracketing in this phenomenological study proved essential to maintaining methodological rigor and ensuring findings remained grounded in participants' lived experiences. While complete suspension of preconceptions is arguably impossible, the deliberate and systematic approach to bracketing described above minimized researcher bias and enhanced the authenticity of findings.

The progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO emerged as a complex phenomenon shaped by rational calculation, technological adaptation, and environmental exploitation, with these insights deriving directly from participants' accounts rather than researcher preconceptions. This outcome demonstrates the effectiveness of rigorous bracketing in phenomenological research and validates its methodological importance in qualitative inquiry.

4.5 Research Questions

The primary objective of this study is to explore and understand the lived experiences of incarcerated offenders regarding their MO in committing carjackings and motor vehicle thefts (MVTs) in the Greater Berea area of Durban. The research questions guiding this inquiry are as follows:

- (a) What are the incarcerated participants' perspectives about the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the Greater Berea area in Durban?
- (b) How does the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the Greater Berea change from one stage to another stage?
- (c) How are formal organisations of perpetrators linked to the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the Greater Berea area in Durban?
- (d) How do offenders who commit carjackings and MVTs in the Greater Berea area in Durban plan the progression of the organised nature of their MO?
- (e) What are the pull factors that draw offenders to commit carjackings and MVTs in the Greater Berea area in Durban?
- (f) Why do carjackers who use the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO commit violence against their victims?
- (g) Which recommendations would be useful in addressing the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the

Greater Berea area in Durban?

4.6 The Micro-Level, Triangulated Intelligence-Led Framework: A Detailed Blueprint

The core methodological contribution of this thesis is the development and application of the Micro-Level, Triangulated Intelligence-Led Framework. This framework is designed to produce a 360-degree, intelligence-led understanding of the criminal problem of carjacking and MVT. The term 'intelligence-led' is repurposed from policing to signify a systematic, evidence-based approach focused on understanding the 'who, what, where, when, why, and how' of a problem to generate actionable insight. The framework is built on four distinct, yet interconnected, pillars of data collection and analysis, creating a powerful system of cross-verification and juxtaposition. **Pillar 1: The Offender Perspective** This pillar forms the foundation of the micro-level analysis. A purposive sample of individuals incarcerated for carjacking and MVT was recruited. In-depth, semi-structured interviews were chosen to allow for a detailed exploration of their 'career' in crime, from motivation and target selection to execution, escape, and adaptation. This data provides the essential view from the ground up. **Pillar 2: The Insider's Critique** This is the most innovative and crucial element of the framework. This study uniquely targeted and interviewed a diverse group of former officials and stakeholders who were subsequently convicted for carjacking or related offences. This group includes:

- Former Senior Police Officers: Possessing intimate knowledge of police procedures, patrol strategies, resource limitations, and institutional culture.
- Former Community Patrollers (CPF Members): Having unique insights into community-level security initiatives and their vulnerabilities.
- Former Insurance Officials: Understanding the procedural and technological weaknesses in vehicle valuation and claims processes.
- Former Victims Turned Offenders: Providing a unique dual-perspective on the psychological impact of crime and the subsequent transition to perpetration.

These individuals possess a 'dual consciousness'. As insiders, they knew how the system was supposed to work; as offenders, they applied that knowledge to identify and exploit its vulnerabilities. Their interviews provide an unparalleled, ground-level critique of the system from the perspective of one who has successfully gamed it from both sides. For example, a former CPF member explained how their position was used to identify targets: "*I was the inside*

eye. Every single time when I forged a license plate I subsequently received R5000.00... I helped target cars we knew didn't have trackers." Similarly, a former police officer detailed systemic corruption: "*My commander ordered me to illegally drive stolen cars from targeted police warehouses... We police officers were paid huge sums of money... for stealing cars from police warehouses, driving stolen cars to various destinations and smuggling illicit drugs into SA*." This pillar directly bridges the gap between the offender's world and the world of formal control.

Pillar 3: The State's Narrative This pillar provides the macro-level context and the state's official narrative. A systematic thematic analysis was conducted on a range of accessible official documents, including SAPS crime prevention strategies, national government safety policies, and relevant white papers. This analysis sought to understand how the problem of carjacking is officially constructed, what assumptions underpin state responses, and what strategies are formally proposed and implemented. This data represents the 'textbook' version of crime control against which the realities from Pillars 1 and 2 are juxtaposed. **Pillar 4: Stakeholder Perspectives on Systemic Flaws** This fourth pillar synthesises the unique insights from the diverse group in Pillar 2 to create a composite picture of systemic failure. It moves beyond individual stories to identify patterns of institutional weakness. By analysing how a former police officer, a CPF member, and an insurance official each identified and exploited different facets of the same system, this pillar reveals the interconnected nature of these vulnerabilities. For instance, the convergence of information from a former officer about police warehouse security and a former CPF member about community patrol patterns creates a multi-layered understanding of how criminal enterprises can operate with impunity. By triangulating these four data sources, the framework moves beyond simple corroboration. It creates a dynamic interplay where accounts from one pillar are used to probe, challenge, and enrich the data from the others. It is in the dissonances, the convergences, and the gaps between these perspectives that the most profound insights into offender agency and systemic failure are revealed.

4.7 Research Setting and Population

The specific locations that constituted the research setting are outlined first.

4.7.1 Research Setting

The research was conducted at selected Department of Correctional Services (DCS) Correctional Centres in the KwaZulu-Natal Province: (a) Durban Westville; (b) Kokstad (including Ebongweni Super Maximum and Kokstad Medium); (c) Pietermaritzburg; and (d) Empangeni Management Areas. This PhD study involved the collection of qualitative data from incarcerated offenders. The data were gathered from several correctional facilities, specifically: (a) Durban Westville Correctional Centre, where 2 male offenders and 2 female offenders participated in the study; (b) Kokstad Correctional Centres, 2 incarcerated offenders from Ebongweni Super Maximum Correctional Centre and 1 offender from Kokstad Medium Prison participated in this study; (c) Pietermaritzburg Correctional Centre contributed 2 incarcerated offenders who also agreed to participate and they provided data for this study; and (d) the researcher interviewed 1 offender at Empangeni Correctional Centre (a maximum-security prison) and, the same offender provided data.

4.7.2 Study Population

The study population consists of incarcerated offenders who have committed MVTs and carjackings in the greater Berea area of Durban. This population includes six types of offenders: (a) motor vehicle thieves, (b) carjackers, (c) cash-in-transit heist robbers, (d) murderers, (e) kingpins, and (f) midlevel leaders. The researcher focused on a small sample drawn from this accessible population, which was refined to ensure that participants had relevant experiences related to the phenomena of interest. Specifically, the study targeted 26 motor vehicle thieves, 22 carjackers, and 8 offenders who committed both MVTs and carjackings, along with 6 kingpins, 9 underbosses, 4 cash-in-transit heist robbers, and 2 murderers. To ensure the validity of the findings, the researcher employed maximum variation sampling and opportunistic sampling methods to select participants who could provide rich and diverse data (Patton, 2015). In fact, the researcher used 4 sampling methods in this study and, these include: (a) maximum variation sampling; (b) criterion sampling; (c) snowball sampling; and (d) opportunistic sampling.

Exclusion criteria were applied to eliminate offenders who did not meet the study's requirements, such as those who committed crimes outside the greater Berea area or those who

provided conflicting statements. Ultimately, the accessible population consisted of 32 potential participants who met the inclusion criteria, and data saturation was reached with a sample size of 10 participants, ensuring that the study captured a comprehensive understanding of the organised nature of offenders' MO in the context of carjackings and MVTs, which were committed in the greater Berea area in Durban. This diverse sample of incarcerated individuals provided valuable insights into the organised nature of the MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs, as perceived by those directly involved in such criminal activities. The perspectives gathered from these offenders contributed to a deeper understanding of the factors influencing their criminal behaviours within the greater Berea Area in Durban.

4.8 Sampling Method and Designs

The process of locating and selecting these research participants involved the strategic application of several purposeful sampling designs.

4.8.1 Locating and Selecting Research Participants

In this study, the researcher employed a combination of 4 purposeful sampling techniques and these are: (a) maximum variation sampling; (b) criterion sampling; (c) snowball sampling; and (d) opportunistic sampling. Maximum variation sampling was utilised to capture a diverse range of perspectives by selecting incarcerated offenders with varying experiences related to motor vehicle thefts (MVTs) and carjackings, ensuring a broad representation of views. Criterion sampling was applied to include only those offenders who met specific eligibility criteria, such as being sane and knowledgeable about the phenomena of interest, thereby ensuring that the participants could provide relevant and insightful data. Snowball sampling facilitated the recruitment of hard-to-reach populations, as initial participants referred other offenders, such as kingpins and underbosses, who were also involved in MVTs and carjackings, thus expanding the sample size through referrals. Lastly, opportunistic sampling allowed the researcher to take advantage of unexpected opportunities to include additional participants, such as cash-in-transit heist robbers and murderers, who expressed interest in participating after the study commenced. Together, these techniques enabled a comprehensive and rich data collection process that addressed the research objectives effectively.

The recruitment strategy began with obtaining permission from the Department of Correctional

Services (DCS) to conduct research within selected correctional centers in KwaZulu-Natal. Upon receipt of the full approval letter from the DCS, the researcher scanned and conveyed it to the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Shortly afterwards, the researcher received an ethical clearance certificate from the HSSREC, which was essential for ensuring that the study adhered to ethical standards. Following this, the researcher engaged with DCS unit managers to discuss the study's purpose, procedures, and the expected role of the DCS in the recruitment process. This approach was crucial for maintaining the privacy of offenders and adhering to DCS regulations. The unit managers then identified potential participants who had expressed interest in the study, ensuring that only willing offenders were approached.

Overall, the combination of purposeful sampling techniques and a thoughtful recruitment strategy enabled the researcher to gather rich, diverse data from a population that had firsthand experience with the phenomena of interest. By focusing on information-rich cases, the study aimed to provide valuable insights into the organised nature of offenders' MO in the context of carjackings and MVTs, ultimately contributing to a deeper understanding of these criminal behaviours.

4.9 Data Collection Methods

Data were collected using semi-structured interviews and field notes. The researcher built the rapport by emphasising voluntary participation, anonymity, and the non-judgmental nature of the study. Eighteen sixty-minute face-to-face interviews were conducted using an interview guide. Open-ended questions were prioritised to encourage participants to explore the phenomena in depth. Some interviews were digitally recorded (with consent), while in other instances, detailed field notes were taken due to participants' refusal to be recorded. Field notes were also written after each interview to capture non-verbal cues and immediate reflections.

4.10 Data Analysis

The researcher employed qualitative content analysis, specifically the directed content analysis approach, to analyse the data. This approach is defined as "a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns" (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p.1278). The analysis followed

both inductive and deductive approaches. The process involved:

1. Preparation of Data: Transcribing audio recordings and translating IsiZulu transcripts into English.
2. Construction of a Coding Frame: Developing a methodical, deductive, and inductive coding frame.
3. Adoption of Materials: Selecting and dividing the most relevant portions of the data.
4. Coding: Manually coding the data by identifying phrases, terms, and sentences that represented themes.
5. Clustering of Themes: Grouping codes into categories and higher-order themes until data saturation was reached.
6. Analysis and Conclusion: Drawing conclusions from the coded data.
7. Presentation and Interpretation: Presenting findings using the code frame, with thick descriptions and direct quotes to support interpretations.

4.11 Trustworthiness and Methodological Rigour

To ensure the trustworthiness of the study, the researcher adhered to Lincoln and Guba's (1985) four criteria:

- Credibility: Enhanced through data triangulation (from the four pillars), thick descriptions, and disconfirming evidence.
- Transferability: Supported by thick descriptions and purposeful sampling, allowing readers to assess the applicability of findings to other contexts.
- Dependability: Ensured by providing clear guidelines for every stage of the research process, from data collection to analysis.
- Confirmability: Achieved by maintaining an audit trail (memos, diaries), using direct quotes from participants, and having the supervisor code parts of the data to verify findings.

4.12 The Significance of Reflexivity

Reflexivity is "a dynamic process of interaction within and between ourselves and our participants, and the data that informs decisions, actions and interpretations at all stages" (Etherington, 2004, p. 81). The researcher practiced reflexivity by:

- Critically self-examining potential biases before, during, and after interviews.
- Writing memos about reasoning and thought processes.
- Standing back and asking, "What is going on here? Do what I think and see fit the reality of the data?" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 44).

4.13 Ethical Considerations

The study received full ethical approval from the University of KwaZulu-Natal's Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the National and Regional Headquarters of the DCS. The following ethical principles were strictly adhered to:

- **Voluntary Participation and Informed Consent:** Participants were provided with information sheets and signed consent forms. They were informed of their right to withdraw at any time without penalty.
    - To ensure ethical standards, the researcher emphasised that participation was voluntary and that declining to participate would not affect the offenders' treatment within the correctional system. Informed consent was obtained from those willing to participate, with the researcher taking time to explain the study's nature, purpose, and procedures. Participants were assured of their confidentiality and the right to withdraw from the study at any time without repercussions. This careful approach to recruitment not only respected the rights of the participants but also fostered an environment of trust, encouraging honest and open dialogue during interviews.
- **Avoidance of Harm:** The researcher took steps to avoid physical, psychological, social, or financial harm.
- **Anonymity and Confidentiality:** Pseudonyms were used for all participants. All identifying information was removed from transcripts and recordings. Interviews were conducted in private. Conditional confidentiality was explained for unsolved crimes.
- **Deception:** No deception was used. The purpose and nature of the study were fully explained.

- **Debriefing:** Participants were given the opportunity to ask questions and comment after the interviews, with plans for a follow-up meeting to discuss findings.

4.14 A Note on Data Collection Timeline and Contemporary Relevance

4.14.1 Methodology: Data Collection and Ethical Compliance

Data collection for this study was conducted in strict adherence to ethical approval timelines and institutional requirements. All primary data, comprising semi-structured interviews with incarcerated offenders and fieldnotes, were collected prior to the expiration of both the DCS and UKZN ethics approvals. Specifically, DCS approval (granted for research access to correctional facilities) remained valid until 19 March 2022, while UKZN ethics approval (reference number: [HSS/1458/018D]) was active from 5 June 2019 until 5 June 2020. All participant engagements were completed within these respective validity periods, ensuring full regulatory compliance during the data-gathering phase.

4.14.2 Contextualising Data Timeline Challenges

While the age of the collected data warrants acknowledgment, it is essential to contextualise the circumstances that influenced the research timeline. Unforeseen supervisory challenges significantly impacted the study's progression. Initial supervision by two faculty members was marked by persistent delays and inadequate guidance, exacerbated by institutional disruptions during the COVID-19 pandemic (including university closures and operational restrictions). These constraints necessitated formal intervention, resulting in the appointment of Professor Matshepo Matoane as supervisor by the then Deputy Vice-Chancellor of Research and Innovation Learning, Professor Mosa Moshabela. Under Professor Matoane's mentorship, the project regained methodological rigour and timely completion, culminating in thesis submission in 2025. It must be emphasised that the researcher proactively mitigated these delays and maintained ethical integrity throughout data collection, which concluded within all stipulated approval windows.

4.14.3 Ensuring Contemporary Relevance of Findings

To address potential concerns regarding the applicability of findings in 2025, this study

integrates recent scholarly developments in carjacking and MVT research. The literature review synthesises foundational data with emergent studies including Abrahams (2022), Gray (2024), Mthimkhulu (2022), Quinn (2019), Maluleke and Dhlamini (2019), and Zincume (2017) to highlight evolving MO and socio-economic drivers. This comparative analysis not only bridges temporal gaps but also reinforces the study's contribution to understanding organised crime dynamics. By aligning historical data with contemporary trends, the research demonstrates sustained relevance for policy formulation and enforcement strategies, underscoring the imperative for qualitative content analysis in criminological inquiry.

In summary, the methodology adhered unreservedly to ethical and institutional protocols during data collection. Subsequent timeline extensions resulted from documented supervisory and systemic disruptions beyond the researcher's control. The integration of current scholarship ensures the findings remain pertinent, offering actionable insights for 2025 and beyond.

4.15 The Methodological Contribution: A Blueprint for a 'Third Way' in Criminological Inquiry

In essence, this PhD study does more than fill a substantive knowledge gap; it provides a new way of seeing and studying the problem. This PhD study is contributing a methodological blueprint for a third way in criminological research, one that moves beyond the limitations of both broad offender interviews and abstract systemic critiques. This PhD study's Micro-Level, Triangulated Intelligence-Led Framework offers a rigorous, replicable, and insightful protocol for uncovering the black box of offender agency and adaptation, making a clear and valuable methodological contribution to the discipline itself. Therefore, this PhD study bridges this divide by proposing a triangulated, intelligence-led framework. This framework systematically combines in-depth semi-structured interviews with four distinct groups: (1) currently incarcerated carjackers and MVT offenders, (2) a unique and expanded group of former officials and stakeholders turned offenders (including former police officers, CPF members, insurance officials, and victims), (3) a thematic analysis of accessible official SAPS crime prevention strategies and government safety policies, and (4) a synthesis of stakeholder perspectives on systemic flaws. This multi-method approach creates a powerful system of

cross-verification, juxtaposing the offender's perspective with the insider's view of systemic flaws and the state's official response, thereby providing a uniquely robust and nuanced analysis. The inclusion of the diverse stakeholder group in Pillar 2 is a significant enhancement. By interviewing former police officers, CPF members, insurance officials, and victims who all became offenders, the framework gains access to a 'dual consciousness' that is unparalleled. These individuals do not just see the system from the outside; they have operated within it, understood its logic, and then used that very understanding to exploit its weaknesses. Their testimonies provide a ground-level critique of the system that is far more nuanced and operationally specific than what can be gleaned from policy analysis or interviews with offenders who lack such insider knowledge. This allows the framework to move beyond a simple offender-versus-state dichotomy and model crime as a complex interaction between multiple actors, each with a different but valid perspective on the same vulnerabilities. This framework's power lies in its synthesis. An offender's account of a crime (Pillar 1) is directly compared with a former officer's account of the systemic flaws that made it possible (Pillar 2), which is then contrasted with the official response designed to prevent it (Pillar 3). The synthesis of these insights (Pillar 4) creates a multi-layered intelligence picture. This process achieves several critical outcomes:

- **Robustness**: It allows for the cross-verification of facts, as a claim made by an offender can be substantiated or refuted by the insider knowledge of a former official.
- **Nuance**: It reveals the critical gap between policy and practice, where the official state narrative often differs dramatically from the lived reality of policing and the offender's perception of it.
- **Uncovering the 'Black Box'**: It illuminates the process of offender adaptation. By understanding systemic flaws and the official response, we can more clearly see how and why offenders adapt their methods to succeed, making the abstract concept of 'adaptation' concrete and observable.

In conclusion, the methodological contribution of this PhD is the design and successful implementation of this expanded Micro-Level, Triangulated Intelligence-Led Framework. It offers a rigorous and replicable blueprint for a 'third way' in criminological research. Its value to the discipline is threefold:

1. **Epistemological**: It provides a robust tool for bridging the persistent agency-structure divide.

2. **Practical**: It is a replicable protocol that can be adapted to study a wide range of criminal problems.
3. **Substantive**: It generates uniquely nuanced findings, producing 'academic intelligence' with clear, practical implications for policing and crime prevention policy. By providing this methodological blueprint, this PhD study offers the discipline a powerful new way of seeing and studying the complex interplay between the offender, the state, and the systemic vulnerabilities that lie between.

4.16 Chapter Summary

Chapter 4 has detailed the research methodology and phenomena under investigation. It began by introducing the study's primary contribution: the Micro-Level, Triangulated Intelligence-Led Framework, presented here using a "bookend" structure to frame the entire chapter. The chapter discussed the constructivist ontological and interpretivist epistemological positions, which underpin the study's qualitative, phenomenological design. The core of the chapter was the detailed operationalisation of the four-pillar framework, highlighting the innovative inclusion of a diverse group of former officials and stakeholders turned offenders. This provides a unique, dual-lens perspective on systemic vulnerabilities. The chapter further described the research setting, population, and the combination of purposeful sampling techniques used to select information-rich participants. Data collection through semi-structured interviews and field notes, and data analysis through directed qualitative content analysis, were thoroughly explained. The researcher's commitment to ensuring trustworthiness, practising reflexivity, and adhering to stringent ethical considerations was also demonstrated. In essence, this chapter has provided a comprehensive and rigorous account of how the study was conducted, laying a solid foundation for the presentation of the research findings in the chapters that follow.

Chapter 5

Research Findings

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to describe specific details of the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban, from the incarcerated offenders' perspectives. The current study is concerned

with the description of specific details of the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban. Chapter 5 provided the data, which were gathered in interviews with 10 incarcerated participants regarding their perspectives, experiences, meanings and understandings about the phenomena under investigation.

The researcher fully transcribed the interviews and, also analysed them by making use of the directed content analysis, which was discussed in Chapter 4. In the current analysis, the researcher started by coding the text data. Qualitative content analysis is specifically suitable for exploratory research like this study, because the phenomena being studied are unexplored. The 10 incarcerated participants were chosen from different groups of offenders housed at various correctional centres in the Province of KZN. The 10 incarcerated participants included: (a) ordinary carjackers; (b) ordinary motor vehicle thieves; (c) kingpins; (d) underbosses; and (e) certain offenders who also committed MVTs and carjackings (for instance, cash-in-transit heist robbers, a murderer and an executioner also known as quasi operational commander). The researcher employed codes, which were guided by the research questions. Therefore, the researcher analysed empirical data by employing directed content analysis to address the research questions, which were introduced in Chapter 1 of this study. The research questions of this study were also restated below. Importantly, the researcher provided abbreviations below, which were utilised as pseudonyms in order to maintain the participants' anonymity and confidentiality.

TABLE 5.1 Abbreviations Employed as Pseudonyms for The Participants

Participants	**Abbreviations**
Incarcerated motor vehicle thief participant 1	IMVTP1
Incarcerated carjacker participant 1	ICP1
Incarcerated motor vehicle thief participant 2	IMVTP2

A quasi-operational commander participant	QCP
Incarcerated carjacker participant 2	ICP2
Incarcerated cash-in-transit heist robber participant	ICHRP
Incarcerated murderer participant	IMP
Incarcerated kingpin participant 1	IKP1
Incarcerated kingpin participant 2	IKP2
Incarcerated underboss participant	IUP

The abbreviations begin by indicating that the participants were incarcerated (at that time) and, then the roles of the participants are also shown.

More particularly, this thesis sought to address 7 key research questions which were restated below:

(a) What are the incarcerated participants' perspectives about the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban?

(b) How does the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea change from one stage to another stage?

(c) How are formal organisations of perpetrators linked to the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban?

(d) How do offenders who commit carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban plan the progression of the organised nature of their MO?

(e) What are the pull factors that draw offenders to commit carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban?

(f) Why do carjackers who use the progression of the organised nature of MO commit violence against their victims?

(g) Which recommendations would be useful in addressing the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater

Berea area?

5.2 Introduction of Code Frame

The above-stated research questions guided the discussions in Chapter 5. Conforming to the directed content analysis adhered to in this thesis (see Chapter 4), the researcher constructed a coding scheme in which the data were grouped into predetermined themes and subthemes. In this study, the researcher conceptualised the themes as the unit of analysis. The data collected from the incarcerated participants yielded 7 key themes and many subthemes.

Chapter 5 was presented in only 1 key section. The research questions were all answered. Added to this, all research questions were answered on the basis of the findings of the research investigator's analysis of the data. The researcher carefully analysed the data, which were provided by all the participants and developed 7 key themes in line with the research questions and these included:

(b) Participants' perspectives about the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban.

(c) The change of the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs from one stage to another.

(d) Links between formal organisations of perpetrators and the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs.

(e) Offenders' planning and evaluation of the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs.

(f) Pull factors that drew offenders to commit carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area.

(g) Carjackers' use of the progression of the organised nature of MO to commit violence against their victims.

(h) Specific recommendations for addressing the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban.

After the progression of the 7 key themes, the research investigator checked the data, then,

spotted and validated that each theme was present in the data. Sometimes, the researcher found that 1 theme was present in 1 or 2 sentences. At certain times, a theme was described at lengthy in a paragraph.

Table 5.2 Demographics of The participants.

Participants	Gender	Age	Relationship status	Education	Number of years as an offender
IMVTP1	Male	40	Single	Tertiary education	20
ICP1	Male	47	Single	Tertiary education	30
IMVTP2	Female	44	Single	Tertiary education	14
QCP	Female	49	Single	Tertiary education	29
ICP2	Male	56	Divorced	High school education	40

ICHRP	Male	60	Single	Tertiary education	45
IMP	Male	62	Single	Tertiary education	42
IKP1	Male	71	Single	Tertiary education	53
IKP2	Male	70	Divorced	Tertiary education	54
IUP	Male	64	Single	Tertiary education	45

5.3 FINDINGS

5.3.1 Findings Addressing Research Question A

What are the participants' perspectives about the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MOs used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban? To answer Research Question A, the researcher developed theme 1, Then, the researcher invited the participants to tell him about their perspectives regarding the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MOs used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area. Thus, theme 1 only dealt with the incarcerated participants' perspectives regarding the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MOs used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area. The researcher noticed many perspectives throughout the participants' responses, which were linked to the above-stated main theme and they are written below after theme 1.

5.3.2 PARTICIPANTS' PERSPECTIVES ABOUT THE PROGRESSION OF THE OFFENDERS' MOs USED FOR COMMITTING CARJACKINGS AND MVTs

The responses of the research participants revealed various perspectives regarding the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MOs used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban. Therefore, the researcher explained theme 1 in

terms of numerous sub-themes, which were expressed by the participants as their perspectives regarding the phenomena being studied and, these include: (a) Kingpins' reactions to the SAPS's attempts to reduce carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area; (b) special recruitment of the most suitable street-level criminal actors; (c) offenders' strict adherence to a bottom-up flow of unprocessed information; (d) strict preferential uses of stolen mobile phones by offenders for only communicating illicit activities regarding carjackings and MVTs; (e) offenders' illicit receipt of offensive driving techniques; (f) offenders' illicit use of surveillance and counter surveillance strategies before, during and after the commission of carjackings and MVTs; (g) combined security loopholes within the greater Berea area and SAPS weaknesses; (h) offenders' use of a counter multi-layered approach; (i) offenders' forcible retaking and mere retaking of motor vehicles; (j) a consistent lack of group cohesion among greater Berea community members; (k) possession of unlicensed firearms; (l) duplication of key fobs; and (m) infiltration of the CID Unit.

5.3.2.1 Theme 1: Kingpins' Reactions to The Authorities' Attempts to Reduce Carjackings and MVTs in The Greater Berea Area

On the authorities' attempts to decrease carjackings and MVTs which were committed in the greater Berea at that time, the responses of Participants IKP1, IKP2, IUP, IMP, IMVTP1, ICHRP, IMVTP2, ICP1, ICP2 and QCP appeared almost the same to each other. Hence, Participant **IKP1** elaborated on the experiences of other incarcerated participants regarding the authorities' attempts to reduce carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area as follows:

> "*As mob bosses, we rightfully accepted the SAPS's tactic to decrease carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area. The SAPS's tactic required the police to collaborate with the eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality in order to rejuvenate and put some spark into the greater Berea area. Hence, the SAPS and eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality enticed wealthier residents and solicited them to move into the said neighbourhood. We mob bosses treated SAPS's and eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality's rejuvenation approach as an opportunity for us to manipulate. Relatedly, we [mob bosses] saw the regeneration process as an opportunity, because the influx of newcomers brought more valuable cars, thus, it became easier for us to steal them. We cautiously planned to recruit appropriate street-level offenders to join our grouping of offenders. In addition, we observed that new and old residents had dissimilar values, which we could manipulate for our gains*."

The *supra* finding was corroborated by Participant **IKP2** who explained as follows:

> *"We, mob bosses, cautiously formulated our own MOs and also fine-tuned existent MOs in line with the regeneration procedure. Added to this, we chose the most effectual MOs used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area. We pinpointed 3 key groups in the greater Berea area and these included: (a) affluent and middle-class community members, mostly Whites, with Indians and other communities; (b) short-term inhabitants, principally African renters, together with Coloureds and other communities; and (c) opportunistic individuals with questionable backgrounds, who temporarily stayed in the greater Berea area for criminal activities, basically from African communities. Each group provided unique features which we contemplated during our planning. This particular understanding assisted us to change our MOs in order to increase our gains or benefits*."

The above-stated issues were further illustrated by Participant **IUP**, who stated the following:

> *"Upon temporarily relocating to the greater Berea area, we offenders initially planned and intended to expand our group's presence, and we succeeded in doing so, subsequently we outnumbered the area's permanent residents. In addition, we strategically posed as responsible community members by providing local residents with targeted assistance. Therefore, we took advantage of the community's structure and culture by pretending to be good citizens. We used this false display to collect information on residents' movements, car security systems, vulnerabilities in buildings that were used as garages, and everyday routines of residents which facilitated our illegal activities*."

In describing aspects related to the offenders' preparations for temporary relocation to the greater Berea area, Participant ICHRP stated that:

> *"During our planning stages, we saw that the greater Berea area's challenges such as people not getting along, unfairness, and social disorganisation would greatly contribute to carjackings and MVTs*."

Moreover, Participant **IKP1** agreed and stated the following:

> *"Living in formerly disadvantaged townships increases the possibility of carjackings and MVTs because of inequalities. However, even in improving areas like greater Berea in Durban, carjackings and MVTs are high and they keep on rising. Prior to our arrival*

as offenders in the greater Berea area, the above-stated place experienced social disorganisation, carjackings and MVTs. Unfortunately, our actions made the greater Berea area even more socially disorganised and also faced escalated carjackings and MVTs more than before our arrival."

On the issues of gentrification and its influence on culture, offenders, residents, carjackings and MVTs, Participant **QCP** stated that:

"In terms of the greater Berea area, we thoroughly considered gentrification and we subsequently noticed that it changed the community's culture. This change silenced long-time residents, whilst newcomers, particularly, offenders such as ourselves, moved in and managed to pretend as law-abiding citizens. However, our real intent was to steal and carjack motor vehicles, hence, we took advantage of the greater Berea area's process of transformation. Us [offenders] realised while planning how to commit carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area, that when a neighbourhood is affected by gentrification and social disorder, the noted 2 issues consistently occur at the same time with increases in social diversification, residential mobility, carjackings and MVTs. Eventually, social disorder and gentrification happened exactly in the same manner we predicted during our planning stages and, in real life they were also accompanied by high increases in carjackings and MVTs."

Participant **IKP2** concurred and said that:

"We, the kingpins, thoroughly planned very well in advance to lease lavish residential units in the greater Berea area especially for our direct offenders. This eventually enabled our direct offenders to increasingly commit carjackings and MVTs with the help of street-smart offenders. We planned that our direct operatives [offenders] and street-smart offenders had to subsequently adhere to our detailed planning stages. Certainly, in turn, all our offenders focused on the subsequent use of the most suitable MOs, which were used for committing carjackings and MVTs within the greater Berea area. Subsequently, we [offenders] carjacked many residents of the greater Berea area, particularly, those who resided in expensive residential properties situated close to Mayview, a disorganised previously segregated neighbourhood."

In support of the above view, Participants **ICP1**, **ICP2**, **IMVTP1** and **IMVTP2** agreed and, they said that:

"In the greater Berea area, numerous residential properties with expensive targeted cars are situated near a formerly segregated township known as Mayview, which is

currently a disorganised neighbourhood, where many of us [offenders] were born and grew up. Therefore, mob bosses [kingpins] took advantage of the short geographical distance between the 2 said neighbourhoods, then, thoroughly planned carjackings and MVTs, which were increasingly committed by us [direct offenders] at later stages over a considerable period of time."

The need for planning and the subsequent use of illicit offensive driving techniques was expressed by Participant **IMP**, who said that:

"Our MOs which we used for committing carjackings were largely dependent on plans we made in advance for example, the use of illicit offensive driving techniques. As a reaction to the authorities' attempts to reduce carjackings, we thoroughly planned in advance all the details needed for the successful use of offensive driving techniques. We used illicit offensive driving techniques to forcibly acquire cars from motorists who frequently drove late at night or early in the morning. We planned that we would target motorists who were not restricted from travelling and those that were temporarily constrained, because they spent more time away from their homes. Careful planning of the said MO involved boxing a target in the middle and forcing it to stop."

Incarcerated participants expressed the need to relatively reveal the chances of being a victim of carjackings and MVTs in townships (deprived communities) or in disorganised communities, which experience robust socioeconomic development (gentrifying communities) such as the greater Berea area. On this specific issue, Participants **IUP**, **QCP** and **ICP1** averred that:

5.3.2.2 Theme 2: Special Recruitment of The Most Suitable Street-Level Actors

All the 10 participants had similar responses and, they described the need for the special recruitment of the most appropriate street-level criminal actors as the first step of the phenomena being studied. The special recruitment of the most suitable street-level offenders is treated as one of the perspectives of incarcerated participants. Therefore, the special recruitment of most appropriate street-level offenders is commensurate with the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MOs used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area. In this regard, the rest of the participants substantiated the data which were revealed by Particiants **IKP1**, **IKP2**, **QCP**, **IUP**, **IMP** and **ICHRP**. In addition, IKP1, IKP2 and IUP were the higher echelons (kingpins) of the motor vehicle crime syndicates. On the special recruitment of the most suitable street-level offenders, Participant **IKP2** explained:

"I am responsible for choosing the most suitable offenders. I only recruit the best persons for committing carjackings and MVTs, because as professional offenders we want to make money directly and indirectly even after death. Hence, I demand unbroken allegiance from recruited offenders. I only identify and select poor, desperate, sober and somewhat untalkative would-be offenders, who only change when I instruct them to do so. I find out and screen more information about a would-be offender and his/her background. The first meeting between a would-be offender and I involves only 2 persons and, others are not allowed. I find out what the problems and needs of a would-be offender are. After being satisfied with the screened information about a would-be offender, I recruit him/her as a new offender. Then, I start protecting the new offender and his/her family members. On the first day after a new offender has been accepted, I give him/her huge amounts of money, so that he/she can spend it on his/her family and himself/herself. From that point onwards, a new offender owes me for life."

In describing additional stages of the special recruitment process, Participant **IKP1** agreed with Participant **IKP2**. Additionally, Participant **IKP1** shared common perspectives and, stressed that conditions for aiding recruited offenders and their families are explained at suitable stages. Every recruited offender is coerced to follow the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MOs used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area. On these matters, Participant **IKP1** said:

"We also provide new offenders with large sums of money per month and/or before month-end in line with conditions. It follows that I provide introductory messages about conditions as to why we assist recruited offenders and their families. I also tell new offenders that someone will explain to them what unwritten rules are and, that a new offender must follow them without questioning anything. I also tell new offenders that unwritten rules require them to follow 7 elements or conditions, which are thoroughly explained at later suitable stages by another person. I instruct new offenders to strictly follow the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MOs used for committing carjackings and MVTs. I also order various persons to train new offenders about how to drive offensively and protectively. Furthermore, new offenders are also trained about how to commit carjackings and MVTs from the first stage to the last stage. I also tell new offenders not to discuss anything which they see or hear in our premises or about us."

In support of this perspective, Participant **QCP** expressed concurrence and added that:

> *"As soon as new offenders execute their first carjacking or first MVT, I always let them know that there is only one combined way out of this. The only combined way out of this, is to adhere to unwritten rules, which require offenders to follow 7 aspects below and die for ever. I also tell new and old offenders not to belittle the leadership, because our bond is based on the following 7 aspects or conditions: (a) openness to each other; (b) trust one another; (c) mutual respect; (d) accumulation of huge sums of money; (e) truthfulness among ourselves; (f) allegiance to the leadership and our cause; and (h) available as and when demanded. The said aspects are all operational terms, which affect the behaviours of offenders in given groups*."

From the above perspectives, it is clear that the special recruitment process and unwritten rules mirror the abilities of kingpins or higher echelons of motor vehicle crime syndicates, which enable them to punish their members and, construct behaviours based on expectations of not failing to comply with unwritten rules. This point was explained by Participant **IUP** as follows:

> *"I also urge offenders, particularly, new offenders to avoid discussing our matters with people outside our groups, because our unwritten rules do not allow the acceptance process to be abused. Additionally, I instruct offenders not to discuss our issues anywhere, except indirectly and briefly during the time when they commit carjackings or MVTs. I also tell offenders that everything, which I say and do is in their best interests and, it is part of our unwritten rules. I further inform offenders that they must not create excuses as justifications for failing to accomplish goals. I also inform offenders that we as their leaders (kingpins) have abilities to penalise them and that they are expected to behave in line with unwritten rules*."

In explicit support of this view**,** Participant **IMP** agreed and said the following:

> *"I truthfully tell new and old offenders in our groups that they will always remain as residents of the criminal world and, that the police shall forever treat them as criminals. Thus, I consistently say to fellow offenders that they should follow unwritten rules and 7 aspects which guide our behaviours. The violation of unwritten rules and 7 aspects leads to serious consequences due to the senior positions of our leaders who decide the punishments. I also tell offenders that the police also openly says that whatever worst things befall offenders, offenders are entitled to such things*."

On this matter, Participant **ICHRP** concurred and expressed the following:

> *"During our meetings, I always tell my fellow offenders that when the police refer to us [criminals], they constantly use humiliating language, yet, the same police say to perpetrators that cooperating offenders are their biggest allies in the fight against crime. This means that the police knows that offenders are in a vulnerable position and, the SAPS exploits offenders in order to end their flourishing careers. Having said this, I waste [kill] offenders who betray me or sell out what our organisation stands for*."

It is clear from the incarcerated participants' perspectives that gains derived from the special recruitment of offenders were key basis for the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MOs used for committing carjackings and MVTs. A few participants connected the special recruitment of offenders with 'unwritten rules', 'adherence to 7 aspects' and 'the fear of punishment'. The data also possibly indicate that the aforesaid issues are perceived as vital determinants of disciplinary action, which can be taken by leaders of criminal groups against offenders who do not follow unwritten rules, 7 aspects and the fear of punishment.

5.3.2.3 Theme 3: Offenders' Strict Adherence to a Bottom-Up Approach Flow of Unprocessed Information.

One of the most typical perspectives from the participants, was that of the offenders' strict adherence to a bottom-up approach flow of unprocessed information from street level offenders to leaders (kingpins) of criminal groups. This view was a second perspective of the participants about the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MOs used for committing carjackings and MVTs. All the participants provided similar responses about the second perspective regarding the phenomena being investigated. On this matter, Participant **IMVTP2** explained the following:

> *"The usual pattern of this matter was for our groups of street-level offenders to be spread across the greater Berea area. Our group of street-level offenders consisted of highly mobile spotters (temporary hawkers), car washers, temporary car guards, atypical workers and gardeners. I was also part of the group and we used mobile surveillance. We, offenders gathered information about targets and, consistently adhered to a bottom-up approach flow of unprocessed information. We collected information about parked targeted motor vehicles in order to follow them and find out where the owners lived and with whom they interacted. Kingpins also contacted us and used a constructed language only understood by us (offenders) in order to give us more information about collectors (offenders who execute practical acts and drive away targeted cars). We informed them*

about changing positions of mobile targets. We followed the targets whilst using cars disguised with big ANC or EFF stickers on the sides. Therefore, we enabled different collectors to steal and carjack targeted cars. Sometimes, I washed cars and, I also gave my kingpins additional information about targeted cars by using this same approach. Additionally, different collectors controlled by kingpins also stole and carjacked more targeted cars at later stages due to my information."

Whilst this neat synopsis gives a summary of the predominate perspective of incarcerated participants, the blurred boundaries between bottom-up approach flow of unprocessed information and contacts made by [leaders] or higher echelons of the motor vehicle crime syndicates were somewhat clear. This is challenging because, on the one hand, there is a group of street level offenders who send information to kingpins about targeted motor vehicles on the streets. On the other hand, there is a small group of kingpins who also make contacts with street level offenders by using a consciously devised language. In addition, identifying the connections between the above-stated 2 groups is challenging. Clearly, the 2 groups operate separately and only reconnect through communication when the need arises. Hence, there is a nexus between the following groups of offenders: (a) kingpins or higher echelons of the motor vehicle crime syndicates who keep their hands clean; (b) collectors who physically steal or carjack targeted motor vehicles after the receipt of relevant information; and (c) street level offenders who mainly collect information about targeted motor vehicles on the streets.

5.3.2.4 Theme 4: A Strict Preferential Use of Stolen Mobile Phones by Offenders for Only Communicating Illicit Activities.

All the 10 participants provided similar responses about the abovementioned perspective. The data showed that all the offenders adhered to a strict preferential use of stolen mobile phones for only communicating illegal activities and these included: (a) counter surveillance of targets; (b) illicit surveillance of risks; and (c) enabling the commission of carjackings and MVTs. All the participants considered the strict preferential uses of stolen mobile phones by offenders for only communicating illicit activities as a perspective regarding the phenomena being investigated. The contents of the data also revealed that offenders steal mobile phones from targeted motor vehicles, houses, pubs, clubs, taverns and restaurants in and around the greater Berea area. Offenders rebirth stolen mobile phones and, they use software to unblock stolen mobile phones. Offenders also change electronic serial number of the mobile phone. The data also revealed that stolen mobile phones enabled street-level offenders to pass information to underbosses about the following: (a) photos of targets; (b) photos of security features; (c)

average number of police patrols; (d) photos of unmarked police vehicles; (e) photos of vehicles of security companies which patrol targeted areas; (f) photos of plain clothed police officers; (g) photos of community police forum members; and (h) photos of security officers who patrol targeted areas. IUP mentioned:

> *"Our street level offenders were trained to pretend that they treated Berea Community members with respect, but our guys did not respect those enemies. Our guys carried groceries for residents without asking for money. Our guys also guarded cars without demanding too much money. Furthermore, our street level offenders trimmed off gardens of pensioners for a plate of food or for smallest fees, and they also kindly asked for small amounts of money to buy food after they cleaned gardens of non-pensioners. Domestic workers who are sent by us cleaned about 2 houses or more per day in Berea area and, their bosses paid them well and liked them too much. Domestic workers gave us information about the following: (a) names of cars; (b) names of streets where motorists parked their cars; (c) residential addresses and various designs of residential units; (d) positions where owners stood and watched their cars; and (e) days and specific times when cars were parked on the streets. This MO worked for us and most of our offenders have never been linked to crime. We teach our offenders about how to steal cellular phones from nice cars, houses, restaurants, bars, clubs and pubs. Our street level offenders use stolen cellular phones in order to communicate with us regarding our MOs, carjackings and MVTs*."

In support of this particular perspective, Participant **IKP2** agreed and said the following:

> *"Our guys on the streets and certain domestic workers used stolen cellular phones to send important information to us about the following issues: (a) photos of cars we wanted; (b) photos of security features and places; (c) photos of average number of police vehicles that patrolled the area where we carjacked or stole cars; (d) photos of vehicles which belonged to key security firms that patrolled the greater Berea area; (e) photos of security firms which patrolled specific areas where we stole and carjacked cars; (f) pictures of police officers who did not wear uniforms; (g) photos of CPF members; (h) counter surveillance of targets; (i) illegal surveillance of potential risks. Stolen cellular phones were used by my guys and the leadership, only for illegal matters known by us [offenders]. We trained our guys to perform errands of residents in order to help Berea residents to free up their time from domestic chores and, this assisted them to either relax or focus on other types of work. Hence, our guys were really liked*

by Berea residents, but our guys just put on an act in order to deceive those community members and, that is how we trained them."

The need for strict preferential use of stolen mobile phones by offenders for only discussing illicit activities was further explained by Participant **IKP1** who said the following:

"Yes, we used stolen cellular phones only for discussions between us [offenders] about matters pertaining to carjackings, MVTs and related criminal activities. We did not use stolen cellular phones for conversing with other people outside our group. We did not use stolen cellular phones for anything which is legal. Berea community members liked our guys, because our guys looked as if they respected those community members by executing many tasks. However, our guys did not respect Berea residents, because they were just pretending and, this is in line with the way we trained them."

Incarcerated participants agreed that offenders were aware of Berea community relations and, the perpetrators made sure that community members were feigningly respected. This approach strongly seemed to work because the offenders' responses were similar and advantaged the same perpetrators. On the same issue, Participant **IMP** stated that:

"Berea community members liked us [offenders] due to errands, which we [as organised groups of offenders] deceptively performed in the greater Berea area. Therefore, we [organised offenders] performed numerous chores in the greater Berea area, which improved our relationships with Berea residents whilst we masqueraded as being concerned and these tasks included: (a) carrying groceries for residents without demanding fees; (b) trimming off gardens of pensioners and, sometimes got a plate(s) of food or smallest amounts of money; and (c) cleaning gardens of non-pensioners and asked for small amounts of money in order to buy food."

The data show that the behaviours of offenders were purposeful and thought out in advance, in order to prepare and allow them to successfully commit carjackings and MVTs with the anticipation that any person in the greater Berea area would not notice that their activities were illegal.

5.3.2.5 Theme 5: Offenders' Receipt of Illicit Offensive Driving Techniques.

All the 10 participants provided similar responses and, they stated that the offenders' illicit receipt of offensive driving techniques is one of their perspectives and it is part of the participants' MOs and, it is relevant to the commission of carjackings. According to Participant **IKP1**:

"All of us incarcerated offenders, particularly, those of us who commit carjackings use 2 types of offensive driving techniques namely handbrake turns of 90 degrees and handbrake turns of 180 degrees. This requires co-offenders to collect preliminary information about targets, which is then imparted to kingpins who direct carjackers to practically use the information. Practically, we [carjackers] are taught how to drive many cars, which surround and abruptly stop targeted motor vehicles by using the aforesaid 2 types of offensive driving techniques."

Participant **IKP2** agreed and in addition said the following:

"As soon as targeted cars are confined, we [carjackers] use firearms and take possession of the targeted motor vehicles. Whilst driving attack motor vehicles, we [carjackers] are trained how to quickly drive from one lane to another lane whilst subsequently reducing the speed of a car and pressing its clutch down, as well as pulling the handbrake. We [carjackers] often use the MO which consists of dangerous skills learnt during our trainings and such skills benefit us."

In addition to the experiences of changing lanes, reducing high speeds of cars, pressing clutches down, pulling handbrakes of motor vehicles and blocking targeted cars, the carjackers mentioned the role played by front tires. On this point, Participant **IUP** explained the following:

"As a carjacker, I strictly follow my training because, it enables me to successfully turn the front tires of a motor vehicle in a preferred direction. The turning of front tires allows me as a carjacker to spin a motor vehicle for 90 degrees or 180 degrees or 360 degrees. Thereafter, I change gears for example, I change into the first gear and, I release the clutch, then I aggressively drive the vehicle in a chosen direction preferably towards the on-coming targeted car of the victim. My actions paralyse the victim of carjacking with fear and, immediately force the victim to stop."

The participants also disclosed that after a victim is forced to stop, weapons are used by offenders in order to dispossess a victim of his/her motor vehicle. Participant **ICHRP** elaborated:

"We have big bosses and, they give us many tasks about carjacking motor vehicles. A job is a job and, we rarely choose because sometimes our big bosses instruct us to steal motor vehicles and we do that as well. We want money but some of us are not highly educated like you, my PhD brother. In terms of carjackings, an offender carjacks a target [I mean a car] in line with the way offenders are trained in using illegal offensive

driving methods."

This view is further explained by different participants who provided detailed explanations regarding the ways through which they are trained about how to use illicit offensive driving techniques. This view is further elaborated by Participant **IUP** who stated the following:

> *"As a carjacker, I am trained to use information which I receive from my bosses. My bosses initially get the same information from our guys on the streets [the lookouts, spotters, hawkers and others]. Once we receive the information, we leave and identify the target [car]. As soon as we notice that the human target is vulnerable and the targeted car is also at a suitable point, we offensively drive 4 motor vehicles and, then squeeze a targeted car in the middle in accordance with restricted time and specific illegal offensive driving methods. My vehicle, which is always in front of the victim's car aggressively stops the targeted motor vehicle and we use our weapons while threatening or assaulting the victim, then we take the car by force. This is part of illegal offensive driving methods. By the way, there are 2 types of illegal offensive driving methods and these are: (a) handbrake turns 90 degrees; and (b) handbrake turns 180 degrees*."

According to Participant **IKP2**, the need for using illicit offensive driving techniques is helpful to carjackers during carjackings. Participant **IKP2** expressed this perspective as follows:

> *"Brother, offensive driving skills also enable us offenders to swiftly switch lanes and over take a target, then we turn the front tyres. The process of turning front tires allows us [offenders] to spin motor vehicles for 90 degrees or 180 degrees or 360 degrees. Spinning a motor vehicle requires the driver to turn the front tyres in a chosen direction. Additionally, I change into gear one and I release the clutch, then I aggressively drive the car in a preferred direction towards the target. Many victims are petrified when us [offenders] stop them aggressively. After stopping the targets, all of us use our weapons to threaten victims or physically assault certain parties or fatally injure them, then we take their motor vehicles by force."*

The trap approach MO: According to Participant **IKP1**, carjackers employ surveillance when following the human target on his/her way back home. On this issue, Participant **IKP1** said:

> *"When the human target drives into her/his driveway and waits for the gate to open, a group of carjackers park their cars behind the victim's targeted motor vehicle and block it. Then, 3 offenders disembark from the carjackers' car and shout at the driver whilst distracting him/her, and 2 more different offenders point firearms at the driver and force*

the driver to give up key fob whilst searching the victim for firearms and cellular phones. Then, 3 additional armed offenders act as lookouts and, the first offender focuses on the back part of the house whilst the second offender concentrates on the front part of the house and, the third lookout watches the gate and the area along the immediate street next to the house. If the victim looks at us [offenders] or becomes aggressive, then our organised MO progresses to additional kidnapping through which we forcibly take the victim with us and we damp the victim after excessively consuming alcohol for 4 days."

In describing issues in relation to Ruse approach MO, Participant **IMP** stated matters which included:

"When we [offenders] drive behind a targeted motor vehicle of the victim, we flash headlights of one of our cars next to the target. Furthermore, one of our fellow drivers who drives another car in a lane right next to the targeted car waves to the victim in order to get the target's attention. Then, the same driver [one of our fellow offenders] gestures to the victim and indicates to the victim that the targeted car has a problem. When the victim decelerates his/her car, then 4 cars of which belong to us [offenders] force the targeted car to stop. The is immediately pistol whipped and overpowered by 5 heavily armed fellow offender whilst being searched for firearms and cellular phones. Our MO progresses to kidnapping if the victim does not easily give up a targeted car, because such a behaviour is a sign of disobedience and disrespect. Again, our MO can progress to kidnapping if the victim does not listen carefully to all our instructions, because we construe such behaviours as counter attacks. Additionally, after forcefully taking possession of a targeted car, we also kidnap the victim who is held for about 5 days and released after consuming too much alcohol. Moreover, the excessive consumption of alcohol by the victim worsens matters, particularly, when registering a case of carjackings at the SAPS charge offices."

Furthermore, Participant **ICP1** described the bump approach MO and stated that:

"A group of us [carjackers] bump into the targeted victim's motor vehicle from the rear. Then, the victim stops his/her motor vehicle unknowing that it is a planned criminal act. Then, the victim disembarks from his/her motor vehicle and assesses the damage and exchanges necessary information with some of us, offenders. Surprisingly, us [carjackers] swiftly attack and overpowers the victim, then we forcibly attempt to drive the targeted car away. However, targeted cars with advanced security systems are

automatically disabled when bumped into from behind. We [carjackers] exploit vulnerabilities in advanced modern car security systems by attacking the Controller Area Network (CAN) bus and, this allows us [offenders] to send commands to the motor vehicle's security systems, which successfully overrides security aspects. Then, we drive a carjacked car away and we also kidnap the victim. This second MO can be performed by using latest expensive smart phones and advanced laptops, which interface with the car's diagnostic port."

In addition, Participant **ICP2** described the Good Samaritan approach MO and averred that:

"Not knowing the trick, the targeted victim stops to help and, in turn, we [carjackers] attack and overpower the victim. Afterwards, we [carjackers] attempt to forcibly drive the targeted motor vehicle away. However, the targeted car is automatically disabled when a button is placed on a key fob. We [carjackers] reverse the actions of a motorist by utilising jamming devices to disrupt the communication between the key fob and the targeted car. When we [carjackers] use jamming devices, we prevent the targeted motor vehicle owner from locking and unlocking the targeted car before, during and after the commission of carjacking. This MO allows us [offenders] to access and control the targeted car without setting off the car alarm systems."

Carjackers use social engineering tactics to trick car owners into revealing information about their motor and gaining access to the car itself. On this specific matter, Participant QCP stated that:

"We [carjackers] pose as police officers. In this instance, I can distract a car owner by impersonating a police officer when I stop a targeted motor vehicle by displaying a fake badge or uniform. I then claim that there is a serious issue with the vehicle, such as a safety violation that needs immediate attention. While the car owner is distracted by my conversation with him/her, I the offender ask the victim to step out of the car to inspect it or to provide documentation. During this distraction, my 4 accomplices wait nearby with firearms and point the firearms at us but they pistol whip the victim and jump into the vehicle and beat him/her up. Then, we kidnap the victim and drive away, hence, we change the MO from impersonating a police officer to carjacking by assist in forcibly taking the vehicle from the owner. The victim initially, believed that he/she was cooperating with the police, yet not, because he/she was caught off guard and this led to a successful carjacking without raising immediate alarm."

These dual MO exploit the trust that individuals have in the SAP, making it a particularly effective form of social engineering in the context of carjackings.

5.3.2.6 Theme 6: Offenders' Illicit Use of Surveillance And Counter Surveillance Strategies Before, During And After The Commission of Carjackings And MVTs

In this study, all 10 participates believed that the illicit use of surveillance and counter surveillance strategies before, during and after the commission of carjackings and MVTs is also part of the phenomena being studied. All the participants presented similar explanations regarding this particular perspective. Participant **IMP** explained:

> *"Before my guys and I commit carjackings and MVTs, we use surveillance and counter surveillance strategies in order to gather information about the police, security firms, targets, certain places, witnesses, security features, community members and anyone who does not like us. Some of the people I mentioned earlier can also use surveillance against us [offenders] and, this is definitely part of the planning processes of the SAPS and security firms. Our enemies do wait for us where we carjack or steal motor vehicles. In order to prevent our enemies from surveying us, we pretend as if we focus on motor vehicles [targets] whilst using counter surveillance strategies. This involves the following: (a) evaluating possible areas where our enemies can hide and counter survey us; (b) consistent turning and looking back in a way which appears natural, so as to find out if we are being followed; (c) setting view mirrors in suitable positions inside our cars in order to ascertain if we are under surveillance; (d) deliberately changing sides and directions, while maintaining a safe security distance, that is, when walking on streets; (e) before leaving our premises, we look through the widows to ascertain if there is anything unusual; (f) in places which are not overcrowded we consistently check if anyone is following us in a manner which is extra-ordinary*."

Participant **ICHRP** consented and added that:

> *"We first gather information about targets and, places where targets are found. Then, we observe both targets and places for reasonable periods of time. After identifying targets, we look for fixed cameras which are placed within the vicinity. We change our dress codes and take photos of all cameras, targets and places. We also take moving pictures of targets such as cars and motor vehicle owners, because they are relevant to our planning processes. We also calculate the distance between each fixed camera and the ground. This allows us to wear suitable clothes for disguising, particularly, on days*

when we decide to commit carjackings or MVTs. Offenders such as ourselves do not like cameras because they monitor behaviours of everyone even though, they do not stop us, particularly, in situations where we act suspiciously. Cameras assist us to improve our MO. We are divided into groups, which include the following: (a) cameramen who take still photos and moving photos of things which are of interest to us [offenders]; (b) carjackers; (c) and motor vehicle thieves who steal cars. Different groups of offenders are instructed to directly carjack and/or steal motor vehicles. Therefore, we are professionals because we behave accordingly."

Participant **IKP1** supported the above perspective and further added to the *supra* view that:

> *"A pool of victims whose cars were stolen in the greater Berea area and/or carjacked whilst passing through or visiting the above-stated area during their routine journeys or resided in the said neighbourhood, increased due to the following: (a) kingpins' planned placement of offenders in accessible populous residential and commercial premises within the greater Berea area; and (b) the offenders' illicit use of surveillance and counter surveillance strategies before, during and after the commission of carjackings and MVTs."*

Participant **IUP** agreed and narrated additional experiences in the following way:

> *"We [offenders] dipped ourselves in mixed socio-economic activities and, this made it very difficult to distinguish us [offenders] who engaged in lawful and unlawful economic activities from citizens that followed the law. Related to this, us [offenders] were intentionally placed in the greater Berea area, specifically, given the consideration that victims who frequented or drove through the said neighbourhood or lived within it, had been identified as drivers or owners of expensive targeted motor vehicles*."

Incarcerated participants described different additional findings. According to Participants **QCP** and **IKP2**:

> *"In the greater Berea area, expensive targeted motor vehicles were parked in close proximity to motivated street-offenders and motor vehicle thieves and this increased MVTs. Therefore, targeted expensive cars were stolen in the greater Berea area in Durban. Rich residents and opportunistic inhabitants (some of our guys) with questionable backgrounds lived in the greater Berea area and, this decreased social control, because of residential mobility and the lack of social contacts between different groups of people. Swift growth in terms of structurally diverse concentrated earnings*

made property owners feel unprotected within the greater Berea area and, they chose to relocate to other neighbourhoods. Additionally, diverse concentrated earnings created feelings of comparable inequalities amongst the offenders who lived in the greater Berea area. Feelings of comparable inequalities encouraged a habit amongst offenders through which they dealt with differences in material possessions by committing more carjackings and MVTs within the said community. There is no social cohesion in the greater Berea area."

Incidents in which carjackers and motor vehicle thieves shifted to the greater Berea area strongly appeared to have been planned, as explained by Participants **ICP2** and **IMVTP2**:

"Kingpins initially planned and utilised their own type of gentrification at later phases, and this is, because they rented expensive residential units for many of us [direct offenders] who were told to shift to the greater Berea area. Us [direct offenders] acted jointly with street-smart offenders who were also responsible for using social disorganisation in order to commit increased carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area."

5.3.2.7 Theme 7 Offenders' Forcible Retaking And Mere Retaking of Motor Vehicles From Their Victims

Regarding carjackings, although routine daily activities explained at least some degree of convergence between SA carjackers and genuine victims (real car owners and actual innocent drivers), the same could not be explained about interactions between SA carjackers and foreign victims during forcible retaking of cars. In certain situations, SA carjackers trailed their domestic victims due to the fact that their routine everyday activities led them to have contact with the victims. For example, Participants **IUP**, **ICP1** and **ICP2** stated that:

"As carjackers, we [offenders] aggressively follow a domestic victim's car. Whilst acting together, we [offenders] surround the victim's car and, we also force it to stop right in the middle of the road and we do not care about anything. Afterwards, we [offenders] collectively carjack the targeted car."

However, the manners in which interactions between SA carjackers and foreign victims happened, differed greatly. The data provided evidence of dissimilarities in the manner through which SA carjackers dealt with their 2 different types of victims (foreign and domestic victims). In support of this sentiment, Participant **ICHRP** said that:

"In all cases, us [SA carjackers] never directly trailed or followed our foreign victims

[for example foreign customers and foreign offenders] during our daily activities. Therefore, we [SA carjackers] never used an MO that required us to stalk foreign victims. Hence, we [SA carjackers] did not hound foreign victims in order to carjack them. Hey my PhD brother, in real life, routine everyday activities cannot always explain all cases where us [offenders] and the victims are brought into contact."

In fact, this perspective was further supported by Participants **QCP** and **IUP** who had identical views and they added that:

"As [SA carjackers], we initially lure or persuade our foreign victims (foreign customers and foreign offenders) and, subsequently we trap them by using sham marked police cars. We [SA carjackers] also remotely threaten to shoot our foreign victims by using heavy calibre firearms. Additionally, we [SA carjackers] use WhatsApp video calling for instantaneously conveying live threats to our foreign victims at exactly the same time as the threats are being made. We [SA carjackers] also send our own live pictures to our foreign victims, and such live images consist of our faces that are covered with balaclavas, whilst we brandish heavy calibre weapons. We [SA carjackers] also threaten foreign victims, and we point our firearms at the same receivers [foreign victims] who answer our calls."

In describing the offenders' forcible retaking and mere retaking of motor vehicles from their victims, Participants **ICP1**, **ICP2** and **ICHRP** averred that:

"*In certain circumstances, we [carjackers] follow our South African victims because their routine activities force us to have contact with them. While acting together, we [carjackers] follow and surround a victim's motor vehicle, and force it to stop in the middle of the road where we carjack it. Nonetheless, we do not stalk foreign victims who buy illegal cars from us. In fact, we initially persuade foreign victims (foreign customers and foreign offenders) and, eventually we trap them by using sham marked police cars. We also remotely use another MO through which we threaten to shoot them with heavy calibre firearms. In this situation, we use WhatsApp video calling for instantaneously conveying live threats to foreign victims at exactly the same time as the threats are being made. We send live pictures to foreign victims, which consist of our images whose faces are covered with balaclavas, whilst we brandish heavy calibre weapons and threaten foreign victims, and, we also point our firearms at the same foreign victims who answer our video calls."*

In explicit support of this perspective, Participant **IKP2** agreed and averred that:

> *"We [offenders] also send photos of live AK47 bullets to the foreign victims, whilst we load them into AK47 magazines. In relation to this, we threaten to shoot the victims in their heads and chests if they do not leave the cars at residential properties where they temporarily stay. Additionally, we instruct foreign victims to leave residential premises on foot and, not to drive targeted motor vehicles out of specific residential premises where they park them. Notably, the value and visibility of targeted cars contribute to their suitability. In many instances, the presence of very weak social controls in the greater Berea area are some of the factors which contribute to the suitability of targeted cars*."

Participant **QCP** agreed and further explained the element of capable guardianship by averring the following:

> *"In certain instances, there is a presence of capable guardianship for example, in terms of the following: (a) target hardening; and (b) motorists who drive motor vehicles with immobilisers, alarms and tracking devices experience reduced MVTs to a certain degree. In cases where electric security gates and electric fences are installed, there is also a decrease in MVTs. However, the installation of motor vehicle anti-theft devices and electric fences, as well as electric gates increase the perpetration of carjackings in the greater Berea area. In certain instances, targeted cars are installed with many layers of advanced security features (guardianship), yet, despite such protections, each targeted car succumbs to MVT. This is because we [motor vehicle thieves] use reprogrammed key fobs, which are obtained from locksmiths after submitting correct information to them so that such key fobs can be reproduced*."

Furthermore, Participant **IKP1** agreed and added that:

> *"The value and visibility of targeted motor vehicles contribute to their suitability; hence, offenders select them in order to steal or carjack them. In many cases, the presence of very weak social controls in the greater Berea area is also regarded by us [offenders] as one of the aspects, which contributes to the suitability of motor vehicles stolen or carjacked by us*."

Participant **ICHRP** described the issue about motivations as follows:

> *"Our motivations develop over time and, they lead us [offenders] to commit carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area. Such motivations include the following: (a) peer*

pressure and a desire to be part of organised groups of offenders (b) professional MVT activities (c) financing street life (d) family values and social influences; (e) improvements in both anti-motor vehicle theft devices and (f) the offenders' possession of illegal firearms."

In describing a similar situation closely related to motivational development, Participant **IMP** stated that:

"Currently, I think that we are relaxed, but within the context of MVTs we need to assertively develop and change our behaviours in line with motivational development. In terms of carjackings, we need to bring back to life some of the most severe and brutal strategies suitable for forcible acquisition of cars. For example, we have to bash into targeted cars on freeways before carjacking them and, also kidnap drivers who should be forced to excessively drink strong alcohol at later stages and, then they must be abandoned at isolated places."

5.3.2.8 Theme 8 Motor Vehicle Crime Syndicates' Infiltration of SAPS Detectives Attached to The Crime Intelligence Division (From Hereinafter Referred to as CID)

From the views of incarcerated participants, it is clear that motor vehicle crime syndicates had thoroughly planned to infiltrate SAPS detectives attached to the CID. For example, Participant **IKP2** said that:

"To a certain degree, we senior offenders planned the progression of the organised nature of our MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area. Our discussions with targeted SAPS detectives attached to the CID show evidence of planning."

The above-stated same view was echoed by Participant **IUP**, who added that:

"Planning required motor vehicle crime syndicates who approached SAPS detectives regarding recruiting them, to use general discussions about subtle issues (for example cricket, football, rugby, family problems and the sluggish SA economy), that is, when the offenders participated in recruiting police officers."

Participant **IKP1** agreed and added that:

"Our intention as motor vehicle crime syndicates was to recruit SAPS detectives attached to the CID as our own informants. As offenders, it is safe to say that access to SAPS top secret information was key to our own decision-making to commit carjackings and

MVTs in the greater Berea area. We [offenders] had a corrupt relationship with SAPS detectives attached the CID. The same SAPS detectives attached to the CID sent top-secret SAPS information to us [offenders] and we used it in order to gain. Given the type of a relationship between us offenders and SAPS detectives attached to the CID, our interrelationship was illegal and misleading, indeed."

The same perspectives were narrated by Participant **IUP** as follows:

"Our activities appear to move between less-organised crime and more-organised crime. This is because we strongly seem to involve some form of planning, yet, we did not reveal many expected characteristics of more-organised crime. Clearly, there is a link between befriending us [offenders] and the participation of corrupt SAPS police colonels in criminal acts (for example sending top-secret SAPS information to offenders and defeating the course or administration of justice)."

Offenders' perception of consistent police surveillance**.** In relation to this, incarcerated offenders described some instances of perceived consistent police surveillance. Participant **IMP** said:

"The feeling of being constantly watched by the SAPS police officers made us, as offenders, nervous before, during and after committing carjackings and motor vehicle thefts. As a result, consistent police surveillance restricted our criminal activities. In deciding whether to commit these crimes, we weighed the potential costs, which were largely influenced by our perception of the police's consistent surveillance."

5.3.2.9 Theme 9: Combined Security Loopholes Within The Greater Berea Area And SAPS Weaknesses

In this study, 8 participants stated that a combination of security loopholes within the greater Berea area and weaknesses in the SAPS structures is a key perspective about the progression of the organised nature of their MO. On this matter Participants **IKP1**, **IKP2** and **QCP** stated the following:

"My guys and all of us who steal and carjack motor vehicles took advantage of security loopholes which existed, at the time, within the greater Berea area, because we knew that the SAPS, community police forum (CPF) members and the general public were disorganised and, that they inherently fear offenders more than crime itself. Security loopholes on the part of the SAPS, CPF and the community included: (a) deliberate disregards of motor vehicle alarms which are activated when we vibrate motor vehicles

and attempt to illicitly enter them on several occasions; (b) paying no attention to the complaints raised by some members of the public about attempted carjackings or attempted thefts of motor vehicles; (c) a consistent lack of group cohesion among members of the community in the greater Berea area in Durban; (d) offenders' exploitation of bad collective police cultural attitudes and behaviours; and (f) the reluctance of senior SAPS officials to correctly follow up on security loopholes within Berea area and SAPS weaknesses. As productive offenders our bosses pay us very well, but wealthy residents of the greater Berea area always have more money than us, hence we steal and/or carjack their cars. Therefore, frequently shifting from one house to another house, having many races from different backgrounds in the same place and the existence of unequal shares between wealth residents and us (offenders) are strong factors, which show that we commit carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area."

On the same issues, Participant **IUP** repeated them and added that:

"All these issues which I mentioned reduce the spirit of junior SAPS officers and CPF members needed for proactive engagement in interventions related to carjackings and MVTs. Security loopholes within the greater Berea area and weaknesses in the SAPS structures help us to identify weak people in the neighbourhood of the greater Berea area and, this allows us to get good information from such feeble persons in order to revise our MO. Then, we commit more carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area."

In support of this perspective, Participants **ICHRP**, **IMP** and **ICP1** elaborated:

"*Constant open arguments between senior police officers about insufficient resources allocated for policing carjackings, MVTs and other offences in Berea area, contribute to problematic relationships between SAPS leaders. You see, constant open arguments and problematic relationships between SAPS leaders compel SAPS managers to shout at junior SAPS police officers. On several occasions, SAPS managers use vulgar language and criticise junior SAPS officers in our presence. Then, junior SAPS officers often release some of us guys without following exhaustive investigations. This aggressive behaviour of SAPS managers towards low ranked SAPS members stops junior police officers from thoroughly executing their tasks such as investigating and arresting us. Such flaws help us to corrupt police officers and also allows us to revise and improve our MO. This enables us [offenders] to collect valuable information from the same people who are supposed to arrest us. You see, the combination of the*

aforesaid relationships and behaviours lead to the commission of more carjackings and MVTs in Berea area. If senior police officers stop participating in open constant arguments and work together whilst taking into consideration views of junior SAPS officers, then such arguments can be addressed and they can effectively police various communities."

5.3.2.10 Theme 10: Offenders' Use of a Counter Multi-Layered Approach

All 10 participants indicted that the use of a counter multi-layered approach is a perspective, which is linked to the phenomena under investigation in this study. In describing the offenders' use of a counter multi-layered approach, Participant **IKP1** stated that:

> *"We [offenders] learn our offending behaviours from fellow offenders who are willing to share with us their ideas and methods used for committing crimes like MVTs and carjackings. For example, when we [offenders] mingle with other offenders, our relationships are meant for a given offence(s) like carjackings and/or MVTs. Crime specific definitions dominate general definitions within our underworld closest contacts. Crime specific definitions (such as MVT is not a crime but the equal transfer of wealth from the rich to voiceless poor masses or a tool for empowering unemployed youths) have more effects on our offending behaviours than general definitions and, this is because numerous offenders with similar MO occupy the larger part of interactions*."

The first aspect of the use of a counter multi-layered approach revealed by the participants, related to the connectedness of new motor vehicles to many layers of protection.

Participant **IKP2** elaborated on the connectedness of modern motor vehicles to many layers of protection and, the need for learning so many counter skills as follows:

> *"All these new cars which we target are connected to many layers of protection. You see, we carefully studied these new cars made by the Germans, French, British, Japanese, Americans, Chinese and South Koreans. We decided to respond by learning so many skills about how these new cars are protected and how we can neutralise their security layers. We learnt new skills from Indians and we recruited more guys from the security and motor industries. We learnt how to disrupt signals of cars and open them, by using internet and the On-Board Diagnostics (OBD) port, because a person does not use car keys to open new cars. Indians taught us how to disable electronic immobilisers of BMWs, Toyotas, Merced Benz, Range Rovers, Land Rovers, Min coopers, Nissan*

and other latest cars. We were taught how to prevent the electronic disruption of fuel system and ignition system."

This perspective was echoed by Participant **QCP** and, in agreement Participant **QCP** described additional skills related to the connectedness of modern motor vehicles to layers of protection. Then, Participant **QCP** stated the following:

> *"Indian guys taught us so many additional skills and they are as follow: (a) how to abuse the OBD port in order to disrupt the car's Engine Control Unit; (b) how to use special laptops and put harmful codes in the OBD, which allows us to open the car and completely control it; (c) how to interfere with the communication between a targeted motor vehicle's reporting system and cellular phones of owners of targeted cars*."

Another participant took the view that many motorists were blissfully not aware of the real extent of the problem of disarming car alarms and unlocking doors of modern motor vehicles by using radio-frequency (RF) transmitters and signal transmitters. On this matter, Participant **ICHRP** said that:

> "*Many motorists do not know that when 2 RF transmitters or 2 signal transmitters are used within a short period, doors of an expensive modern car can be opened. In addition, the offender can start the engine of the targeted car, too. As car thieves, we use our MO and, we also share tasks when we steal cars. For example, if I use an RF transmitter and I send a signal of 490Hz on medium wave to the car control module, the RF signal of 490Hz stays there all the time. In other words, what I have done is that I sent an RF signal of 490Hz to the car alarm system and, I also informed it the size of the RF signal. The car alarm system records the size of the RF signal of 490Hz, so that whenever I repress the RF transmitter it easily recognises the signal. The car alarm system is jammed when my fellow offender does something else*."

The perspective provided by Participant **ICHRP** highlighted the need for the execution of tasks in succession by an additional offender who used another RF transmitter, which is part of the overall MO used in committing this type of MVT. This point was condensed by Participant **IMP** as follows:

> "*Trying to jam a car alarm system with 1 RF transmitter is useless without using a second RF transmitter. The need for the execution of tasks in succession by using 2 different RF transmitters is based on this reality, while trying to steal a car. After my fellow offender has used the first RF transmitter through which an RF signal is sent, I also*

utilise a second RF transmitter. While using a second RF transmitter, I send another RF signal of 300Hz to the same car control module. This means that I am adding 300Hz to 490Hz which was initially sent by my colleague and, the total is 790Hz. However, the car alarm system does not need 790Hz, but it only needs 490Hz initially sent by my colleague. Therefore, my above-stated action of adding 300Hz to 490Hz remotely jams the car alarm system and unlocks the car doors. Flowing from this, I immediately contact my fellow offenders to open the door(s) of a targeted car. It follows that I press a button on RF transmitter which starts the engine of the car."

This perspective was supported by Participant **IKP1**, who agreed and stated that:

"My guys and I sit around and wait patiently and, we talk to the guy with a handheld remote control by using our mobile phones. When the guy with handheld remote control says that the targeted car is unlocked, we walk towards the target and enter it. The guy with handheld remote control remotely starts the targeted car and we quickly drive it away before the owner comes back."

During interviews, leaders of the motor vehicle crime syndicates also explained that they questioned the lack of effective MO used by offenders for committing MVTs in certain instances within the greater Berea area. Leaders of motor vehicle crime syndicates also expressed clear bitterness at the loss of time and huge profits, particularly, when they failed to supply specific makes and models of ordered cars. Hence, they adopted the most flexible and intricate MO such as obtaining car manufacturers' unique codes needed for reprogramming fobs and accessing targets. The leaders of motor vehicle crime syndicates described the benefits of using most malleable and complex MO. In describing these issues, Participant IKP2 said the following:

"Basically, we always analyse our MO and, we concluded that most of our MO are useless on certain makes and models of modern cars ordered by numerous customers. We sought solutions to the complicated and improved car security. Car alarm systems installed in specific makes and models of cars ordered by our customers are too complicated and, we cannot disable them. In addition, we cannot unlock locked steering wheels of certain makes and models of targeted cars and, we also fail to sidestep specific engine immobiliser systems which prevent engines from starting. The solution is that we have 4 insiders who work at Toyota SA Motors, Prospecton Plant in Durban. We also have 4 connections at the harbour in Durban. In addition, we have numerous connections at the following car plants: (a) Volkswagen Group SA (VWSA); (b)

Mercedes-Benz SA; (c) Isuzu Motors SA; (d) Ford Motor Company Silverton Assembly Plant; (e) Bavarian Motor Works (BMW) Group Plant Rosslyn; and (f) Nissan Group of Africa, Rosslyn Plant. Our connections who work at car plants often provide us with correct information required by locksmiths such as the manufacturers' unique codes needed for reprogramming fobs and accessing targets."

This perspective was supported by another incarcerated participant who revealed similar experiences of using the most flexible and intricate MO. IKP1 concurred with IKP2 and, described a typical process of obtaining the manufacturer's unique codes and, the reprogramming of new fobs used for accessing certain makes and models of targeted modern motor vehicles. Therefore, Participant **IKP1** agreed and expressed the following:

"Modern cars are too complicated for anyone. We cannot just enter and start modern cars. We have to go through many security steps. Sometimes, we follow security steps of certain modern cars and we neutralise them. However, security steps of specific makes and models of targeted cars are almost impossible to neutralise. Additionally, we cannot always carjack such cars, because committing such a crime is too dangerous. Hence, in such cases we approach our corrupt connections [friends] who work at car plants which manufacture Toyota, BMW, Mercedes Benz, VW, Ford, Isuzu and Nissan. Therefore, we [offenders] provide our [connections] who work at SA top car plants with makes and models of targeted cars, as well as specific different years when they were manufactured. In return, our corrupt [connections] give us [offenders] correct codes and accurate VINs, which our (corrupt connections) steal from car plants regarding makes and models of cars, as well as specific different years when targets were manufactured. Furthermore, we [offenders] contact corrupt locksmiths who use correct codes and accurate VINs of cars in order to reprogram new key fobs for targeted cars. In such cases, the complicated security systems of modern motor vehicles force us [offenders] to change our MOs used for committing MVTs in the greater Berea area. Before we start looking for targeted cars, we contact other people for their input."

From the responses of the 2 leaders of the motor vehicle crime syndicates, it is clear that car security systems of certain makes and models of targeted cars are complicated. Due to this, offenders face enormous problems when they try to steal certain makes and models of targeted motor vehicles. The process in which offenders bypass enormous problems when they intend to steal certain makes and models of targeted cars involves a number of stages. Regarding this matter, IUP concurred with the other 2 leaders of the motor vehicle crime syndicates and

explained the last stage as follows:

> *"Immediately after receiving new fobs for targeted cars from locksmiths, we contact corrupt seniors staff members who work at the Department of Transport and Public Works (DTPW). We give vile DTPW senior staff members the year, make and model of targeted cars. In return, unscrupulous DTPW senior staff members provide us with registration details of various targeted cars and, different residential addresses of owners of targets. Then, we choose suitable times and, we also locate residential addresses of owners of targeted cars in order to find out where they park targeted cars. We also find out the routes which are used by owners of targeted cars and, we study them as well. Additionally, we study and survey places where car owners park targeted cars. We start following targeted cars in an unsuspicious manner until we steal targeted cars. We stole some of the targeted cars in Berea area*."

Regarding an exploitative relationship between offenders and vile employees who work at the Durban harbour, another incarcerated participant expressed the need for the former to use illicit services which were provided by the latter and others. Participant **IMVTP2** supported the views mentioned earlier by Participants **IKP2**, **IKP1** and **IUP**. In support of the views revealed by the 3 participants, Participant **IMVTP2** added the following comment:

> *"Certain makes and models of targeted cars are manufactured overseas and SA imports them for the local market. After the arrival of imported cars at the harbour, senior employees who work there have long lists of imported targeted cars, together with codes and VINs of such cars. Corrupt employees contact and ask us to collect the required information and we pay for the information. Then, we hand over codes and VINs of targeted cars to locksmiths who reprogram new fobs. We also pass codes and VINs of targeted cars to DTPW senior employees who sit and wait for the cars to be registered. As soon as targeted cars are registered, DTPW senior employees give us registration details of targeted cars and residential addresses of relevant motor vehicle owners. Afterwards, we easily conduct surveillances and follow targeted cars until we steal some of them in Berea area. In this way, we steal targeted cars as if we are plucking feathers from a dead chicken."*

In agreement, Participants **IMVTP1** and **ICP2** shared the same perspective and they described their counter skills in terms of the offenders' MO and stated the following components:

> *"We [offenders] learnt various skills, which we use when perpetrating MVTs or, carjackings which involves dead victims or uncooperative victims. Our groups of*

perpetrators employ dissimilar MO meant for exploiting weak points of contemporary motor vehicles and, this enables us to access targeted cars and drive them without getting the permission of car owners. Kingpins choose 5 offenders and combine them in order to create a single excellent group. Kingpins instruct different groups of offenders to employ dissimilar MO in relation to each task. For example, offenders are also instructed by kingpins to utilise laptops and/or smart phones to attack the OBD port inside a car and, the OBD port is connected to numerous parts of a car. We employ the OBD port or the charging port to start the engine of a targeted motor vehicle within few minutes. We control a motor vehicle provided that we have access to the OBD port. We also utilise USB sticks or CDs to damage the software of a motor vehicle and, this gives rise to extra attacks because we fully control a targeted motor vehicle. We can also access a motor vehicle by utilising blue tooth and then start its engine. You see, Bluetooth is wireless and, we are also trained to use the Controller Area Network (CAN) to open a targeted motor vehicle and start its engine."

IMVTP2 agreed and in support of this perspective, quiet similar explanations were repeated, particularly, the combination of offenders who commit MVTs and to a certain extent carjackings. In this way, Participant IMVTP2 stated the following:

"You see, our guys had to understand their tasks very carefully because we work together in order to benefit and confuse the enemy. First, as a group, we had to use several layers of different MO. For example, offenders A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M and N all commit MVTs. In this instance, offenders A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M and N perpetrate MVTs jointly in various combinations of individuals or layers. For instance, offender A perpetrate MVT with offenders E, F and G. Then, offender B committed 3 counts of MVTs with offenders C, D, H, K and J, while offender D commit 4 counts of MVT with offenders C, A, E, F and L. Furthermore, Offender K perpetrated 3 counts of MVTs with offenders C, D, E, I, J and N. Each layer of the said offenders does not use a common MO. This layering of MOs consistently removes the possibility of being detected by investigators because it diversifies ever changing MO. The more we mix our guys with changing MO, the more layers of MO are used in the streets and this allows us to take many cars without being detected by the police. In this way we do not use 1 MO or 2 MO."

5.3.2.11 Theme 11: Offenders' Experiences in Selling Stolen and Carjacked Cars, as Well as The Forcible Retaking of The Same Cars

All the incarcerated participants in this study were in the front line of selling stolen and carjacked motor vehicles. The incarcerated participants also have first-hand experience of the forcible retaking of cars sold, which are initially stolen and/or carjacked. The incarcerated offenders treated this sub-theme as a perspective of the phenomena being studied. This particular sub-theme described the offenders' experiences in selling stolen and carjacked cars, as well as, the forcible retaking of the same cars. Referring to the sale of stolen and carjacked motor vehicles, Participant **IKP1** said that:

> *"I always ask my familiar customers if they recall the procedures which we employ in our business and they always confirm that they do. Added to this, every time when I meet my new customers, I also reiterate safe and reciprocal business procedures. I order my clients and fellow offenders [business partners] to employ codenames whenever they refer to the following: (a) names of cars; (b) colours of cars; (c) models of cars; (d) different amounts of money; (e) names of cities; (f) names of countries; (g) names of people; (h) names of firearms; (i) names of ammunitions; (j) names of days; (k) names of months; (l) names of years; (m) names of hours; (n) makes of cars; and (o) different types of statistics."*

In describing and supporting the same situation, Participant ICP further added that:

> *"Clients who recklessly look for cheap stolen or carjacked cars in Durban frequently end up failing to benefit from the purchase of cars sold at giveaway prices. Even small mistakes made by these clients can negatively affect our MO used in the following: (a) ordinary carjackings; (b) forceful retaking of sold stolen and carjacked cars; and (c) ordinary MVTs."*

This perspective was supported by Participant **IKP2** who added that:

> *"Within the greater Berea area, it is not uncommon for offenders to forcefully retake stolen cars from customers who initially bought them. The said MO frequently gives rise to argumentative issues MO due to hard evidence, which links us [offenders] to motor vehicle crimes. To maintain control, we [offenders] employ guns while retaking sold motor vehicles and, this strengthens our unwritten rules which we often share with clients. Therefore, this serves as a lesson to our clients, because it guides and shows them as to how they should behave in line with our unwritten rules. We forcefully retake*

more than half of the motor vehicles purchased from us by our customers."

Incidents of forcible retaking of sold motor vehicles, which are initially carjacked and stolen seem to happen consistently in the greater Berea area as explained by Participant **IUP**:

> *"Numerous careless clients phoned us and, they complained that their motor vehicles were forcefully retaken before they exited the greater Berea area by groups of heavily armed men. We [offenders] feigned as if we sympathised with the clients. Additionally, we [offenders] asked our affected clients whether they wanted emergency help, yet, at the same time we vaguely criticised them for their own circumstances. We [offenders] reminded our clients of their controversial conducts such as sleeping with many sex workers, yapping carelessly to various women and expending too much money unnecessarily. Then, we informed our clients that their own above-stated lifestyle made them suitable targets for attacks. Some of my colleagues even told our clients that they behaved like cornered offenders and, that they were too fancy, because they drove overpriced cars around Durban, and also wore lavish garments. By making use of the aforesaid MO, we [offenders] shifted the criticism for carjackings from our door-step to that of our clients*."

In the experience of incarcerated participants, the forcible retaking of sold cars from customers, was committed by the same offenders who disposed of stolen and carjacked motor vehicles. The *supra* point was suitably articulated by Participant **QCP** who stated the following:

> *"We [offenders] violently retook motor vehicles from our clients, which they initially paid for and collected. We [offenders] were able to forcefully retake cars from our clients because we comprehended their movements and behavioural patterns very well. Our targets included specified cars which we initially stole and carjacked. Added to this, our MO required us to choose specific dates of departure when our clients from other African states left the greater Berea for their external destinations. Our MO also required us to block above 50% of the convoys and, we quickly boxed in motor vehicles which we chose as targets. Occupants of the first motor vehicles did not notice that their companions' cars were being forcefully retaken by us. Additionally, too many vehicles on the road (at the time) during peak hours and our timed actions within a short period time prevented anyone from assisting the victims at that stage. Sadly, intelligence-based methods for tracking and apprehending perpetrators who commit such car offences are defectively used in SA and, we [offenders] cannot report our own offending activities."*

Participant **ICP2** supported the above perspective and added that:

> "*We [offenders] disguised ourselves by wearing hooded tops, balaclavas, dark sunglasses, tops with long sleeves, and hand groves. We also used vulgar language in order to supress our customers' reactions and this tormented them, too. Whilst using vulgar language, we also pointed heavy calibre firearms at the customers and we forcibly retook the cars which they initially bought from us. They did not report any issues related to the forcible retaking of cars to the police for 2 reasons. First, the forcibly retaken cars were initially carjacked and stolen. Second, the money used for purchasing forcibly retaken cars was not declared at SA boarders, because they did not have it. In fact, the money used for buying forcibly retaken cars was raised by us [offenders] in SA through the massive sale of illicit drugs, which the same customers supplied*."

Participant **ICHRP** also supported this matter and stated the following:

> *"We [offenders] adopted the greater Berea area for non-South African clients due to 3 reasons. Firstly, it is reasonably quiet and less terrifying for visitors. Secondly, there are very few police patrols within the greater Berea area in relative to North Beach or South Beach. Thirdly, the position of the greater Berea area enables us [offenders] to swiftly escape from a crime scene. Even though the greater Berea area seems like a beautiful area for any reasonable person to stay, it is not because of our offending actions. In spite of the implied risks, our clients continuously come back to purchase more carjacked and stolen motor vehicles from us, offenders. Us [offenders] target unsuspecting foreign nationals and South Africans, who buy stolen and carjacked motor vehicles from us, but subsequently we forcibly retake the same cars again for the second time."*

6.3.4.12 Theme 12 (5.3.2.12): A consistent lack of group cohesion among greater Berea community members. All the incarcerated participants expressed the opinion that a consistent lack of group cohesion affects the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area. A consistent lack of group cohesion among greater Berea Community members is also closely associated with kingpins' exploitation of offenders linked to marked income inequalities within the population of the greater Berea area. On these issues, Participant **IMVTP1** explained the following:

> *"When we [offenders] open car doors in a dubious way, inquisitive bystanders frequently express suspicions about our acts. Nonetheless, their companions provide*

personal opinions to them such as being oblivious to what they observe or hear, as a way of fearing for their safety because of our brutal repute. This type of a condition gives emphasis to the lack of group cohesion among community members of the greater Berea area, which facilitates and increases organised crime for example MVT incidents committed in the above-stated neighbourhood. Kingpins manipulate the lack of group cohesion among residents in the greater Berea area, because they rent rooms and small flats for perpetrators who, in turn, collect information about targets (such as cars and car owners/drivers). This manipulation leads to financial inequities within the greater Berea area, because kingpins earn huge profits from illicit acts of the offenders."

Participant **IMVTP2** agreed and added the following:

"Given the associational interrelationship between kingpins and us ordinary offenders, 2 matters are required to be dealt with. First, it is necessary to deal with the manipulation of offenders by kingpins and, this is connected with financial inequities in the greater Berea area. Second, solve the lack of group cohesion amongst community members of the greater Berea area and, this is also a relevant solution to the current problem."

Participant **IKP1** supported the above-stated second issue and added that:

"Community members of the greater Berea area lacked group cohesion because of regular relocations in and out of the said residential area. Due to differences in residents' backgrounds and period of residences, there is an absence of social connections among residents of the greater Berea area. The greater Berea area's expansion and augmented mixture happened together with an increase in residential instability and crimes such as carjackings and MVTs."

Furthermore, Participant **IKP2** agreed and also added that:

"As expected, the lack of social cohesion in the greater Berea area worsened the residents' fear of crime. Additionally, it appears that both the absence of social cohesion and the media's amplification of the fear of crime did not reduce the fear of crime among residents in the greater Berea area."

Regarding the media's amplification of the fear of general crime, Participant **IUP** said the following:

"The media's amplification of the fear of general crime, especially carjackings and MVTs, is linked to Berea community members' deemphasis of formal policing and, the

acceptance of informal policing, which is definitely our key MO used for committing MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban."

5.3.2.13 Theme 13: Offenders' exploitation of hostilities between the police and the community positively shape the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MOs used for committing MVTs in the greater Berea area

Incarcerated participants believe that the exploitation of hostilities between the police and the community, strengthen and improve the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing MVTs in the greater Berea area. This was corroborated by all the research participants. With reference to the exploitation of hostilities between the police and community, Participant **QCP** stated the following:

"SAPS police officers and community members of the greater Berea area do not frequently understand one another. SAPS police officers treat their standing orders and regulations as being relevant to police operations and, this restricts involvement with community. Police officers use their power by way of pressing for information about offences without requiring the participation of civilians in formulating strategies. Finally, SAPS police officers show reasonable doubt by vowing that civilians have to wait for them and allow them to deal with crimes, so that they can solve their grievances."

Furthermore, Participant **IUP** described police complaints about being monitored by the community and CPF members. On this matter, Participant **IUP** expressed the following:

"Police officers put frustration with residents into words by making use of metaphorical dialect in order for them to explain their emotions. SAPS officers characterise being overburdened, by comparing their circumstances to commandeering an immovable omnibus carrying demanding and drunk passengers who want to travel to various opposite directions at the same time. SAPS police officers feel that they are consistently being observed by members of the general public who employ cellular phones to record their activities, which makes it impossible for them to perform their work tasks. Added to this, SAPS police officers dislike the existence of CPF members at local police stations, because they think that CPF members weaken their power. Finally, SAPS officers contend that community policing cannot reduce the local fear of crime and, this is connected with the careless and thoughtless behaviours of civilians who are not trained to police any person."

The preceding perspective was reiterated by Participant **ICP1** in the following words:

> *"Police officials plan their operations alone and, they do not allow CPF and community members to help them how to formulate workable strategies for fighting crime. Instead, police officers want the community to provide information about crimes which have already been committed, including names of offenders and future dates when new crimes will be committed. The police always tell us who their targets are and future dates set aside for police operations, as well as areas where police operations will be conducted. This type of information allows us to change our MO in order to counter their operations. Police officers always say to us that they cannot listen to civilians, because civilians are not trained to police anyone*."

Participant ICP2 reiterated similar sentiments, and made the following point:

> *"The SAPS plans its operations single-handedly and, it neither invites the CPF nor community members to participate in developing strategies for fighting crime. The SAPS expects residents of the greater Berea area to only supply information about previous offences, possible subsequent/future crimes, whilst sharing minute facets concerning their own targets and planned operations with police informers who pass such information to us [offenders]. This clearness or unambiguity on the part of the SAPS enables us [offenders] to change our MO in order to escape from the police and avoid them, as well as frustrate SAPS detectives. SAPS police officers argue that they cannot depend on inputs formulated and provided by the civilians because civilians do not have the required training needed for effectual policing."*

This perspective was strengthened by Participant **ICHRP** who expressed the following words:

> *"The effects of apartheid cause residents of the greater Berea area to carefully assess police behaviours, so as to attempt to connect them with previous damaging conducts. The part played by the media in this issue is that it fails to present full and correct narratives concerning police issues, because it frequently twists facts and contributes to deceptive statements. The media's twisting of facts intensifies our MO used for committing MVTs, particularly, carjackings. Due to this, petrified community members turn to persons who pledge to protect them including perpetrators such as ourselves [offenders]."*

Participant **IKP1** agreed and repeated the matter about misconceptions regarding the police in the following words:

> *"Residents of the greater Berea area concentrate more on misunderstandings about dishonest police officers than on constructive and helpful contributions of incorruptible police officers. Additionally, the media frequently strengthens misunderstandings about the police and, it does not provide inclusive statements regarding interactions between the police and offenders. The aforesaid circle of false information together with effects of apartheid and our manipulative conducts as offenders, intensify and support strained relations between the SAPS and residents of the greater Berea area. The combination*

of the above-stated behaviours make it easier for offenders to commit crimes like carjackings and MVTs."

Participant **IMP** supported the aforementioned perspective and added more views to the following issues: (a) hostilities and strong divisions between the police and Berea community; (b) media's amplification of the fear of crime; and (c) offenders' injection of informal policing and their interests in MVTs and carjackings. On these issues, Participant **IMP** said:

> *"We [offenders] take advantage of strained relations between the SAPS and community members of the greater Berea area through ordering hired criminals to relocate to the greater Berea area and cause mayhem. Since we [offenders] are well informed about the friction between the SAPS and residents of the greater Berea area, we take disorder to the community members of the said neighbourhood in order to remain pertinent and connected to them. We [offenders] accept as true that mayhem steers change, which is needed for own expansion in a sluggish setting."*

In support of this particular narrative, Participant **IUP** agreed and said that:

> *"We premeditatedly cause chaos in the greater Berea by ordering troublemakers to go to the above-stated neighbourhood and cause problems for the residents and, this gives rise to hostilities between the SAPS and community members. These disputes together with the media's doom-mongering, causes the residents of the greater Berea area to lose confidence in formal policing and resort to informal policing. This change to informal policing enables us [offenders] to exploit the situation and commit MVTs more effortlessly than previously. Additionally, informal policing also births more opportunities for us [offenders], such as the perpetration of carjackings."*

In relation to the media's amplification of the fear of crimes, such as carjackings and MVTs, Participant ICHRP stated that:

> *"The media's concentration on both carjackings and MVTs caused the residents of the greater Berea area to be fearful of the above-stated offences. The media also caused the residents of the greater Berea area to depend on informal policing more than formal policing. Due to this, informal policing became a repeated and habitual MO for us [offenders] who committed MVTs and carjackings in the greater Berea area."*

Concerning chaos in the greater Berea area, its causes are not completely explicit due to the incarcerated participants' failure to specify specific unlawful acts committed by offenders that

contribute to chaos. However, numerous participants subsequently mentioned several acts that are considered to be indicative of chaos. This specific point was initially explained by Participant **ICP1** as follows:

> *"We [offenders] initially focus on interfering with social norms in the greater Berea area and we achieve this by bringing into action disruptive persons who cause chaos in the said neighbourhood. Disruptive persons' illicit activities include the following: (a) vandalising public and private property; (b) harassing domestic animals and Berea community members; (c) abusing illegal drugs and alcohol in public spaces; (d) shoplifting; and (e) prostitution. In general, disruptive offenders' intentions are to cause havoc and compromise safety and orderly behaviour in the greater Berea area."*

Participant **IMVTP1** concurred and further explained the following:

> *"Residents of the greater Berea area open criminal cases against offenders at the local police station, but SAPS officers frequently battle to react effectually because of constitutional restrictions, which safeguard suspected person's rights. Dishonest SAPS CID officers give offenders various duplicates of complainants' dockets, which allow them to comprehend evidence and advise real suspects on how to avoid detection. We [offenders] introduce manufactured suspects who look like real suspected persons. Subsequently, us original offenders urge manufactured offenders to stay in certain places and wait to be arrested, whilst we pretend as if we sympathise with the complainants. We anonymously contact complainants and inform them about the exact whereabouts of manufactured offenders."*

Participant **ICHRP** agreed and expressed the following:

> *"Victims often mistaken us [perpetrators] for other offenders and, this contributes to uncertainties and inconsistencies, as well as a viewpoint that all black people look the same, which leads to the involvement of innocent persons. SAPS investigating officers refuse to apprehend such suspects in the absence of hard evidence. Instead of arresting innocent persons, SAPS detectives request chief prosecutors to study and assess the cases prior to taking them to court. This causes strained relations between the SAPS and the residents of the greater Berea area. On the one hand, residents of the greater Berea area erroneously criticise SAPS officers for: (a) not arresting offenders; (b) favouring offenders' rights over those of victims; and (c) behaving like defence attorneys for offenders. On the other hand, the media's coverage of the above-stated 3*

key issues worsen conflicts by characterising SAPS officers as blameable until shown to be innocent."

In support of this perspective, Participant **IMVTP2** said the following:

"Certain people benefit from social media by uttering anti-police opinions, hence, denying police officers the opportunity to demonstrate and express their good inputs as accountable citizens. Strained relations which we [offenders] create between the SAPS and the residents of the greater Berea area make community members treat police officers as ineffectual. Due to this, cynical residents in the greater Berea area seek help from us [offenders] in particular security and protection, hence, they treat us [offenders] as a more responsible replacement of the SAPS."

In addition to the experiences of misconceptions about the SAPS and hostilities between the police and Berea community members which they recounted, incarcerated participants provided explanations about the implementation of informal policing as a preparation for committing MVTs in the greater Berea area. This was explained by Participant **IMP** as follows:

"Strained relations between SAPS police officers and community members of the greater Berea area give rise to the non-acceptance of state policing. We [perpetrators] take advantage of this situation by carrying out informal street patrols, which usher in MVTs in the greater Berea area. We [key perpetrators] target susceptible petty offenders and homeless persons, and we also relocate them to undesirable places. We [offenders] place lookouts on the streets while implementing informal policing and, they pretend to be concerned about the wellbeing of Berea community members, yet, lookouts are only interested in gathering necessary information for us offenders and kingpins. The information collected by lookouts is needed for creating intelligence for us [offenders] who commit MVTs. Lookouts consistently send and resend relevant information to kingpins, and the information pertains to motor vehicle security systems and street patrols. In short, the information is conducive for MVTs and other related offences."

Participant **ICP2** agreed and said the following regarding MVTs and the media's negative reports about the police:

"At the same time when perpetrators participate in informal policing in the greater Berea area, media stories about SAPS officers' inappropriate behaviours give rise to dissatisfaction, which compromises the reputation of hardworking police officers. The

media's dismissive reporting about police conducts promotes the lack of certainty amongst community members of the greater Berea area and, this leads to a setting that facilitates MVTs. Even though the media does not succeed in recognising our fruitful MVTs, it sometimes commends SAPS officers for arresting offenders and, this makes us fine-tune our planning and MO utilised for committing motor vehicle offences."

In support of this view, Participant **IKP2** added and said the following:

"We perpetrators have cynicism towards the police, because of their discerned ineffectualness and the media's contradictory description of SAPS officials, which usually has a propensity for condemnation. Our parents brought us up and they taught us not to trust the SAPS officers and, this is stimulated and intensified by their previous cynical experiences with the police. As a consequence, we [offenders] participate in informal policing through which we carry out some of the SAPS's tasks within the greater Berea area. Hence, we [offenders] employ informal policing as one of the MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area."

While the initial parts of the above-stated broad MO used by car thieves involves discrediting the police and injecting informal policing in Berea, a subsequent and final section of the same MO requires offenders to take a series of well-coordinated steps before stealing cars. In illustrating this matter, Participant **IMVTP1** expressed the following:

"We [perpetrators] are grouped into various groupings and each has its specified tasks. New groupings of perpetrators act as if they bolster the constitution of SA whilst conducting fake patrols meant for instilling fear in community members of the greater Berea area. We [offenders] deceive community members of the greater Berea area by asserting that we have the potential of dealing with their victimisers, because the majority of us and their victimisers all come from the same townships. In terms of MVTs, we [offenders] utilise 2 relay boxes and each is controlled by an offender and a lookout's task is to warn the other 2 perpetrators about possible dangers. Our kingpins supply information about targets (such as cars and human beings) and, this allows us to pilfer motor vehicles swiftly during the absence of car owners."

This perspective was shared by Participant **QCP**, who stated the following:

"In MVT incidents, 2 offenders with relay boxes and a lookout operate together. The first offender captures radio signals from the motor vehicle owner's keyless key fob

and relays them to offender number 2, who utilises them to open the target and start its engine within few minutes. The motor vehicle's internal computer contemplates that the real key fob is very close to it, yet, it is not. We [offenders] choose the following cars: (a) BMW; (b) Mercedes Benz; (c) Range Rover; (d) VW; (e) Mini Cooper; and (f) Audi. We also employ signal boosters to increase and alter radio signals, enabling a stolen motor vehicle to work even when it is far away from the keyless key fob."

Participant **IMVTP2** agreed and further explained the following:

"We [groups of offenders] steer clear of overt interactions in order to fend off suspicions and misinterpretations of our behaviours. Since I am a motor vehicle thief, I employ a keypad to enter different passwords until a right password is entered and blended with the car's control circuit. The said MO enables me to swiftly enter a targeted motor vehicle and start its engine, as well as driving it away whilst manipulating defects in latest car security systems."

Additional organised MO are used by motor vehicle thieves who target certain models and makes of cars in the greater Berea area. This matter was described by Participant **ICHRP** who said the following:

"Regarding certain motor vehicle models, I install a triangle-shaped object into a pliable plastic, which is then lodged between the driver's door and the car body. Afterwards, I press an inflatable airbag and force air into it until sizeable gaps are created between the door of the car and its body. Formed sizeable gaps enable me to utilise a lengthy bendable instrument needed for pulling the door pin and opening the driver's door. In terms of motor vehicles with 1 keyhole, I steer clear of setting off the alarm system by making use of my deep insight and, I also circumvent tripping the alarm system through the use of an intensified [strong] cotton string. I create a loose knot by utilising a cotton string and, the wobbly knot is inserted into the gap between the door pin and the door, then it is tightened around the door pin. Afterwards, I pull up a tightened cotton knot in order to also pull the door pin and, then open up the driver's door and subsequently access the targeted car before finally stealing it."

Participant **IUP** agreed and added more explanations about pertinent actions taken by motor vehicle thieves whilst inside targeted cars before they start their engines. In describing the most relevant steps taken by car thieves that precede the stage in which engines of targeted motor vehicles are started, Participant **IUP** stated that:

"Whenever I target a Hyundai or a Kia motor vehicle, I begin by taking out a flat screwdriver and a USB cable. I utilise the flat screwdriver for untightening nuts and bolts around the steering wheel, and I also eventually detach the ignition cylinder. This process involves removing a plastic cover underneath the steering wheel, thus, the ignition cylinder is left unprotected. I then push the flat screwdriver into the ignition cylinder and shake it, and I also turn it right and left until the ignition cylinder is disconnected. The whole procedure lasts about 2 minutes. Afterwards, I press the USB cable in a slot where the ignition cylinder was positioned in order to start the engine and, unsecure the steering wheel. We [offenders] concentrate on Hyundai and Kia models manufactured between 2011 and 2020, because their weak anti-theft steps taken to prevent theft remain unaltered. We also teach numerous willing offenders about how to steal cars, as long as they pay for such lessons."

Furthermore, a certain incarcerated participant also described some instances where engines of certain models and makes of cars could be started after the removal of relays. On this point, Participant **ICHRP** stated the following:

"Sometimes, I use a metal cutter and I cut all relays underneath the steering wheel or hidden somewhere within the car and then, I remove everything including the alarm system within 4 minutes. I am trained in identifying different relays and purposes of various cables which are attached to them. Relays are switches which can be turned on and off, and they distribute power to the fuel pump, alarm systems, the ignition system of modern cars, sunroof, or windows. I immediately remove an ignition relay which is often situated in the fuse and relay panel underneath the car bonnet. Whenever I remove a relay, I reconnect the wires directly to each other and, direct connections of wires remove the purposes of relays. Therefore, in the absence of relays, I can start an engine of a stolen car without problems and the car cannot be immobilised. Hence, we [offenders] remove relays from targeted stolen cars, because they cause problems for offenders."

Clearly, the above-stated empirical data show that there are 3 parts of the motor vehicle thieves' MO used for committing MVTs in the greater Berea area mentioned in this sub-section. These 3 parts of the MO used by organised car thieves in the greater Berea area include: (a) organised car thieves' exploitation of hostilities between the SAPS and Berea community members and, this requires organised car thieves to pit the police against the community by deliberately

sending marauding offenders (third parties) who cause chaos in the greater Berea area and, then organised car thieves blame the SAPS for being incompetent and biased; (b) organised offenders' injection of informal policing under the pretext of riding the greater Berea area of marauding offenders, yet, organised car thieves are interested in committing MVTs; and (c) organised car thieves' use of different methods, which are suitable for committing MVTs in the greater Berea area.

Research question B

How does the progression of the organised nature of the carjackers' and motor vehicle thieves' MOs change from one stage to another stage? In answering the *supra* Research Question B, the researcher developed the following theme: the change of the progression of the organised nature of the carjackers' and motor vehicle thieves' MO from one stage to another stage.

5.4 THE CHANGE OF THE PROGRESSION OF THE ORGANISED NATURE OF THE CARJACKERS' AND MOTOR VEHICLE THIEVES' MOs FROM ONE STAGE TO ANOTHER STAGE

Incarcerated participants overwhelmingly reported that the change of the progression of the organised nature of the carjackers' and motor vehicle thieves' MO from one stage to another stage, is necessary for their well-being and the completion of carjackings and MVTs. The change of the progression of the organised nature of the carjackers' and motor vehicle thieves' MO derives from a number of factors which include the following: (a) offenders' perception of consistent police surveillance; (b) offenders' tactical exploitation of offending and distractive behaviours; (c) motor vehicle crime syndicates' infiltration of SAPS detectives; and (d) the use of small drones which record movements of victims and also capture images of targeted motor vehicles.

5.4.1 Theme 1: Offenders' Perception of Consistent Police Surveillance

The empirical data showed a compelling need for the change of the progression of the organised nature of the carjackers' and motor vehicle thieves' MO from one stage to another stage, as utilised by the said offenders. Hence, incarcerated participants were of the opinion that the change of the progression of the organised nature of MO from one stage to another stage was necessary for the offenders.

In part, the offenders' perception of consistent police surveillance causes the progression of the

organised nature of the carjackers' and motor vehicle thieves' MO to change from one stage to another stage. This view was summarised and expressed by Participant **IKP1** who stated that:

> *"The progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs changes from one phase to another phase, and it involves changes which are required. The progression of the organised nature of MO is partially caused by the manner in which we perceive constant direct and indirect police surveillances. In this instance, SAPS members do not want to be seen interacting with community members whilst they conduct surveillances, that is, whether in police uniforms or not. We [offenders] have a long history of committing different offences in various places. Therefore, we know numerous police officers through our interactions with them on different occasions. Hence, we know how SAPS members work and think. The more police officers try to disguise themselves and wear civilian clothes, the more they remain the same to us. Due to this, SAPS members work with certain community members who conduct surveillances on behalf of the police and, such community members are regarded as trusted eyes and ears of the police. We [offenders] ask numerous domestic workers who are also on our payroll to obtain mobile numbers of people who regularly communicate with their employers in Berea."*

In support of this perspective, Participant **IKP2** expressed the following:

> *"We always train domestic workers how to unlock locked mobile phones and, subsequently they unlock locked cellular phones whenever the need arises. Domestic workers on our payroll reveal to us [offenders] more than what we expect. For example, such domestic workers include contents of consistent telephonic private conversations between their employers and people who turn out to be senior police officers. Domestic workers tell us specific rooms/places inside buildings where their employers watch offenders commit crimes including carjackings and MVTs. Domestic workers also tell us the exact times when their employers observe illicit activities on the streets in Berea. Hence, consistent direct and indirect police surveillances trigger us to increase our vigilance at every stage of our MO. In this way, the progression of the organised nature of our MO is informed by the information gathered about indirect and direct police surveillances."*

This perspective was shared by Participant **ICHRP** who agreed and added that:

> *"Consistent police surveillances also escalate police presence in certain areas and, this increases both tasking and cooperation between the police and certain community members. However, tasking and cooperation between the SAPS and specific community members is not effectual because the media, us [offenders] and most of the residents in the greater Berea area discredit the police. Therefore, most of the residents in the greater Berea area do not buy into things said by the SAPS about crime prevention strategies. In fact, most of the residents in the greater Berea area do not communicate with the SAPS. Hence, we change our MO before, during and after the commission of MVT or carjackings. We frequently change our MO in order to further confuse the police and their royal informers, and this allows us to successfully commit carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area."*

In illustrating the progression of the organised nature of MO from one stage to another stage used by carjackers and motor vehicle thieves, Participant **IUP** commented the following:

> *"We frequently experience situations in which we quickly escalate our counter surveillance methods, whilst creating an impression that crime is being prevented and reduced. This requires offenders to behave as if they are abandoning carjackings and MVTs, yet we escalate our vigilance in order to monitor police strategies and commit the above-stated offences, then, pretend as though nothing happened. Therefore, such well-calculated changes to our behaviours as offenders, reduce direct police surveillance. However, the above-stated changes to our behaviours [as offenders] increase indirect police surveillance, which is carried out by few residents who are treated by the police as their trusted eyes and ears on the ground."*

5.4.2 Theme 2: Offenders' Use of Small Drones Which Record Movements of Victims and also Capture Images of Targets

While incarcerated participants initially noted that the progression of the organised nature of their MO partially stemmed from direct and indirect police surveillances, they also subsequently mentioned the benefits of technologically advanced counter-surveillance strategies, which were used by them, for example small drones. For incarcerated participants, the key reason for using small drones was to make sure that the progression of the organised nature of their MO happened in methodological ways. In support of the *supra* statements, Participant **QCP** stated that:

"We [offenders] frequently knew where owners of targeted costly motor vehicles resided in upmarket suburbs such as the greater Berea area, because many of them were our close neighbours. We [offenders] regularly checked the surrounding areas for irregular activities, nonetheless, elevated wall fences, which were constructed around targeted properties obscured whatever happened behind such fences. We employed drones fitted with cameras and, they flew over targeted residences whilst tracking motor vehicle owners' movements and taking advantage of elevated wall fences which were supposed to safeguard the targets [cars and motor vehicle owners]. This MO aided us [offenders] to perpetrate carjackings and MVTs outside elevated wall fences or in front of main gates."

Similar sentiments were echoed by Participant **ICP2**, who said:

"We [offenders] employed noiseless drones whilst we were inside our own mobile minibuses with tinted windows and/or inside our fellow offenders' apartments, hence, we observed targets without causing suspicions. This particular MO assisted us to collect required information about security systems of motor vehicles and car owners' routines. Additionally, silent drones enabled us to see whether car owners were awaiting us or safeguarding their motor vehicles or they intended to depart from their residences. We utilised the intelligence to prepare, formulate and change our MO used for perpetrating carjackings and MVTs, as and when the need arises. By taking advantage of the constructed environment, we [offenders] were indirectly allowed to exploit our targets and perpetrate carjackings and MVTs."

The *supra* findings were validated by Participant **ICHRP** as follows:

Participant **IKP1** concurred and added that:

"In the greater Berea area, rich and questionable persons co-existed, and this contributed to both the absence of social controls and weak social connections between various groups. This setting led to feelings of income inequality amongst the least comfortable community members and, this also included us, the offenders. Due to this, we [offenders] increased the commission of carjackings and MVTs to address these dissimilarities in material possessions within the greater Berea area."

In support of the *supra* narrative, Participant **IKP2** agreed and also expressed that:

> *"Social bonds between residents decreased with rapidly rising reciprocal social dissimilarities and, declining duration of residence for many residents [at that time] of the greater Berea area. Reductions in social bonds between inhabitants of the greater Berea area were because of elevated residential mobility into and out of the abovementioned neighbourhood."*

5.4.3 Theme 3: Offenders' tactical exploitation of offending and distractive behaviours

Incarcerated participants described their own tactical exploitation of offending and distractive behaviours as one of the strategies, which makes the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs to change from one stage to another stage. According to Participant **IMP**, in the environment where carjackings and MVTs are committed:

> *"We [professional offenders] manipulate offending and distractive behaviours, particularly, those of marauding criminals, imposters and corrupt SAPS officers. This is one of the strategies which we use for changing the progression of the organised nature of our MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area, from one stage to another stage. As already stated above, we [professional offenders] employ strategies such as chaos and lies for altering our MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs. This is very difficult for outsiders to understand, because we [professional offenders] instruct marauding offenders to cause chaos and commit offences in the greater Berea area and, we also order imposters to physically appear as if they induced chaos and perpetrated crimes. By so doing, we [professional offenders] shift the blame for generating chaos and committing crimes from marauding criminals to the door step of imposters who are not responsible for chaos and crimes. To terminate this, we need to stop exploiting these behaviours. We cause confusion by instructing real offenders to cause chaos and perpetrate crimes and, then provide falsehoods to victims. This makes victims think that innocent people are suspects, yet not. We [professional offenders] encourage victims to impel the SAPS to apprehend innocent people, who look like real offenders. We [professional offenders] do this in order to discredit the SAPS and distract investigating officers from our real crimes, and make it very difficult for the police to arrest us."*

All the incarcerated participants reiterated and supported the *supra* perspective because, as Participant **ICP1** stated:

> *"The process of changing the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO from one stage to another stage is explicit to offenders but it is not obvious to outsiders and victims. This is due to partnering chaos and lies as already explained above, which are employed to mislead victims and honest police officers."*

In support of this perspective, Participant **IKP2** expressed consent and added that:

> *"When Berea residents report illegalities perpetrated by marauding offenders, we know that they do not provide the SAPS with specific fixed addresses where real suspects can be found. We [professional offenders] immediately exploit this lack of much needed information about addresses. Thus, as professional offenders, we immediately contact corrupt police officers who give us duplicated complete SAPS dockets. Such dockets are about offences committed in the greater Berea area by marauding offenders. After confirming the absence of fixed addresses where suspects can be located, we [professional offenders] telephonically contact the victims. There is no person who can solve our tactical exploitation of offending behaviours of marauding offenders and distractive behaviours of corrupt SAPS officers. Indeed, this is our game."*

Participant **IUP** agreed and stated the following:

> *"We [professional offenders] dupe victims by providing them with fake information about the location of their offenders in the greater Berea area. We [professional offenders] then instruct imposters to wait at a certain place and pose as offenders, and the victims erroneously identify them as the actual criminals. The police are forced to take into custody the imposters, and we [professional offenders] manipulate the situation to our advantage. However, the only way to stop this exploitation is for us to stop playing this double-dealing dangerous game."*

In further substantiation of the offenders' tactical exploitation of offending and distractive behaviours, **IKP1** stated:

> *"We [professional offenders) exploited the police's oversights which they make when handling both victims and suspects, because SAPS detectives usually ignore major inconsistencies in statements. We [professional offenders] pitted SAPS officers against the victims when we urged the latter to force the former to arrest the imposters. SAPS detectives usually write false confessions and compel people to sign them, in spite of*

the suspects being innocent. Subsequently, it is disclosed that the suspects were incorrectly accused and they did not perpetrate the offences. This is because the suspects were already imprisoned at the time when the offence was committed. Therefore, in turn, it follows that the residents of the greater Berea area accuse the SAPS of exploiting crime statistics in order to get a bigger budget."

In support of the preceding perspective, Participant **QCP** expressed the following:

"When SAPS detectives perpetrate blunders, we [professional offenders] manipulate such errors in order to damage their reputation and condemn them for being incompetent. Victims and residents of the greater Berea area also condemn SAPS officers and treat them as inept and untruthful. This bitterness contributes to the absence of partnership, because the residents of the greater Berea area become unprepared to apportion information about offences with the police. Finally, flaws of SAPS investigators give rise to the organised nature of our MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area. This creates additional divisions between the SAPS and the residents of the greater Berea area. A possible remedy for this this problem is to solve the bitterness between the SAPS and Berea community members."

In addition, Participant **ICHRP** agreed and explained the matter in the following way:

"As I see it, we are behaving in a self-destructive manner by discrediting the SAPS and fostering informal policing in the greater Berea area. Nevertheless, it is nice and beneficial for us [offenders]. What we are really doing is employing these patrols to revise and improve our own offending MO. By carrying out informal policing, we are able to look into the weaknesses of car owners and spot the most vulnerable motor vehicles, which then assists us to change our MO in order to sidestep enhanced security systems. Additionally, we are also able to spot the most tactical places in the greater Berea area where we can perpetrate carjackings and MVTs. By looking into the flaws of car owners and spotting the most ill-protected cars, we are able to alter our MO from one stage to another stage. But, honestly speaking, the only way to resolve the problematic informal policing, which we imposed on the resident is to solve animosities between the SAPS and community members of the greater Berea area. Therefore, the

foregoing point is the only approach needed for stopping us from committing carjackings and MVTs. Nevertheless, in reality, that is not a simple achievement at all."

5.4.4 Theme 4: Offenders' infiltration of SAPS detectives and the positive feedback from the latter were jointly identified as additional and special aspects among factors, which changed offenders' MOs from one stage to another stage

Incidents of offenders' infiltration of SAPS detectives and the positive feedback from the latter were jointly identified by incarcerated participants as additional and special aspects among factors, which changed offenders' MO from one stage to another stage. This was explained by all 10 participants who had similar views. On the same matter, Participant **IMP** said the following:

"Our own planned infiltration of SAPS detectives assigned to the CID and, the related positive feedback obtained from the same detectives are aspects among factors, which changed the progression of the organised nature of our MO from one stage to another stage. The only option for us to infiltrate SAPS detectives was to recruit senior detectives and, we also motivated them to collect quality top-secret information from the SAPS and they gave it to us."

Participant **IUP** concurred and explained the issue in the following words:

"Our calculated infiltration of SAPS detectives assigned to the CID and, the related positive feedback obtained from the latter were jointly identified by all of us [offenders] as elements among factors, which changed the progression of the organised nature of our MO from one stage to another stage."

This perspective is consistent with the following comments said by Participant **IKP2**:

"Initially, us offenders did not have opportunities needed for committing MVTs. However, due to our own planned infiltration of SAPS detectives assigned to the CID and, the subsequent corrupt transactional relationship between the 2 said groups, the former [offenders] were given required opportunities by the latter [SAPS detectives]. Such needed opportunities were in form of positive feedback provided to us [offenders]. The positive feedback (lucrative information) consisted of substantial rewards for us [offenders], which later enabled us to steal many cars, whilst we experienced minimum risks."

This comment strongly appears to have been supported by Participants **IKP1** and **ICHRP**, who stated that:

> *"We [offenders] used the positive feedback to locate suitable targets (cars), which were stored in a warehouse rented by one of the corrupt police colonels, where us [offenders] were instructed to steal such cars, that is, after SAPS detectives passed the required information to us [offenders]. Targeted motor vehicles were initially stolen from police warehouses by corrupt SAPS detectives and, subsequently driven to another warehouse where us [offenders] illegally took possession of such cars. Hence, greater accessibility to required lucrative information reduced information limitations on the part of us [offenders]. This enabled us [offenders] to correctly evaluate information and, then we decreased the possibilities of being arrested by honest SAPS police officers."*

Motor vehicle crime syndicates infiltrated SAPS detectives, and this affected the progression of offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs, especially when MO changed from one stage to another. Motor vehicle crime syndicates' infiltration of SAPS detectives was a repeated theme in the responses of numerous incarcerated participants. By the same token, Participant **QCP** said:

> *"We view the SAPS as a threat, so we target and infiltrate them in order for us to know what they think about us. They lie, commit offences, and protect the public, which makes us a threat to them. So, we study police officers during arrests and interactions in order to recruit them as our informants."*

Participants **IKP2** and **IMP** supported the above-stated perspective and added the following:

> *"We [offenders] recruit police colonels as informants by initially discussing general topics, such as sports (cricket, football, rugby) and personal issues (family problems, economy), in order to build trust and eventually detect their personal interests."*

Some of the incarcerated offenders described the recruitment process and the relationship between offenders and police colonels as reaching alarming levels, and this was due to the personal interests of police officers in material things. In the words of Participants **IUP** and **ICP1**:

> *"We recruited police colonels as informants by exploiting their personal interests in material gains, such as buying them gifts like clothes, groceries, and customised car wheels. We also took photos of them accepting these gifts, which were used to coerce them into sharing SAPS top secret information and intelligence on rival syndicates."*

This perspective of recruiting police colonels was repeated by Participant **ICHRP** in the following words:

> *"After recruiting police colonels as our informants, we consistently asked them as to why they agreed to work with us. Police colonels recruited as informants cited reasons for cooperating, including: (1) fear of competition from fellow detectives in other units, and (2) a desire to eliminate competition from their own colleagues who sought benefits like promotions or recognition, which made detective work highly competitive."*

On the flow of information and relationships, Participant **ICP2**, stated that:

> *"We controlled the flow of information from police colonels, ensuring they collected SAPS data on our terms. We investigated if our informants had previously betrayed other syndicates and vilified their loyalty. To guarantee accuracy, we reinforced relationships with most senior police officers to verify information received from colonels*."

In support of this perspective, Participant **ICP1** said that:

> *"We stayed ahead of police colonels by having contacts with senior police officers (directors and commissioners) who were on our payroll. They probed police work on carjackings and MVTs committed in the greater Berea area and sent us the information. Senior officers colluded with us, but kept their hands clean by not leaving evidence. They advised us to avoid leaving tell-tale signs at crime scenes, which could lead investigators back to us and them."*

In explaining the need for passing any type of information about the commission of carjackings and MVTs, some of the incarcerated participants revealed that they did not permit their informants (police colonels) to exploit informant positions, so as to fool and lay a trap for the offenders. According to Participants **ICHRP** and **ICP1**,

> *"We [offenders] instructed police colonels to immediately report any information about carjackings and MVTs in Berea to our crime syndicate bosses, who would then issue further instructions. This was meant to prevent police colonels from abusing their informant positions in an attempt to dupe and trap us by selling false information to us,*

whilst gathering correct information about our MO used for committing MVTs and carjackings in the greater Berea area."

On the same issue Participants **IUP** and **IMVTP2** added the following:

"We [offenders] prevented our informants (police colonels) from being greedy and materialistic, by ensuring that they worked hard and did not betray us. We strongly warned our informants (police colonels) not to reveal sensitive information about us or seek rewards from the SAPS national office, as this would lead to charges of corruption, carjacking, MVTs, and illegal possession of top-secret information being laid against them and us. Police colonels even joked about reporting our syndicate to the SAPS national office, that is, if their real names were revealed."

According to Participants **QCP** and **ICP2**, the aspect of obtaining information from the informants came from police colonels who were recruited by the offenders and, the 2 parties had a corrupt relationship. In this regard, Participants **QCP** and **ICP2** stated that:

"Police colonels (our informants) on our payroll provided us with information about specific detectives and police units, which investigated car thefts and carjackings in the greater Berea area. This included estimated times when offenders committed the crimes, and this information allowed us [offenders] to create credible alibis before interrogations, especially when we were suspected of involvement in committing carjackings and MVTs."

At a later stage, Participants **QCP** and **ICHRP** concurred and further averred that:

"Our police colonel informants advised us to shave our heads and facial hair, and apply thick white wet mascara as a disguise before committing carjackings or MVTs in the greater Berea area. The mascara was effective in concealing our facial features, and the informants reassured us that it would not arouse suspicion, as mascara is associated with traditional doctors and IsiXhosa initiates, making it an effective disguise for our criminal activities."

On the need to wear thick white wet mascara, Participants **ICP1** and **QCP** further elaborated in the following manner:

"We [offenders] used thick white wet mascara as a disguise to change our MO. We also covered our bodies with mascara and, also changed our clothes to avoid recognition.

This tactic was effective, as witnesses reported that they could not identify the suspects who committed carjackings and MVTs due to the use of mascara, which obscured their facial features."

On the issue of shaving off entire bodies of offenders, Participants **QCP**, **ICP1** and **IMP** explained the following:

"Police colonels [our informants] advised us to shave our entire bodies in order to avoid leaving hair traces at crime scenes. This was because hair could be used to identify us [offenders] through DNA analysis, which can link them to crimes and lead to convictions. The informants warned that even if offenders do not notice hair falling off, it could still be found and used as evidence against us [offenders]. We offenders followed this advice to minimize our chances of being caught."

In relation to the changing of voices by the offenders whilst committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban, Participants **IUP**, **IMP** and **ICHRP** said that:

"Police colonels [our informants] trained us to alter our voices during carjackings in order to mislead witnesses. The police colonels advised us to use Nigerian or Zimbabwean accents in order to confuse victims and make them unreliable witnesses. This tactic was intended to shift suspicion onto innocent immigrants, who might be accused of committing carjackings and MVTs."

In explaining the need for concealing carjacked and stolen cars, as well as removing car security systems from such motor vehicles, incarcerated participants revealed that the processes were complex and sometimes repetitive. For example, Participant **IUP** stated that:

"Police colonels [our informants] advised us to remove car security systems and conceal stolen or carjacked cars in underground structures after committing carjackings and MVTs. SAPS police colonels would sometimes inform us in advance to move the cars to new hiding places before police raids. By following this advice, us offenders were able to avoid arrests and prevent the police from seizing stolen motor vehicles and carjacked cars. The concealment strategy, used by SAPS police colonels, allowed us [offenders] to repeatedly hide and protect carjacked and stolen motor vehicles."

Different incarcerated offenders had similar views that showed that police colonels revealed relevant information, which in turn demonstrated that numerous rival perpetrators committed

carjackings and MVTs in dissimilar places, but during the cooling-off periods, offenders parked such cars in the greater Berea area. In describing this particular situation, Participants **IUP, ICPI**, **QCP** and **IMP** said that:

> *"SAPS Police colonels [informants] shared intelligence with us [offenders], and they revealed that rival car crime syndicates committed carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area and elsewhere. Police colonels also indicated that rival crime syndicates stashed carjacked and stolen cars in the greater Berea area during cooling-off periods. The colonels provided specific names and nicknames of syndicate members and exact locations of stolen cars in our territory. With this information, we adjusted our MO and targeted the same cars. Additionally, some car owners staged MVTs, and sold their vehicles to rival offenders and then filed false insurance claims, and we took advantage of such dealings by using police-provided information which enabled us to carjack or steal the same cars."*

In explaining the need for the offenders to participate in a transactional relationship with police colonels and the consequences of the persons who engaged in such transactions, Participant **IKP1** said the following:

> *"SAPS Police colonels [our informants] suggested that we could easily steal cars in the greater Berea area if we maintained a transactional relationship with them, where all parties benefit. To do this, we had to do certain tasks for the police before stealing cars from other offenders. This arrangement meant that the police would indirectly enable us to steal the cars we wanted, as long as we fulfilled their requests. In essence, the police would allow and facilitate our carjackings and MVTs in exchange for our cooperation and favours."*

On the issues about reliable sources of crime intelligence and the irresponsible use of high calibre weapons prior to, during and after the commission of carjacking, Participant **IKP1** expressed the following:

> *"Police colonels informed us that their crime intelligence sources revealed that our rivals used powerful hand-held firearms during carjackings. According to the colonels, our rivals would often store these firearms at the homes of frail old women. Through ballistic tests, the police were able to link our rivals to various crimes, but the evidence did not directly place them at the crime scenes. Instead, the firearms were traced back to the frail old women, who agreed to keep the firearms at their homes and they were*

already incarcerated in the Western Cape at the time when offenders committed fatal carjackings."

Incarcerated participants expressed their opinions on the following matters: (a) the delivery and sell of doctored firearms to targeted offenders; and (b) the link between the offenders' firearms and crime scenes where crimes were committed including carjackings. On these matters, Participants **IKP2** and **QCP** said that:

"Police colonels explained that linking our rivals to crimes like carjackings depended on 2 key pieces of evidence: ballistic tests and testimonies. However, the evidence did not directly link our rivals to the offences, making it a case of the frail old women's words against those of our rivals. SAPS colonels considered our rivals to be intelligent criminals who would deny involvement, so they advised us to sell same doctored firearms to our rivals, which were initially used in fatal carjackings and, this was done in order to gather required hard evidence."

Incarcerated offenders described police colonels' plan which involved the seizure of powerful firearms and the arrest of certain offenders, as well as allowing certain spoiled groups of offenders to steal illicit motor vehicle that were driven by the arrestees and, spoiled groups of offenders colluded with corrupt police officers. On this issue, Participants **IKP2**, **ICP1** and **IMP** stated that:

"SAPS Police colonels presented a plan to change our MO and focused on seizing powerful hand-held firearms from our rivals, with the goal of arresting them. However, they instructed us to steal illicit cars from our rivals, sell them, and give them a portion of the money. The colonels explained that this was necessary because our rivals had committed serious offences (fatal carjackings) using the seized firearms, which were initially taken from the home of 2 frail old women who were already incarcerated at the time when the actual offenders committed carjackings."

On the modification of the firearms which were delivered and sold to targeted offenders, Participants **IMP**, **ICP2** and **IKP1** said the following:

"Police colonels altered the appearance of firearms by changing the colours of the butts and magazines, and respraying safety pins to make them appear newer. They also removed firing pins to prevent the weapons from being used to harm or kill others. The colonels instructed us to deliver the modified firearms to our rivals, so that they could

be arrested and charged with serious offences, allowing us to profit by stealing their cars after their arrest."

On the issue of eradicating competition among motor vehicle thieves and carjackers through the use of a transactional relationship between unethical police officers and their favourite offenders, Participants **IMP**, **IMVTP1** and **ICP1** expressed the following:

"SAPS Police colonels proposed a mutually beneficial arrangement where we would work together to target our rivals, allowing us to steal their illicit valuables [cars] while they were arrested. This required us to deliver doctored firearms to our rivals, then steal their stolen and/or carjacked cars after their arrest(s). According to the police colonels, this arrangement improved safety and security by enabling the arrest and charging of dangerous offenders responsible for violent crimes like carjackings and murder."

Participants **ICHRP**, **IKP2** and **IUP** supported the abovementioned perspectives and they added the following:

"Police colonels praised our actions and said that our MO promoted safety and security. They gave us doctored firearms to deliver and sell to our rivals in exchange for stealing their cars. We delivered the doctored guns to our rivals when they needed powerful firearms, partly due to the increase in carjackings in Berea and the shortage of weapons among offenders."

Participants **ICHRP**, **ICP2** and **IMVTP2** provided the following additional explanation and averred that:

"SAPS Police colonels offered us a mutually beneficial deal, which provided us with information about concealed stolen and carjacked cars. In return, we delivered doctored firearms to our rivals, and this allowed the police to arrest them for related crimes linked to doctored firearms."

Regarding the end of preparations and the delivery of doctored firearms, Participants **ICHRP** and **IKP1** described the following:

"Before delivering the firearms to our rivals, SAPS police colonels reminded us that most of the guns were doctored and we had to follow our lessons. The delivered firearms, included Makarov and Tokarev pistols, as well as Scorpion revolvers, which did not have firing pins, except for 2 firearms that were only used for demonstration

purposes. We retained a Makarov pistol and a Scorpion revolver for demonstration purposes."

Participants **QCP** and **ICHRP** described the arrest of rival offenders and the seizure of doctored weapons from them, as well as how they [offenders] had a corrupt relationship with police colonels who assisted them to steal motor vehicles, which belonged to the arrestees.

> *"SAPS police colonels arrested our rivals for possessing illegal firearms and ammunitions, and added further serious charges related to the use of illegal guns. After the arrest, we stole our rivals' motor vehicles, which were initially carjacked and/or stolen. The SAPS police officers restored the firing pins to the confiscated firearms in order to build a stronger case against our rivals."*

The perspectives of incarcerated offenders revealed how police colonels taught certain offenders to steal motor vehicles stored at police warehouses. This point was summarised by Participants **ICHRP**, **IUP** and **IMVTP2** as follows:

> *"SAPS police colonels taught us [offenders] how to steal cars from police warehouses and, this was achieved by leaving doors open during load shedding and the police colonels also temporarily disabled the cameras. Furthermore, police colonels helped us make arrangements with locksmiths in order to create electronic keys for certain car models stored in the warehouses."*

In support of the abovementioned perspective, Participants **IMVTP1** and **IUP** said the following:

> *"Based on the information provided by SAPS police colonels, we sent our own 2 initial fellow offenders to a targeted police warehouse to assess potential safety risks and ensure a smooth operation. Once the 2 initial fellow offenders confirm that it was safe, we instructed additional offenders to enter the warehouse and steal pre-selected cars."*

When asked about how targeted motor vehicles were chosen by the offenders, all the incarcerated offenders indicated that they drew lists of motor vehicles which were ordered by their clients. On this matter, Participant **IKP2** stated the following:

> *"We [offenders] created lists of cars that our clients wanted, including details like the model, make, and year of manufacture. We then gave these lists to SAPS police colonels, who preselected the cars based on our clients' orders."*

Additional explanations regarding more appropriate types of colours for different motor vehicles were provided by all the participants. On this matter, Participant **IKP1** explained the following:

> *"We [offenders] provided police colonels with various car colours based on customer preferences. Police colonels looked for individuals with criminal records who were skilled in advanced spray painting of stolen vehicles. Once the cars were repainted, they were delivered to various buyers, indicating a multi-stage operation where the MO evolved at each stage. Collaboration with other offenders occurred at different stages in order to make changes in the MO."*

In relation to the revelation of the real identities of the investigating officers who tracked stolen and carjacked cars, as well as perpetrators, more information was revealed by police colonels and then passed to certain offenders regarding several issues and dossiers. On these issues, Participant **IMVTP2**, **IUP** and **ICP2** stated the following:

> *"SAPS police colonels [our informants] gave us [offenders] specific names of detectives who were responsible for tracking stolen and carjacked cars. Our informants revealed that they possessed dossiers on offenders suspected of committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area, as well as hard and circumstantial evidence connected with the said crimes. Our informants also shared details about upcoming police raids, which targeted specific perpetrators and, they also provided lists of police-informers embedded in motor vehicle crime syndicates that operate in the greater Berea area."*

Research question C

How are formal organisations of offenders linked to the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MOs used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban? In order to answer Research Question C, 1 theme was developed and it is as follows: links between formal organisations of offenders and the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MOs used for committing carjackings and MVTs.

(a) trust creating-circumstances; (b) criminal networks; and (c) criminal ties.

5.5 Theme: 5 Links Between Formal Organisation of Offenders and The Progression of The Organised Nature of The Offenders' MO Used for Committing Carjackings and MVTs

Incarcerated participants overwhelmingly mentioned that the need for the links between the formal organisation of offenders and the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO is necessary for the execution of their illicit tasks regarding carjackings and MVTs. Therefore, the links between the formal organisation of offenders and the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO derive from aspects which include: (a) trust creating-circumstances; (b) criminal networks; and (c) criminal ties.

Incarcerated participants stated the following perspectives in terms of their connection to the progression of the organised nature of MO, which offenders used when they committed carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area. According to Participant **IKP1**,

> *"We [perpetrators] work separately as various groups of offenders specialising in numerous tasks. Our common interest permits us to concentrate on our major goal of stealing and carjacking cars for profits. This, in turn, gives rise to trust between us [perpetrators] and, also links us to our well organised MO, even though we seem to perform tasks separately. As perpetrators, we cooperatively commit carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area."*

Participant **QCP** provided examples of personal aspects, which are specific to the MO used by offenders who commit carjackings or MVTs:

> *"We [offenders] utilised personalised traits like being dependable when meeting other people such as fellow offenders, buyers, witnesses, police officers, or victims at certain places and times. We [perpetrators] identified continuous life-threatening interactions between us [offenders] whilst committing carjackings, and to a lesser degree, MVTs, as a trust-building circumstance that leads to the organised nature of our MO. Carjackings and MVTs require us [offenders] to utilise complicated MO, that is, when we commit the aforesaid 2 crimes."*

This perspective was supported by Participant **IKP2** who added the following:

> *"We [offenders] reviewed our reasoning about utilising certain MO before, during, and after committing carjackings and/or MVTs. We also analysed the likelihood of making blunders which police informers could manipulate. Furthermore, we considered the possibility of one of our colleagues [a fellow offender] passing information to the police*

about past or future incidents of carjackings and MVTs. Experienced offenders in our group had the potential to identify and predict police informers' behaviours, who remained calm under pressure and hide their true intentions."

Participant **IUP** concurred and added the following:

"We [experienced offenders] keep our knowledge of police informers' deceitful behaviours secret from them, and we also use our experience to limit what they learn about our well organised MO. Additionally, we also utilise this knowledge to identify trustworthy perpetrators who are then included in the progression of the organised nature of our MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs."

From the above experiences of incarcerated offenders who stole and carjacked motor vehicles, it strongly appeared that the knowledge of specific older offenders increased the detection of police informers among carjackers and motor vehicle thieves. The knowledge of certain older offenders also connected trustworthy offenders to the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs. This perspective was expressed by Participant **ICHRP**, who said the following:

"Detecting police informers involves analysing their actions, omissions, and behaviours. Our unique MO requires us to provide senior SAPS connections with pictures of suspected informers, who in turn, give us copies of top-secret files. Such files consist of fingerprints, original pictures, and detailed information, which include the following:(a) real names; (b) code names; (c) recruitment dates; (c) proof of payments; (d) commissions; and (e) handler details. The files also encompass signed requisition receipts and autobiographies of the informers. This inclusive information enables us to identify and track down police informers, as well as help us to terminate their treacherous activities and severely punish them. By making use of this MO, we [offenders] successfully resolve threats brought about by police informers. This same MO allows us [offenders] to sustain carjackings, MVTs and the wholeness of our organised groups of perpetrators."

In support of this perspective, Participant **IMP** said the following:

"Police informers often change their behaviours and mannerisms so as to appear sincerer, and this makes it difficult for ordinary offenders to detect police informers' true intentions. Nevertheless, experienced offenders like myself, intervene to avoid broad interpretations of police informers' behaviours, thus, we only concentrate on

specific details and this allows us to remove unnecessary information. By analysing SAPS top- secret files, we can identify and address the issue about police informers, hence, the use of this information enables us to deal with the traitors violently."

Research question D

How do offenders who carjack and steal motor vehicles in the greater Berea plan the progression of the organised nature of their MO? In order to answer Research Question D, the researcher wrote an objective and it is known as the perspectives of incarcerated offenders on how carjackers and motor vehicle thieves plan the progression of the organised nature of their MO.

5.6 PERSPECTIVES OF INCARCERATED OFFENDERS ON HOW CARJACKERS AND MOTOR VEHICLE THIEVES PLANNED THE PROGRESSION OF THE ORGANISED NATURE OF THEIR MOs

During interviews with the participants in Chapter 5, many incarcerated offenders believed that when carjackers and motor vehicle thieves planned the progression of the organised nature of their MOs, they considered various issues and these include: (a) initial offending decisions aligned with pre-offence tasks (b) final revised offending decisions; (c) planning; and (d) target selection.

5.6.1 Theme 1: Initial offending decisions aligned with pre-offence tasks

The incarcerated participants described the initial offending decisions aligned with pre-offence tasks. Furthermore, the incarcerated participants described pre-offence tasks assigned to various offenders as a set of elements, which contribute to how carjackers and motor vehicle thieves plan the progression of the organised nature of their MO. On these issues, Participant **IKP2** said the following:

"We [senior offenders] teach junior offenders how to spot opportunities through which MVTs and carjackings can be committed. We also teach junior offenders how to reason, how to conduct themselves and, how to operate like experienced perpetrators. Furthermore, we [senior offenders] teach our junior counterparts how to identify targeted motor vehicles and, how to survey a targeted place in order to identify dangers and security shortcomings. Additionally, us [senior offenders] order junior offenders to thoroughly carryout preliminary surveys, and afterwards they send the intelligence back to us, kingpins. We also train junior offenders how to alight from motor vehicles that deliver them to targeted places. Before direct offenders committed carjackings and

MVTs, we [kingpins] weighed up perceived costs and perceived benefits of committing the 2 above-stated offences within the greater Berea area. We [kingpins] also carefully considered our own goals and perceived benefits, which were subsequently gained from perpetrating carjackings and MVTs. Additionally, we [kingpins] cautiously contemplated the progression of the organised nature of our MO, which were used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area. We [kingpins] also prepared the commission of carjackings and MVTs by taking orders from trusted clients regarding specific motor vehicles. This shows that we [kingpins] made initial decisions about committing carjackings and MVTs."

In addition, various offenders, particularly, senior offenders who participated in the current study, described calculated reasoning in which numerous aspects were seemingly contemplated over a considerable period of time. In illustrating this point, Participant **IUP** averred his argumentative point as follows:

"Most reasoned decisions seemed to have been made by kingpins who did not have complete knowledge about situational aspects before, during and following the commission of carjackings and MVTs. Therefore, this shows that the decision-making environment might have been undermined in a certain way. Brother! any decision maker, including myself as a kingpin, is restricted by the level of information, the ability to process that information and the availability of time. A certain drug addict, an experienced kingpin, who had enough time to plan and also possessed detailed knowledge of possible costs and benefits of committing carjackings and MVTs, but due to perceived reduced mental ability to make sound decisions, the kingpin (a drug addict) was not allowed to plan offenders' MO used for perpetrating the said offences. To relate back to the phrase of bounded rationality, it is clearly evident that other offenders' perception of the likely consequences of the drug addict's planning, led such offenders to become bounded when they made their decision, that is, such a decision did not rest on a complete review of the consequences, perceived costs and perceived benefits of employing the drug addict's MO, which were supposed to be used for committing carjackings and MVTs. Relatedly, certain offenders including those who took part in

this study, imposed boundedness on themselves by not noticing some of the most important information, which the drug addict (kingpin) had."

On the same issue, Participant **IMP** averred that:

"The drug addicted kingpin's knowledge about risks linked to committing carjackings and MVTs was disregarded and excluded from the offenders' decision-making process by other offenders. On certain occasions, even though the information about risks of committing crimes (for example carjackings or MVTs) subsists, there is neither time set aside for contemplating such risks nor space for considering them when making a decision to perpetrate the said motor vehicle crimes."

Some of the incarcerated participants described the kingpins as offenders with specialised skills. In the words of Participants **IKP1** and **IUP**:

"We, kingpins, have expert experience in committing carjackings and MVTs. We, kingpins, base the said judgements on our increased success rates, degree of experience and available information about our own organised nature of MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area."

In addition to specialised skills kingpin and a senior incarcerated offender described a phased decision-making procedure used by kingpins. However, Participants **IKP2** and **ICHRP** only focused on the initial or first phase of the decision-making process for kingpins and, the 2 incarcerated offenders averred that:

"The initial or first phase of decision-making process involved checking and revising offending decisions through which kingpins set rules of conduct that were related to the consequences of carjackings and MVTs, hence, they got rid of possibilities that were exceeded by reasonable likelihoods. Additionally, kingpins placed together various consequences of crime with almost identical reasonable possibilities. Kingpins used their experience in committing carjackings and MVTs as an advantage, because they treated it as a substitute for planning."

On the issues of pre-offence training and pre-offence tasks, Participants **QCP** and **IKP1** had this to say:

"Kingpins provided direct offenders with pre-offence training in the sense that, they realised that pre-offence trainings could lead to increased perceived benefits, which

exceeded perceived costs to the offenders, or pains connected with legal punishment, including lengthy incarceration. Direct offenders were initially trained and given suitable pre-offence tasks by kingpins and, this increased the commission of carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area. The initial detailed training of direct offenders also involved subsequent allocation of pre-offence tasks to perpetrators with suitable skills. Additionally, during pre-offence trainings, direct offenders were trained to identify coherent opportunities and, this enabled them to succeed in carjacking and stealing cars on behalf of kingpins, indirect offenders. Kingpins contemplated possible perceived benefits and probable perceived costs to the offenders. Kingpins acted seemingly irrationally and, also made seemingly irrational decisions about how direct offenders employed the organised nature of MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area."

Participant **IMP** agreed and stated the following:

"While driving around the greater Berea area, a kingpin noticed cues which indicated poor security and effortless exposure of targeted motor vehicles to motivated offenders. Therefore, the kingpin's experience in MVTs informed the indirect offender that certain targeted motor vehicles in the greater Berea area, were both vulnerable and potential targets, thus the kingpin immediately instructed direct offenders to steal such cars. Kingpins explained the use of previous experience in exploiting images of direct offenders, so that they mirrored personalities that were perceived as less sceptical by police officers, security officers or members of the general public."

5.6.2 Theme 2: Final revised offending decisions

In describing the second phase of decision-making process, Participants **IKP1** and **IMP** started that:

"In terms of the second phase of decision-making and assessment, offenders were interested in selecting a real successful act, which happened to be the achievement that strengthens the best consequences regarding costs and gains of carjackers and motor vehicle thieves. The aforesaid assessment also involved the final revised component of the offenders' decision-making process, in which kingpins only decided in advance to instruct and prepare direct offenders, so that they could commit carjackings and MVTs. The supra part of the kingpins' decision happened before they contrasted probabilities and took advantage of possibilities. Relatedly, kingpins contrasted probabilities and

also exploited possibilities before they decided their precise course of action. Additionally, kingpins' decision-making process was a continuous procedure in which re-evaluation of costs and gains, happened at many stages until direct offenders completed the commission of carjackings and MVTs, respectively."

On the preceding issue, Participant **ICHRP** concurred and stated that:

"In terms of the final revised offending decisions, particularly, the intricacy of offenders' decisions made, my story [data] in this study shows that a final revised offending decision is not a separate and complete procedure of reasoning, nonetheless, it could be a decision which is generated over a considerable period and, then changed contingent upon the perpetrator's successful consequences designed to exploit the gains and costs linked, specifically, to crime(s) such as carjackings and MVTs."

In addition, Participant QCP agreed and explained as follows:

"Regarding carjackings and MVTs, kingpins identified their own goals and perceived benefits of the said offences, and that they also made their own decisions about perceived costs and perceived risks. In setting up the aspects whilst making final offending decisions, kingpins participated in processes of considering such aspects. Relatedly, examples of aspects such as specified intents of accumulating huge profits, our incidents of carjackings and MVTs are always well planned and, it is a must for us to follow our well organised MOs so that we are able to fetch cars very easily from greedy owners."

The need for making criminal or offending decisions was repeated by Participants **IUP** and **ICHRP** who made a sharp comment which is as follows:

"Understanding the process of cutting corners is relevant to apprehending how kingpins made revised final decisions, which were relevant to the perpetration of carjackings and MVTs. Relating back to the term bounded rationality (lack of information), the abovementioned phrase means a decision made under flawed circumstances. Relatedly, kingpins who make initial offending decisions are restricted by the amount of information or time at their disposal. Aligning the preceding point to the term experience, it could seem that the abilities and information, which the kingpins had over a considerable period of time regarding the organised nature of offenders' MOs, functioned to loosen to a certain degree, the initial offending decisions they made about committing carjackings and MVTs. Experienced kingpins utilised their skills to

re- evaluate initial decisions, thus, they replaced planning with their own experience coupled with modifications. The combination of skills and experience allowed kingpins to make more methodical, practical and tactical brief decisions even when bounded by time, and the lack of information about situational aspects. Related to this, direct offenders did not have all pertinent facts about situational aspects, hence, they were bounded by limited available information at the time. However, kingpins with prior experience subsequently reconsidered initial offending decisions, thus, they increased the cost-effectiveness of the decisions even when direct offenders committed carjackings and MVTs under problematic conditions."

5.6.3 Theme 3: Planning

On the matter of planning, Participants **IKP1** and **IKP2** averred that:

"The duration of time set aside for making an offending decision is an interesting part of the kingpin's reasoning procedures. As offenders who make offending decisions, we [kingpins] note that the planning processes come after the initial decision to offend is made. In certain circumstances, planning is an inherent component of our decision-making processes. We [kingpins] provide different timelines for the planning procedures from few months or a number of weeks to a day prior to or to a handful of hours or minutes before carjackings or MVTs are committed."

5.6.4 Theme 4: Target selection

The empirical data reveal that target selection is an inherent part of the kingpins' decision-making process. To explain this point, Participant **IKP2** said that:

Target selection puts kingpins at certain stages between opportunistic delinquency (this involves a spontaneous decision to commit crime, because of available criminal opportunity) and a structure of target selection, where the offending decision is made beforehand. Within the target selection structure, kingpins decided to instruct direct offenders to commit carjackings and MVTs, and then the latter went to the greater Berea area where they carefully assessed car security systems of targeted motor vehicles and actively looked for possible targets. In cases which involved MVT, kingpins informed direct offenders to steal cars which were poorly protected and, those with installed

neutralisable car security systems. Therefore, decisions, which were made by the kingpins to commit MVTs in the greater Berea area rested on the preceding conclusion.

Research question E

What are the pull factors that draw offenders to commit carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban? In answering the research question relating to pull factors that draw offenders to commit carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban, the empirical data revealed interesting findings. Despite different factors which drew offenders to commit carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area, all the responses to the aforementioned research question were common among the participants.

5.7 PULL FACTORS WHICH DREW OFFENDERS TO COMMIT CARJACKINGS AND MVTs IN THE GREATER BEREA AREA IN DURBAN

5.7.1 Theme 1: Peer pressure and a desire to be part of organised groups of offenders

In terms of peer pressure and a desire to be part of organised groups of offenders, Participant IKP1, a kingpin, had this to say:

"Peer pressure is my chief reason as to why I joined other offenders who carjacked and/or stole motor vehicles. Due to peer pressure, I was able to financially maintain myself and my family. At the beginning, I was trained as a lookout and I learnt everything through observation during carjackings and MVTs. My wish to be amongst professional offenders contributed to my promotion through various ranks. Subsequently, I became a lead driver and, I also supervised 6 getaway drivers in different groups of perpetrators."

5.7.2 Theme 2: Professional MVT Activities

Responses regarding professional MVT activities revealed many issues and, another incarcerated kingpin, Participant **IKP2** said the following:

"I was brought up in abject poverty, which is a recurrent reason for numerous perpetrators who engage in MVTs. Observing other people getting wealthy from pilfering cars led me to ask myself as to why I remained penniless. Through our family members, we young offenders at the time, connected with professional motor vehicle thieves who employed me as a driver responsible for delivering pilfered cars to buyers in order to receive a commission for each delivery. After working for professional car

thieves for a long time, I noticed that I could earn more income through working for myself."

Participant **IKP1** agreed and explained the matter in the following way:

"We pilfered motor vehicles in the greater Berea area and traded them to customers of our previous employers [professional car thieves]. Whilst working for my previous employees, I was brought into contact with bigger clients who increasingly bought numerous stolen cars. In order to satisfy our bigger clients' ever-increasing appetite for stolen motor vehicles, we improved our previous skills and also acquired new abilities which enabled us [professional car thieves] to steal more cars. Subsequently, we disposed of many additional stolen motor vehicles more than what our previous employers vended."

5.7.3 Theme 3: Financing Street-Life

Again, all the participants had almost identical responses about financing street-life and Participant ICHRP, when asked to respond to the research question mentioned above, provided a response pertaining to financing street life as follows:

"We offenders are larger than life, hence, we consistently perpetrate carjackings and MVTs in order to finance our way of street-life. We consume beyond what we can spend. As a carjacker or a motor vehicle thief, anytime the police can shoot me or one of my crazy victims may revenge and kill me. Therefore, we spend our money on parties, alcohol, drugs, gambling, women, holidays, expensive clothes, shoes and jewelry. Most of the aspects which I alluded to above are addictive and very expensive. Hence, we need a very good source of income, which can support our way of life. Carjackings and MVTs are the most suitable sources of income, which can fund our street-life. Due to this, we are drawn to carjackings and MVTs, which we commit in the greater Berea area in order to fund our way of street life. Therefore, financing street- life is the third most common motivation amongst carjackers and motor vehicle thieves, which draws them to the greater Berea area."

This perspective was supported by Participant **IMP**, who stated that:

"We [offenders] perpetrate carjackings and MVTs to maintain our costly and addictive street way of life. This manner of living does include spending on celebrations, narcotic-drugs, betting and extravagancies. Carjackings and MVTs serve as stable

sources of funds for us [offenders] and, due to this, we have to protect and sustain incidents of carjackings and MVTs. Furthermore, financing street-life is the third most widespread reason, which draws us [offenders] to the greater Berea area, where we commit carjackings and MVTs."

The opportunity of being a victim of carjacking or MVT related to inequalities is not only higher in townships (deprived communities), but also in disorganised communities, which experience robust socioeconomic development (gentrifying communities) such as the greater Berea area in Durban.

5.7.4 Theme 4: Family Values And Social Influences

An important theme that emerged from the empirical data is family values and social influences. All the incarcerated participants felt that family values and social influences draw offenders to commit MVTs and carjackings in the greater Berea area and other places. In explaining the aforesaid phenomenon, Participant **IMP** commented the following:

"Due to apartheid, most of us offenders come from families which do not function at all. Additionally, most of us were brought up by our unemployed grandmothers. Again, many of our grandmothers fail to differentiate between right and wrong, because they trained us how to use violence and commit crimes in order to survive. Furthermore, our grandmothers trained us how to compete amongst ourselves as siblings for limited resources and, we were also trained to consistently lie through our teeth by not changing our false narratives meant to cover our illicit activities. We defended ourselves in courts by using falsehoods. These teachings drew us [offenders] to the greater Berea area where we committed carjackings and MVTs, and we also repeated our lies in order to achieve common group goals."

This perspective was related by Participant **IUP** in the following manner:

"During my childhood, my grandmother and older perpetrators compelled me to perpetrate carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area. Older perpetrators disposed of the cars, which we carjacked and stole, whereas my grandmother forcibly collected money from the older offenders by using a knife and a pistol. This type of behaviour was not peculiar to my grandmother, because other grandmothers in the same neighbourhood also participated in offences directly related to carjackings and MVTs, which were committed in the greater Berea area. Currently, I think we should make changes and tap into some of the harmful tactics used by our grandmothers."

5.7.5 Theme 5: Improvements in Anti-Motor Vehicle Theft Devices and Home Security Systems

The experiences of several participants revealed that improvements in anti-motor vehicle theft devices and home security systems led many offenders to shift from committing MVTs to perpetrating carjackings in the greater Berea area. Therefore, improvements in anti-motor theft devices and home security systems also drew many offenders to the greater Berea area where they committed many incidents of carjackings. According to Participant **QCP**:

> *"Contemporary motor vehicles consist of the state-of-the-art security systems, which make it very hard for us to pilfer cars [targets]. Contemporary cars frequently consist of complicated anti-theft devices, which are hard to neutralise. Due to this, many of us [offenders] switch to carjackings in lieu of only pilfering motor vehicles, particularly, in the greater Berea area. Intricate security systems of latest motor vehicles and homes make carjacking a more acceptable choice for offenders like us. In terms of improved home security systems, improvements within such environments prevent us from breaking into residential places where we can steal key fobs needed for committing MVTs at later stages."*

5.7.6 Theme 6: Possession of illegal firearms

An important sub-theme which emerged from the empirical data is the possession of illegal firearms by the offenders. All incarcerated offenders felt that easy access to illegal firearms drew them to commit carjackings in the greater Berea area. In explaining the said matter, Participant **IKP1** had this to say:

> *"Motor vehicle owners and drivers who legally purchase firearms for self-defence and protection of their cars are treated as a menace by us offenders. In order to counteract the danger posed by armed motor vehicle owners and armed drivers, we [offenders] equip ourselves with heavy calibre firearms such as 9mm pistols and AK47s. When us, offenders, ambush a target the first offender screams at the driver and the second perpetrator searches the motor vehicle, whilst the third accomplice operates as a lookout. This MO enables us [offenders] to swiftly deal with any possible dangers and, is especially effectual in the greater Berea area because of its composition. The greater Berea area's configuration is suitable for perpetrating carjackings and, this is one of the reasons which draws us to perpetrate the said crime there."*

5.8.1 Theme 1: Offenders' Forcible Retaking of Cars and Mere Retaking of Motor Vehicles From Initial or First Offenders.

All the 10 incarcerated participants overwhelmingly reported that this was one of their perspectives regarding the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area. According to IKP2 and IKP1, the aspects of forcible retaking of cars and mere retaking of motor vehicles from initial offenders are their perspectives about the phenomena under investigation. Subsequent offenders forcibly retake cars and merely retake motor vehicles, which are initially carjacked or stolen by earlier offenders. Therefore, Participants **IKP2** and **IKP1** explained in their own words that the aforesaid aspects of forcible retaking of cars and mere retaking of motor vehicles are linked to:

> *"Incidents in which motor vehicles initially carjacked or stolen by other organised syndicates are [re-carjacked] and [re-stolen], respectively, by our quick-thinking more organised offenders*."

In support of this perspective, Participant **ICHRP** agreed and made the following point:

> *"Our underworld is like a casino; thus, this means that what you get now, you [might] not get it next time. Targets [motor vehicles] ordered by our clients are not readily available all the time out there and, targets do not wait for us offenders. Our big customers send orders of wanted cars to many offenders including us. Brother, we do not want anyone to remove us from our line of business. Thus, we [kill] competition by forcibly retaking cars and merely retaking motor vehicles from offenders who initially carjacked or stole cars. Sometimes we steal carjacked cars and we also carjack stolen cars, but these incidents are rare in relative to the combination of other MO, which we use when we illegally acquire cars*."

Participant **IKP2** concurred and said the following:

> *"We know where our enemies briefly hide their carjacked motor vehicles or stolen cars, which are expensive. Our enemies [hide] or park their carjacked motor vehicles or stolen cars away from cameras and, they briefly [park] or leave them for certain periods of time near the following places: (a) police stations; (b) institutions of higher learning; (c) hospitals; (d) schools; (e) shopping malls; (f) clinics; (g) government administrative buildings; (h) courts and (i) shops. Since we know where carjacked and stolen motor vehicles are taken to, we conduct surveillances and write down all the weaknesses of places where targeted cars are briefly parked. We merely retake targeted cars on days*

when places where motor vehicles are parked experience more weaknesses than strengths."

Issues related to safe keeping and reduced detection of carjacked and stolen motor vehicles mean that carjacked and stolen cars cannot be taken to the above-stated places without making precautionary changes to carjacked and stolen motor vehicles. This particular perspective was expressed by Participant **ICHRP**, who said:

> *"Before other offenders drive carjacked and stolen motor vehicles to places where such cars can be briefly kept safe for certain periods of time, offenders' MO require criminal actors to make numerous changes to carjacked and stolen cars and these include: (a) a painstaking removal of an anti-theft system of a motor vehicle, which may include a car alarm or an engine immobiliser; (b) a careful removal of the original colour(s) of a carjacked car or a stolen car; (c) step-by-step spray painting of a carjacked car or a stolen car; (d) replacement of genuine number plates of a carjacked car or stolen car with number plates taken from registered and immovable identical cars which are not written off in cities within KZN; and (e) replacement of customised wheels of a carjacked car or a stolen car with ordinary tires. Other perpetrators try to remove VIN and chassis numbers, but it is almost impossible due to suspicious markings or dents caused by offenders. In spite of the fact that other offenders make numerous changes to stolen and carjacked cars, we still manage to retake such cars from places were offenders park them*."

The forcible retaking of cars and mere retaking of motor vehicles were a repeated sub-theme in the responses of many offenders. In a similar vein, Participant **IKP1** said the following:

> *"When some of us say [enemies], it means that every person who is not part of our group is treated as an enemy including other carjackers and competing motor vehicle thieves. We do business with other carjackers by forcibly retaking their cars and, we demand that they [other carjackers] have to pay us by using illicit drugs as a form of currency. After other carjackers make payments to us in form of illicit drugs, we give them back their cars. We forcibly retake such cars from the carjackers at initial stages. We only know the carjackers by sight from whom we forcibly retake cars, however, they do not know us and we have never met each other as friends*."

It is evident from additional direct perspectives of incarcerated offenders that there is a different

aspect of forcible retaking of cars and mere retaking of motor vehicles in the greater Berea area. This involves many motor vehicles that are initially carjacked in and stolen from other countries by foreign offenders, who illegally bring them to the greater Berea area where local offenders forcibly retake and merely retake some of the illegal foreign cars. In explaining this issue, Participant **IKP2** said that:

> *"Many cars initially carjacked and stolen in other countries (such as Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Namibia and/or Zambia) have false registration numbers plates for Gauteng Province. In addition, foreign offenders are assisted by a few locals and, illegally take such cars to the greater Berea area for brief safe keeping. When illegal foreign cars are taken to Berea area, we identify them after reviewing most suitable reliable information received from 'our eyes and ears' on the streets. This is because our own street-level offenders (for example spotters, temporary hawkers, car washers, atypical workers and gardeners) are 'our eyes and ears' on the streets, and they provide us with urgent reliable information. Indeed, our contacts in Gauteng do confirm that cars with such number plates in question are still in Pretoria or Johannesburg. Then, we immediately proceed and retake foreign illegal cars with cloned number plates and, sometimes, we forcibly retake those foreign illegal cars*."

In support of this perspective, Participant **IKP1** agreed and briefly described the clearing process of forcibly retaken cars and merely retaken motor vehicles. Participant **IKP1** also explained the exportation of cleared cars and, additional illicit transactions which involve forcibly retaken cars and merely retaken motor vehicles. According to Participant **IKP1**:

> *"Thereafter, we clear forcibly retaken cars and merely retaken motor vehicles through our clearing agents in Durban and we register them at DTPW. We drive cleared cars back to African states where cars are very expensive and car salesmen demand cash from buyers. We use cleared cars as a currency when buying illicit drugs in large quantities from African drug barons. This is an important skill about illicit car business and multiplying money, because we make huge profits when we use forcibly retaken cars and merely retaken motor vehicles as a currency in illicit drug trafficking transactions. Again, we multiply our profits when we sell illicit drugs in South Africa and, this entire process is made easier by initially following our MO which involves the forcible retaking of cars and mere retaking of motor vehicles in Berea area*."

Participant **QCP** concurred and said the following sentiments:

"We forcibly retake cars and merely retake motor vehicles because we are in competition with many motor vehicle syndicates. You know, other syndicates carjack and steal expensive cars, but they do not understand how business is managed. Those rivals, I mean other syndicates, sell expensive cars next to nothing and they [kill] our business and destroy a profitable relationship between us and our customers which takes a long time to build. Thus, we drive rival motor vehicle syndicates out of business by forcibly retaking cars which they initially carjacked or stole. We also merely retake motor vehicles, which they initially stole from other people or carjacked. Sometimes we shoot them in order to send a message about not destroying our markets."

In elaborating on this perspective, Participant **IMP** commented as follows regarding the forcible retaking of cars and mere retaking of motor vehicles from initial offenders:

"In order to succeed in our under-world, we think like our enemies. In fact, we are way ahead of our enemies in terms of reasoning. Anyone outside our family of offenders is an enemy. We collect information about offenders who intend to commit carjackings and/or MVTs in an identified area on a specific date and at a given time. We know the spotters, lookouts, drivers and street-level information collectors who work for different motor vehicle crime syndicates in Durban. We usually pick up the abovementioned groups of offenders nicely and, then we beat them in order to collect required information. Sometimes people die. Whilst beating them, we ask the abovementioned groups harsh questions and they answer them correctly. We use the information extracted from the abovementioned groups for forcibly retaking cars and merely retaking motor vehicles. We immediately drive straight to places where initial offenders briefly keep stolen cars in Berea area and we merely retake motor vehicles within minutes. In case of [re-carjacking], we quickly enter a targeted car in Berea driven by the initial carjacker and we forcibly retake it, because the offender cannot call the police for help."

In a similar vein, Participant **IMVTP1** stated the following:

"I am a professional motor vehicle thief, but I usually carjack motor vehicles when I am instructed to do so by my bosses. Mostly, our bosses decide whether we steal or carjack motor vehicles. A few minutes before we forcibly retake cars or merely retake motor vehicles, our bosses provide us with information about where the targets can be found. Our bosses obtain the required information from spotters, lookouts, drivers, car

washers, gardeners, hawkers, atypical workers and street-level offenders."

In addition to the information given to offenders about where targeted cars could be found, which they forcibly retook or merely retook from initial offenders, incarcerated participants averred that the need to know the steps or MO about how to forcibly retake a car and merely retake a car are vital. In explaining this need, Participant **IUP** said:

> *"Immediately after the receipt of latest information, we use fast Germany cars and small trucks in order to box targeted cars and this is part of the offensive driving. When we forcibly retake a targeted car from the initial offender(s) who stole the car or carjacked it, there is no victim of a crime, because the targeted car does not belong to the initial offender(s). In cases where we merely retake or [steal] certain latest cars, we use new laptops or smart phones which interact with the car security system. The car security system sends interrogating signals back to the smart phones or latest laptops. Then, we create pass words that are responsible for damaging the car security system, which fails to detect the damages. This means that pass words are reset by using latest laptops or smartphones which unlock targeted cars and their functions. Hence, the car security system fails to lock itself and, it also fails to isolate external harmful pass words sent by us offenders through latest laptops or the smartphones."*

It is clear from further direct perspectives of incarcerated participants that the offenders' MO of forcibly retaking cars was repeated, because it has so many sides. Therefore, another element linked to the forcible retaking of cars is the issue of the offenders' exploitation of police corruption. The forcible retaking of motor vehicles was repetitive. According to Participant ICP2:

> *"We [perpetrators] forcefully retake pilfered motor vehicles from foreign delinquents and, we also frequently tackle dishonest SAPS police officers who demand bribes. We [perpetrators] employ strategies such as accommodating foreign delinquents in safehouses and confiscating their car keys until transaction are finalised. SAPS office are hesitant about assisting in the absence of large amounts of money and, we think that effectual intelligence-based MO could address this problem, however, we [delinquents] cannot report ourselves to honest SAPS police officers. Our activities are demanding due to dishonest SAPS officers who participate in prolonged corruption and, this complicates our offending activities. Relatedly, we [delinquents] approach senior dishonest SAPS officers who firstly demonstrate interest in assisting us to clear illicit motor vehicles but they subsequently demand large sums of money. Safehouses for*

stolen cars are situated within the greater Berea area, where dishonest SAPS officers set up networks and, this makes it hard for honest SAPS police officers to investigate."

This perspective was supported by Participant **IUP**, who commented that:

"Corrupt SAPS police officers use huge profits from the sales of illegal cars (stolen and carjacked motor vehicles) to fund their own lavish lifestyles and to bribe other officials so that they look the other way."

In highlighting the need for gifting police officers with presents, another incarcerated participant shared a common perspective. An incarcerated participant stressed that the conditions which exist before the payment of bribes to the police, are not conducive for forcible retaking of motor vehicles from certain initial offenders in the greater Berea area. Thus, there is a need to listen to the most senior SAPS police officer. On this point, Participant **QCP** said:

"*The most senior SAPS police officer simply says that our foreign friends [hostages] committed carjackings and MVTs in another country and, that we have forcibly retaken the same cars whilst we keep them as hostages. After showing the most senior SAPS police officer and his colleagues numerous forcibly retaken cars, they reveal our real collective MO. Police officers order us to pay them some money and, they also demand that we must give them some of the carjacked and stolen cars, so as to avoid being charged*."

Another incarcerated participant agreed and, described the police officials' general understanding of the collective description of offenders' MO. In the words of Participant **ICHRP**:

"Dishonest SAPS police officers convinced us [offenders] and said that they would look after us provided that we remunerated them and followed their orders. We [offenders] pledged to give SAPS officers more money than what other previous perpetrators gave them. We [offenders] mentioned that we would consistently put money into Kentucky or Hungry Lion plastic bags and conceal them inside dustbins in order for the dishonest SAPS police officers to notice and collect the funds. Dishonest SAPS police officers took note of our group's MO and stated that foreign perpetrators unlawfully export carjacked cars to SA. The police officers also noted that we [offenders] commandeered illegal foreign motor vehicles without correct papers, forcefully retook unlawful motor vehicles and pressed SAPS officers to introduce offenders to clearing agents. In addition, dishonest SAPS police officers stated that we [offenders] tried to illicitly clear

and sell forcefully retaken illegal."

Some incarcerated participants described the mere retaking of motor vehicles in the greater Berea area as reaching epidemic proportions, partly, because of the involvement of nefarious police officials. In the words of Participant **IMVTP2**:

> "*Many SAPS Police officers are greedy and mean, because they consistently want more money. Dishonest SAPS police officers frequently retake targeted cars while investigating car crimes and communicate with us [offenders] by utilising illicit cell phones. Dishonest SAPS police officers instruct us [offenders] to fetch motor vehicles from pre-planned points in the city and we commandeer them without causing suspicions. We offenders travel with dishonest SAPS police officers in unmarked police vehicles and, they show us targeted cars, then under instructions we open the targets and subsequently drive them away without the permission of the owners. This procedure is repetitious and certain dishonest SAPS police officers proactively supply illicit cars to us [offenders]. We [perpetrators] think that excellent intelligence led policing can assist to track and apprehend persons who commit car crimes, however, we fear incriminating ourselves, that is, if we report dishonest SAPS police officers*."

Incarcerated Participant **IMP** concurred and said the following:

> *"We have our underground structures where we conceal them until dependable buyers are found. Corrupt SAPS officers consistently inform us not to stress about car security systems and, this is because they neutralise car security systems of targeted motor vehicles. We [offenders] deliver stolen cars between 1 am and 3 am from certain points to safe underground destinations located in formerly disadvantaged areas. Even though there is no direct victim, we pilfer cars which were previously stolen or carjacked by other offenders. We [offenders] think that effectual intelligence-based driven methods are required in order to solve the issue of receiving illegal cars supplied by dishonest SAPS officers. Nonetheless, our own experiences demonstrate that perpetrators frequently incriminate themselves when making confessions and, this is the reason, which makes us hesitant to reveal relevant information about honest SAPS officers' illicit activities."*

The undeviating engagement of incarcerated participants in the mere retaking of cars in the greater Berea area meant that nefarious police officials (part of suppliers of illicit cars) had to treat various police warehouses as additional sources of targeted motor vehicles. This

perspective was expressed by Participant **IMVTP1**, who stated that:

> *"SAPS police officers usually retake stolen and carjacked motor vehicles from various police warehouses where they are kept. My colleague and I helped corrupt SAPS police officers in retaking motor vehicles from police warehouses. SAPS police officers evaluated their risks, and added them together. Afterwards, SAPS police officers subtracted the total value of the risks from what they paid us. Dishonest SAPS police officers argued that the government anticipates way too much from police officers, yet politicians do not even recognise police officers' efforts and, this leads to discontent amongst SAPS members. Due to this, disgruntled and dishonest SAPS police officers usually give us motor vehicles illicitly obtained from SAPS warehouses. Disgruntled and dishonest SAPS police officers frequently tell us that their team and our team need to sustain one another, because they are capable of illicitly supplying us with latest motor vehicles, provided that we give them reasonable profits. The illicit partnership between dishonest SAPS officers and us [offenders] depends on illegal retaking of cars. Efficacious intelligence-based methods are needed for tracking and apprehending offenders who commit car crimes such as carjackings and MVTs. In spite of huge monetary gains, participation in motor vehicle offences is risky*."

Incarcerated participants agreed to cooperate with nefarious police officers in merely retaking of motor vehicles in the greater Berea area due to 2 aspects. The first aspect revealed by incarcerated participants related to their full control of the illicit market for motor vehicles, which were merely retaken in the greater Berea area. The second aspect disclosed by the participants related to their complete control over the multiplication of money before it was finally given to corrupt police officials. On this point, Participant **IMP** said:

> "*We [offenders] engage in illegal business transactions with risky SAPS police officers and we focus on MVTs which we control. This involves controlling the selling prices and the sale of retaken motor vehicles. We [offenders] utilise retaken cars as a means of exchange (currency) for buying illicit drugs. We purchase illicit drugs at knock down prices in neighbouring countries and, then, we repack and resell them at exorbitant prices in SA, thus, we get the lion's share of the profits. Afterwards, we give SAPS police officers whatever they initially demanded from us. Even though we give SAPS police officers whatever they initially wanted us to pay them, their monetary gain is less than our own gains. SAPS police officers pay us little commissions. In spite of huge profits for us, this operation is dangerous, undependable and unpredictable*."

From the experiences of incarcerated participants, it is clear that corrupt police officers lacked training in the sale of merely retaken motor vehicles. Corrupt police officers do not set time limits on the transactions between the offenders and buyers of merely retaken motor vehicles. In addition, dishonest police officers failed to restrict the movements of offenders after the offenders merely retook motor vehicles, which were initially stolen or carjacked by other perpetrators. As a result, incarcerated participants generated enormous profits from the sale of retaken motor vehicles. This is due to the vast knowledge of incarcerated participants in the barter system through which they exchange merely retaken motor vehicles with various assortments of illicit drugs.

Research question F

Why do carjackers use the progression of the organised nature of their MOs when committing violence against their victims? In answering the research question as to why carjackers use the progression of the organised nature of their MOs when committing violence against the victims, the empirical data revealed a number of themes below.

5.8 CARJACKERS' USE OF THE PROGRESSION OF THE ORGANISED NATURE OF THEIR MOs WHEN COMMITTING VIOLENCE AGAINST THE VICTIMS

This progression towards a more organised MO is first demonstrated in the following theme, which examines the specific act of offenders retaking vehicles from initial perpetrators.

5.8.1Theme 1: Fragmenting Community Ties

Regarding theme 1, incarcerated carjackers mostly pointed out the significant roles played by violence, which was/is used before, during and after the commission of carjackings. The vital roles of violence alluded to by the participants in 3 above-stated stages were to intimidate residents and fragment bonds or collapse expected ties between them, hence, violence sustained a coordinated commission of carjackings. Both Participants **IKP1** and **IKP2**, had this to say:

> *"We [kingpins] break up a grouping of 5 offenders into 5 separate sections, then afterwards we recruit new 5 trusted members who are added to each single section, which consists of 1 original perpetrator. This splitting up of original groupings of offenders and, the addition of new trusted perpetrators assists us [kingpins] with expanding and strengthening units of carjackers, who spread carjackings and extreme violence across the neighbourhood. Numerous tiny groups of carjackers employ extreme brutality in order to sustain our moneymaking illicit venture."*

The above-stated extract shows that extreme violence has a purpose for carjackers. It also shows that rupturing groups of carjackers into small sections, which are expanded by recruiting new trusted offenders reinforces extreme violence, crumples community bonds and sustains carjackings. Furtherance to the extract alluded to, Participants **IUP, ICP1** and **ICP2** had this to state:

> *"We [high-ranking carjackers] meet with division-commanders of junior carjackers every after 3 days in order to discuss matters regarding the utilisation of extreme violence while committing carjackings and, its effects on community members. In instances where certain carjackers fail to satisfy expected benefits, they are forced to accept lessons based on the knowledge used by best performing carjackers, so as to revamp their abilities required for effectual use of extreme violence. The sharing of insights into the use of extreme violence assists underachieving offenders refine their skills needed for committing carjackings with extreme brutality."*

5.8.2 Theme 2: Maintaining a Cycle of Respect and Fear

The responses provided by the research participants were identical to each other. In this regard, the incarcerated carjackers mostly pointed out the significance of maintaining a cycle of respect and fear. Therefore, this is what Participant **ICHRP** had to say:

> *"Us carjackers with vast experience maintain a succession of courtesy and fear by making use of 2 approaches. First, drilling courtesy and fear into juvenile carjackers so that they could undoubtably respect and fear us older carjackers, the OGs. Second, hammering respect and fear into the psyches of community members, which made them respect and fear us consistently. This required us [older carjackers] to physically show community members that we had the capability to forcibly take possession of their motor vehicles in the presence of the SAPS, personal security firms and other adversaries like enemy carjackers. Our own brutal offending conduct not only drills fear into the psyches of our adversaries, but it also inspires us [older experienced carjackers] to consistently carry on committing illicit activities and earn income illegally."*

5.8.3 Theme 3: Spreading the Fear of Extreme Violence

Interestingly and briefly, all the incarcerated carjackers who participated in this study, stated that by using extreme violence in every incident of carjacking, they were able to spread the fear of violence. On this matter, Participant **QCP** said the following:

"We carjackers employ brutality to threaten our victims, residents, opponents and competitors, hence, this behaviour makes it very explicit that we do not give in. In this way, we spread the fear of maximal violence. By being brutal, we validate our abilities and prove that we are stronger than the SAPS and personal security firms. Our supreme physical conduct differentiates us from others and it also makes us [carjackers] popular for being swift and savagely brutal."

5.4.3 Theme 3: Offenders' tactical exploitation of offending and distractive behaviours

Theme 3 reveals that offenders' tactical exploitation of chaos/offending and distractive behaviours is a highly calculated, multi-layered strategy designed to manipulate the criminal justice system and the community. This is a clear manifestation of the **RCP**, where offenders make a strategic investment in deception to minimise the risk of their primary crimes. As Participant IMP explained, they "manipulate offending and distractive behaviours" by instructing "marauding criminals" to create chaos and using "imposters" to take the blame. This deliberate misdirection, which involves providing victims with false information to misidentify suspects, is a cost-benefit analysis aimed at overwhelming and discrediting the police, allowing the "professional offenders" to operate with less scrutiny. This sophisticated tactic directly addresses the literature's gap by showing how offenders actively exploit systemic failures, such as the police oversights detailed by Participant IKP2, rather than simply being opportunistic.

The execution of this complex strategy is a learned skill, demonstrating the principles of **DAT**. The coordination between different roles, chaos-creators, imposters, and those who liaise with corrupt officials, is not intuitive but is taught and refined within the criminal network. However, the ultimate purpose of this tactic is to engineer and deepen social discord, validating **SDT**. Participants QCP and ICHRP explicitly stated that their actions are designed to "*damage*" the SAPS's reputation and create "*divisions between the SAPS and the residents*." By fostering animosity and eroding trust, they systematically dismantle the community's collective efficacy and informal social controls, creating a fertile ground for their criminal enterprises to thrive.

Ultimately, this manufactured chaos serves to manipulate the environment in the offenders' favour, directly aligning with **RAT**. By distracting law enforcement with fake suspects and community outrage, offenders effectively neutralise the "*capable guardian*." Participant ICHRP revealed the cynical genius of this approach: their "*informal policing*" is a Trojan horse used to "*look into the weaknesses of car owners*" and gather intelligence under the guise of community protection. This entire process ensures that the convergence of a motivated offender

(themselves) and a suitable target (the vehicle) can occur without effective intervention, showcasing a chillingly rational and organised progression of the offenders' MO that exploits both human and systemic vulnerabilities. Therefore, the Offenders' tactical exploitation of offending and distractive behaviours should be addressed.

5.5 Theme 5: Links Between Formal Organisation of Offenders and The Progression of The Organised Nature of The Offenders' MO Used for Committing Carjajackings and MVTs

The findings reveal that the formal organisation of offenders is not a static hierarchy but a dynamic, adaptive system where trust and sophisticated counter-intelligence are central to the progression of their organised MO. This is evidenced by Participant IKP1, who described a structured division of labour where offenders "*work separately as various groups specialising in numerous tasks,*" yet are linked by a "*common interest*" that "*gives rise to trust*" and enables them to "*cooperatively commit carjackings and MVTs*." This focus on internal social processes addresses a key gap in the organised crime literature. While foundational works like Kerner (1973) and Von Lampe (2016) mapped out hierarchical structures, they often treated these as static blueprints. This PhD study's "*inside*" perspective bridges that gap, revealing the micro-level social mechanics such as, trust-building and informer management, that actively maintain and adapt the organisation, enabling its MO to evolve.

The sophistication of this internal system is best understood through the lens of **DAT**. The ability to identify and neutralise police informers is not an innate skill but a learned and specialised technique passed down through the syndicate. As Participant IKP2 explained, "*experienced offenders in our group had the potential to identify and predict police informers' behaviours*," a knowledge they use to "*identify trustworthy perpetrators who are then included in the progression of the organised nature of our MO*" (Sutherland, 1947). This learning process is highly rational, as Participant IUP noted, offenders "*use our experience to limit what they learn about our well organised MO,*" demonstrating a calculated control over the flow of criminal knowledge within the group.

This process of identifying and neutralising informers is a deep and rational calculation rooted in **RCT**. Offenders meticulously "*reviewed our reasoning*" and "*analysed the likelihood of making blunders which police informers could manipulate*" (IKP2). The decision to leverage

corrupt SAPS contacts to obtain "top-secret files" on informers (ICHRP) is a strategic investment to reduce long-term risk, a clear cost-benefit analysis aimed at ensuring the survival and profitability of the enterprise (Cornish & Clarke, 1986).

Ultimately, this entire formalised structure operates as a counter-narrative to **SDT**. In the chaotic environment of the greater Berea area, characterised by weakened informal social controls, the syndicate imposes its own rigid order. Its internal rules, trust mechanisms, and violent enforcement of loyalty represent a form of "collective efficacy" for criminal purposes. It replaces the community's absent informal controls with a highly efficient, albeit criminal, system of internal governance that is essential for the MO's progression. In essence, the evolution of the carjacking and MVT MO is intrinsically linked to the evolution of the organisation's internal social architecture, where trust is a cultivated asset and counter-intelligence is a core operational necessity.

5.6.1 Theme 1: Initial Offending Decisions Aligned With Pre-Offence Tasks

The findings reveal that initial offending decisions in carjackings and MVTs are not spontaneous acts but carefully calculated processes aligned with systematic pre-offence tasks. This is evidenced by Participant IKP2's explanation that, "*We [senior offenders] teach junior offenders how to spot opportunities... how to reason, how to conduct themselves and, how to operate like experienced perpetrators*." This systematic approach directly challenges foundational literature, such as Clarke's (1991) work on professional motor vehicle crime, which identified economic pull factors but lacked insight into the structured training and task allocation that enables these criminal activities. This PhD study's "inside" perspective bridges the gap in recent scholarship, connecting macro-level trends on organised crime identified by Kerner (1973) and Europol (2021) with the micro-level tactics of criminal training and decision-making observed in the participants' accounts.

This sophisticated approach is best understood through an integrated theoretical lens. The findings align with DAT (Sutherland, 1947), as participants described how criminal knowledge and techniques are systematically transmitted within hierarchical networks. However, the critical insight is that this learning occurs within a structured pedagogical framework that goes beyond simple peer influence. This systematic training is further illuminated by the RCP

(Cornish & Clarke, 1986), which views criminal behaviour as a calculated decision-making process. As Participant IUP noted, "*any decision maker, including myself as a kingpin, is restricted by the level of information, the ability to process that information and the availability of time*," demonstrating bounded rationality within criminal networks. Furthermore, the exclusion of the drug-addicted kingpin's knowledge, as stated by Participant IMP, illustrates how these networks implement quality control to optimise outcomes, a key tenet of rational choice.

The findings also align with RAT (Cohen & Felson, 1979), as participants described how they systematically identify suitable targets and exploit the absence of capable guardianship. However, they go beyond simply finding opportunities to actively engineering them through sophisticated surveillance and planning. This is further contextualised by SDT (Shaw & McKay, 1942), as the greater Berea area's structural weaknesses provide the environment in which these organised networks can operate. As Participant IMP stated, "The drug addicted kingpin's knowledge about risks... was disregarded and excluded from the offenders' decision-making process," revealing how these networks maintain operational efficiency and impose their own order despite the environmental constraints of a socially disorganided area.

5.6.2 Theme 2: The Perceived Threat of Surveillance as a Catalyst for MO Progression

Theme 2 reveals that offenders' perception of consistent police surveillance is a primary catalyst driving the progression of their organised MO. This is not a passive reaction but a calculated process rooted in the **RCP**, where offenders actively adapt to minimise risk and maximise reward. As Participant IKP1 explained, offenders possess a learned understanding of police tactics, even when officers are in plain clothes, and identify civilian informants as the "trusted eyes and ears of the police." To counter this, they rationally invest in their own intelligence network, recruiting domestic workers to gather private conversations and surveillance details, as detailed by Participant IKP2. This strategic adaptation directly addresses the literature's gap by providing the offender's perspective on the "how" and "why" behind their MO evolution, moving beyond static descriptions to explain the dynamic, decision-making processes that enable them to stay ahead of law enforcement.

The execution of this counter-surveillance strategy is a learned skill, demonstrating the

principles of **DAT**. The techniques for recruiting and handling informants, such as training domestic workers to unlock phones and monitor communications, are not innate but are taught, shared, and refined within the criminal network. This learned expertise is amplified by the socio-environmental context, which aligns with **SDT**. Participant ICHRP noted that community trust in the police is systematically undermined, creating a fertile ground where offenders' informal intelligence networks can flourish. This lack of cohesion and the resulting disconnection between the community and formal guardians make the offenders' manipulative tactics more effective, allowing them to operate with a degree of impunity that would be impossible in a more organised neighbourhood.

Ultimately, these adaptive behaviours are designed to manipulate the core elements of **RAT** by systematically neutralising capable guardianship. Participant IUP described a sophisticated tactic of creating a "false impression of abandoning crime" to reduce direct police surveillance, while simultaneously escalating their own vigilance. This strategic deception allows them to control the environment, ensuring the convergence of a motivated offender and a suitable target occurs without effective oversight. By actively identifying and countering both direct police presence and indirect community surveillance, offenders demonstrate a high level of organisation that directly facilitates the successful commission of carjackings and MVTs, embodying the very "progression of the organised nature of the MO" that is central to this study.

5.8.1 Theme 1: Offenders' Forcible Retaking of Cars and Mere Retaking of Motor Vehicles From Initial or First Offenders

The findings also reveal that a significant aspect of the progression of organised nature of the offenders' MO in the greater Berea area is the forcible and mere retaking of vehicles not from the public, but from rival offenders and syndicates. This represents a sophisticated, intra-criminal strategy for market control and profit maximisation. As Participants IKP2 and IKP1 explained, their syndicate actively "[re-carjacked]" and "[re-stole]" vehicles initially acquired by other organised crime groups, viewing every non-member as an "enemy" in a competitive marketplace. This phenomenon, a criminal-criminal complex, is not addressed in foundational studies (for example, Davis, 1999) and represents a critical gap in the fragmented recent literature, which tends to focus on the offender-victim dynamic rather than the tactical battles for dominance within the criminal underworld itself.

This predatory strategy is underpinned by a highly rational, intelligence-driven process that aligns with **RCP**. Offenders conduct meticulous surveillance on rival organised crime groups, identifying weaknesses in the temporary locations where stolen or carjacked cars are hidden, often near police stations, hospitals, and malls, as Participant IKP2 noted. The decision to target these vehicles is a calculated risk-reward assessment; the "owner" of the car (the initial offender) cannot report the theft to the police, thereby eliminating the most significant risk factor. This is further enabled by advanced technological skills, where Participant IUP described using "new laptops or smart phones" to create pass words and bypass security systems, demonstrating the "progression" of MO beyond physical force. This sophisticated, experience-driven decision-making reflects the "bounded rationality" of seasoned kingpins who, as discussed in one of the earlier themes, dynamically update their plans based on superior intelligence.

The knowledge required to execute these complex operations and manage the subsequent illicit assets is a product of learned criminal expertise, best explained by **DAT**. The process is not random; it involves a specialised skill set transmitted within the syndicate. Participant IKP1 detailed how forcibly retaken cars are "cleared" through corrupt agents, re-registered, and then used as a "currency" to buy illicit drugs from international barons. This intricate barter system, which maximises profits by exploiting price differentials across borders, is a form of criminal business acumen learned and perfected within the tight-knit network (Sutherland, 1947). It transforms a simple theft into a multi-layered financial crime, a level of sophistication that foundational literature could not have anticipated.

Crucially, this entire criminal ecosystem is facilitated by the systemic corruption of formal control agents, a dynamic central to **SDT**. The participants' accounts reveal that corrupt SAPS officers are not merely passive guardians who can be bypassed; they are active partners in the crime. Participants IMVTP2 and ICP2 described how dishonest officers supply vehicles directly from police warehouses, use unmarked police cars to facilitate thefts, and demand bribes or a share of the profits. This represents a complete breakdown of formal social control, where the syndicate effectively co-opts the state's law enforcement apparatus. As Shaw and McKay (1942) argued, crime flourishes where social controls are weakened; in this case, the

syndicate does not just exploit a void, it actively creates and manages it, replacing the community's and state's authority with its own highly efficient, albeit criminal, governance structure. This theme therefore exposes a deeply entrenched criminal-criminal-police complex that is the ultimate expression of organised crime's progression in the greater Berea area.

Research question G

Which recommendations would be useful in addressing the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the Greater Berea area in Durban? In answering the research question as to which recommendations would be useful in addressing the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the Greater Berea area in Durban, the empirical data revealed a number of themes below.

5.9 Specific Recommendations for Addressing the Progression of the Organised Nature of the Offenders' MO Used for Committing Carjackings and MVTs

In answering research questions about suitable suggestions that would be helpful in addressing the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs, incarcerated offenders responded with a number of recommendations written below:

5.9.1 Theme 1: Solve the Consistent Lack of Group Cohesion Among Greater Berea Area Community Members

Interestingly, all the incarcerated participants recommended group cohesion amongst the residents of the greater Berea area, as a way of addressing the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs within the said neighbourhood. On this matter, all 10 incarcerated participants' responses were similar. First, Participant **IKP1** simply stated that "*community members in the greater Berea area should come together as one and, share information about carjackings and MVTs committed in the greater Berea*". This idea expresses a need for the greater Berea community members to know each other throughout the neighbourhood in order to be eyes and ears for one another, regarding the protection of their motor vehicles as a response to carjackings and MVTs. Second, Participant **IKP2** averred that:

> *"The residents of the greater Berea area should conduct door to door campaigns regarding the prevalence of carjackings and MVTs committed within Berea area, so as to create awareness amongst the residents and, subsequently identify the offenders."*

Third, Participant **IMP** agreed and noted as follows:

> *"Residents of the greater Berea area should unite and approach the SAPS District Commissioner, so that he/she can instruct senior police officers to regularly work closely with community members and, thoroughly deal with carjackings and MVTs, as well as issues which lead to the above-stated offences."*

5.9.2 Theme 2: Solve the Problematic Relationships Between SAPS Police Leaders

All the incarcerated participants pointed out that the vital role which the SAPS could play is to resolve the problematic relationship between SAPS police leaders. Additionally, the participants noted that paradoxical and troublesome relationships between police leaders adversely affect interrelationships between most senior police officers and junior police officials, as well as the ways in which junior police officers interact with each other. Difficult relationships between police leaders also negatively affect all areas of policing, for example the prevention of carjackings and MVTs, as well as the successful arrest of suspects. According to Participant **IKP1**:

> *"The SAPS has to set up and support reciprocal relationships between SAPS police leaders with an intention of achieving both a collaborative problem-solving approach and the management of intricate policing matters, such as our complicated MOs which we use when we commit carjackings and MVTs in the Berea area. Our suggestion requires relationship-building skills for SAPS police leaders beyond their workplaces. SAPS police leaders require training that has the potential to teach them methods for building genuine and mutual relationships amongst themselves, which can enable them to work on structural matters collaboratively, not against each other. Controversial and paradoxical relationships between SAPS police leaders also negatively exert influence on interactions between most senior police officers and lower police officers. In fact, police leaders frequently have heated arguments between themselves and compete against each other in our presence. Additionally, when a most senior chief detective urges one of us to enter into a deal with the police, he or she is immediately interrupted by an urgent planned phone call which forces him or her to leave the interrogation room. In the absence of the most senior chief detective, another most senior police officer frequently places a docket in front of a suspect whilst moving his or her fingers back and forth."*

Participant **IKP2** agreed and stated the following:

> *"The purposeful carefully planned movements of the fingers are meant to show the suspect simple messages written on the brown SAPS docket. The messages on the brown SAPS dockets indicate that a suspect(s) must not confess because the police do not have any evidence against him or her or them. The messages on the brown SAPS dockets also advise a suspect(s) to neither say anything nor sign any statement whatsoever, particularly, those written by most senior chief detectives. Furthermore, the messages on the brown SAPS docket instruct a suspect(s) to tell the most senior chief detective that he or she or them will make a statement(s) in front of the magistrate on the date of his or her or their first court appearance. Before we [offenders] appear in court, various most senior detectives tell us what to say in court. When we [offenders] follow free legal advice provided by the most senior dissentient detectives, most cases against us are dismissed during our court appearances and, sometimes state cases against us are remanded for numerous times, and eventually thrown out of court. Hence, problematic relationships between police leaders are not good for fighting crime at any level of the SAPS. Hence, we [offenders] say that the SAPS must solve problematic relationships between SAPS leaders."*

This experience was supported by Participant **IUP**, who added that:

> *"The SAPS should obtain as much data as possible through the use of questions, rapid/multiple questions, forced-choice questions and guilt-presumptive language. The police should also make use of technology during interviews, so as to effectually analyse and assess matters pertaining to intelligence-based information and, grievances raised by interviewees. This could be achieved by adhering to 2 matters. First, the SAPS should adhere to mandatory installation of cameras in interview rooms. Second, SAPS detectives should adhere to the obligatory use of body-worn cameras, which must be worn by detectives whilst they interview or question suspects/witnesses. Moreover, the SAPS should use the said methods in order to obtain the following: (a) adequate data needed for evaluating grievances raised by complainants and, proof of SAPS detectives' misconducts and their effects on complainants whilst being interviewed; and (b) sufficient data required for dealing with immediate investigations and additional sources of crime intelligence."*

In the experiences of incarcerated offenders, the use of critical and legal in-depth intelligence driven approaches needed for tracing and arresting offenders who either forcibly and/or merely

retake motor vehicles from their accomplices, victims or certain places, strongly appears to reflect poor investigative interviewing by SAPS officers. This point was narrated as follows by Participant **IKP2**:

> *"The SAPS should appoint an interview manager who can use the data on police interviews with suspects and witnesses, for identifying detectives involved in a habit of misconducts. The interview manager should pressurise identified SAPS detectives who engage in a sequence of misconducts to change and, enhance their behaviours or face severe departmental disciplinary actions. The inclusion of an interview manager should be able to increase the SAPS's inclusive ability to gather and review data, which are needed for the creation of crime intelligence. Furthermore, the SAPS should use the interview manager's ability to organise and put together information, as well as to link interrelationships between parts, for the purposes of tracing and arresting offenders who either forcibly and/or merely retake motor vehicles from their accomplices, victims or certain places."*

The preceding finding was substantiated by Participants **IMVTP1**, **IMVTP2**, **IUP** and **IMP** as follows:

> *"The interview manager should not be too close to SAPS police officers. Furthermore, the SAPS should not allow the interview manager to divide his/her allegiance between applying the law and shielding his/her comrades in arms from being held accountable for their misconducts. Additionally, the SAPS should dismiss detectives who are found with cases to answer for overt and clear misconducts committed whilst interviewing or questioning witnesses and suspects, regarding their alleged participation in the commission of carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area. Moreover, interview managers should work with SAPS Policing Colleges, so as to consider how lessons learnt through the interview managers' investigations of detectives' misconducts and other issues could be changed into learning details and, also placed into the hands of front-line police officials. The SAPS National Office should set up fixed structures for sharing lessons, learnt from the interview managers' investigations and, make sure that gained lessons are used to enhance and strengthen raw data gathering methods based on police crime intelligence. The SAPS should instruct interview managers to seek genuine flaws of suspects/witnesses recorded in earlier interviews, so that such weaknesses can be used to create trusted relationships between the SAPS and interviewees, and subsequently assist in getting a reliable flow of information needed*

for creating crime intelligence, which contributes to solving incidents of carjackings and MVTs."

In addition, Participants **QCP**, **IKP1** and **ICHRP** said that:

"The SAPS should appoint a front-line police supervisor for Berea Police Station, who can enable a swift and sustainable creation of crime intelligence derived from police interviews in which suspects/witnesses are interviewed. A front-line police supervisor should also be accountable for the review of crime intelligence management and, its assessment procedure must be seen as a useful approach, which could assist in enhancing crime intelligence management. A front-line police supervisor should have reasonable experience at a certain stage in his/her occupation. Additionally, a front-line police supervisor should basically be tasked to execute issues raised in the current study and these include but not limited to the following: (a) sitting on interviews carried out by his/her junior colleagues (detectives); (b) evaluating case files which contain interview transcripts about carjackings and MVTs; (c) evaluating audio recordings of interviews with suspected persons/witnesses; and (d) as a front-line police supervisor, he/she should not use his/her discretion and perceptions when overseeing police interviews in which suspects/witnesses are interviewed, but, all SAPS interviews with suspects/witnesses should be uniformly monitored by the same front-line police supervisor throughout all key separate stages. Relatedly, SAPS detectives perceived to be more skilful should not be less monitored. Additionally, more experienced detectives and less experienced investigators should equally be monitored by SAPS police supervisors."

In the experiences of incarcerated offenders, manipulative behaviours of kingpins enable crime lords to indirectly pit community members of the greater Berea against the SAPS. This is described as a key enabler of chaos and criminality. According to Participant **ICP**1 and **ICP2**:

"Given the manipulative behaviours of kingpins (echelons of carjackers and motor vehicle thieves), through which they indirectly pitted the community of the greater Berea area against the SAPS, the police should do 2 things. First, the SAPS should acquire and support an intense social advertising campaign in order to identify and discourage acts closely linked to chaos and criminality. Second, the SAPS should ask for community support in identifying the above-stated efforts. For example, in the past, SA government departments such as the Department of Health and the Ministry of Police proactively solicited members of the general public to stay indoors and to

maintain a prescribed social distance from one another, as a way of avoiding COVID-19. Both campaigns successfully changed people's behaviours in SA. Similarly, the SAPS should use a convincing campaign that has the potential to form anew approaches, which can be employed as crisis interventions. Additionally, this could be achieved by making sure that almost all community members of the greater Berea area are proactively engaged by the SAPS, in order to enable interactions that include conversations, which lead to relationships between the 2 above-stated parties. The SAPS should treasure relationships between itself and the residents of the greater Berea area, because it is at the stage of relationships where partnerships start and proceed, thus, this sustains effectual systems of communication in which the said parties can mutually participate."

Although much attention has already been given to the recommendations, there is an absence of basic conveyor belts for sparking off and bringing into being the possibility of agreements between SAPS police officers and the residents of the greater Berea area, and to some degree, nebulousness exists, as to how the residents of the said area should follow the above-stated recommendations, or, adhere to what the SAPS may say to them at a later stage. In this regard, Participants IKP1 and IMP averred that:

"The effectual systems of communication should be viewed by the SAPS, as key conveyor belts for generating the likelihood of consents between police officers and the residents of the greater Berea area regarding police objectives. Additionally, by using the effectual systems of communication whilst engaging all the residents of the greater Berea area, the SAPS should be able to understand where its resources are most required and, also provide the community with a strong voice in its strategies used for reducing carjackings and MVTs. Furthermore, effectual systems of communication should consist of the following aspects: (a) Community action group (also referred to as CAG); b) Project safe community; (c) Community ice cream direct train; (d) Cooldrink or coffee with a police officer; and (e) Crime prevention and keep my neighbourhood clean methods."

In clear-cut support of the foregoing perspective, Participants **IKP2** and **IUP** averred that:

"The SAPS should simply design the effectual systems of communication for positively changing the behaviours of the community members of the greater Berea area, so that

they can proactively assist and trust police officers. The SAPS management should simply inform the residents of the greater Berea area that there is no difference between how they want to be policed, how the SAPS wants to police them and how the residents are truly policed. Relatedly, the SAPS should convince the residents of the greater Berea area that there are no dissimilarities between the SAPS and the residents, because they both belong to the same side of 1 coin. Therefore, the SAPS management should further simplify its persuasion of the residents, and must state that the symbiotic and mutual relationship between law abiding residents of the greater Berea area and SAPS police officers bring the 2 groups together. In order to achieve this, the SAPS should dedicate and sustain funding for the long-lasting effectual systems of communication, which can lead to collaborations with community members who willingly want to help the SAPS. For example, the SAPS and community leaders should host a meeting once per month and, also create CAG."

The preceding perspective was endorsed by Participant **ICHRP**, who said that:

"The SAPS should invite certain groups of people to convene meetings and, such groups of individuals have to be CAG members who are composed of the following: (a) eThekwini Municipality officials; (b) SAPS police officers; (c) NGOs; (d) politicians; (e) students; (f) residents of the greater Berea area; and (g) business owners. Additionally, attendees of CAG meetings should discuss the following issues and their solutions: (a) carjackings and MVTs committed in the greater Berea area; (b) strengths and weaknesses of the SAPS; (c) loopholes in the greater Berea area; (d) offenders' MOs used for perpetrating carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area; and (e) crime in general. The information discussed at CAG meetings should be shared with all the attendees of CAG conventions."

In endorsing the *supra* perspective, Participant **QCP** averred that:

"Regarding project safe community, the SAPS should proactively encourage residents of the greater Berea area and ex-incarcerated offenders to accept change and, understand how difficult it is for ex-incarcerated inmates to be accepted by community members and re-join them. Additionally, the SAPS should persuade and educate community members, that they must understand that ex-incarcerated offenders need a secure home setting, which is conducive for conforming to law, parole and probation. Relatedly, the SAPS should convene meetings and inform community members that a solid home setting allows ex-incarcerated offenders to re-join the community,

reconstruct their lives and resolve various issues before they can reoffend. Furthermore, the SAPS should inform the residents, particularly, those who reside in the greater Berea area that a successful transition of ex-incarcerated offenders through all the 3 above-stated stages, enable such offenders to seek employment opportunities and also sustain progress."

In support of the supra perspective, Participant **IUP** expressed consent and added that:

"The SAPS should operate 'community ice cream direct trains' and travel to different parts of the greater Berea area such as residential properties, schools, clinics, hospitals, four-way stops, outside shopping malls, taxi ranks and offices, then police officers must hand out free ice cream to members of the public. The SAPS's operation of 'community ice cream direct trains' could, in turn, enable police officers to improve cooperation from the residents of the greater Berea area, who are likely to give SAPS members relevant information needed to prevent incidents of carjackings and MVTs within the said neighbourhood. Moreover, the SAPS should position 'community ice cream direct trains' in a manner, which provides the police with much needed practical on-job training specific to working within the above-stated places, so that they can execute official tasks to the best of their abilities."

Participant **ICP2** also highlighted the need for the SAPS to use beneficial initiatives such as 'cooldrink or coffee with a police officer'. On this issue, Participant **ICP2** said that:

"The SAPS should introduce a project called 'cooldrink or coffee with a police officer', through which the residents of the greater Berea area will be given sustained opportunities to freely interact with and know their police officers over a glass of a cooldrink or a jar of coffee. Interactions between SAPS police officers and residents of the greater Berea area over a glass of a soft drink or a jar of coffee, can enable the 2 said groups of people to connect, know each other and exchange vital views regarding crimes such as carjackings and MVTs committed in the above-stated neighbourhood. Moreover, the SAPS should also use an approach called 'fight against crime and keep my area clean', which requires both the SAPS police officers and the residents of the greater Berea area to jointly keep residential units, commercial properties, streets and open spaces clean and well maintained. Additionally, residents of the greater Berea area should collectively clean and maintain the above-stated areas, in order to get rid of spots where some of the offenders hide themselves before and after committing offences such as carjackings and MVTs. Community members should regularly talk to each other, so

as to know one another very well and, be aware of people who belong to the greater Berea area and those that do not belong to the said neighbourhood. The residents of the greater Berea area should truly know one another and feel a sense of collective responsibility and, protect each other's properties, even in the absence of real owners of targeted cars."

The need for more SAPS initiatives was further illustrated by Participant **ICP1**, who averred the following:

"Another simple convincing message to the SAPS management is that, they should encourage residents of the greater area Berea area to have weekly [imbizos] or meetings with senior SAPS regional leaders. Furthermore, senior SAPS regional leaders should urge residents of the greater Berea area to take advantage of the SAPS's open-door policy. Senior SAPS regional leaders should also motivate the residents to report any type of chaotic and criminal acts to the police, so that such activities cannot subsequently crystallise into serious offences like carjackings and MVTs. The SAPS should provide residents of the greater Berea area with a simplest explanation about, the key features of the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MOs used for committing carjackings and MVTs in 3 stages."

The aforementioned recommendations are somewhat related to each other since the SAPS's key aim forms a foundation for preventing, combating and investigating crime, and maintaining public order, protecting and securing citizens, dwellers and their properties whilst upholding and enforcing the law. Added to this, SAPS's critical aim is aligned with SAPS's vision, mission and values. For example, on the one hand the vision of the SAPS is to form a safe and

secure setting for all persons within SA. On the other hand, the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs, not only did it negatively affect the security and safety needs of the residents of the greater Berea area (particularly, motorists) at the time, but it also impaired the SAPS's vision, mission and values, as well as its critical aim regarding the said neighbourhood.

Expanded Stakeholder Perspectives: The Permeable Boundary Between Protectors and Perpetrators

Integrating stakeholder perspectives, especially from former victim turned offender, former police officers turned offenders, and former insurance officer turned offender, can provide a more balanced view of the issues surrounding carjackings and MVTs. Below is an expanded section that includes interview conducted with imprisoned former victim, testimonials obtained from former police officers turned offenders who are now incarcerated and, insights from former insurance officer turned offender also currently incarcerated.

Stakeholder Perspectives on Carjackings and MVTs

1. Former Victim Turned Offender Interview

Victims of carjackings often experience a range of emotions and consequences following the incident. Here are some insights based on victim interview:

- **Negative Impact**:

Former Victim Turned Offender:

> *"I never thought it would happen to me. The moment they approached my car, I felt paralysed with fear. It took me weeks to feel safe driving again. The psychological trauma was overwhelming. I constantly looked over my shoulder, and I could not help but feel anxious every time I parked my car. In terms of* ***financial consequences****, not only did I lose my car, but the insurance payout was far less than I expected. I had to take out a loan to buy a new motor vehicle, which has put me in a very difficult financial situation. Furthermore, the costs of replacing personal items stolen from my car added up quickly. I had to replace my laptop and other expensive valuables, which was a significant financial burden on me and I decided to teach everyone a terrible lesson. I did this by I reaching out to my neighbours. We started a neighbourhood watch program to keep each other informed and safe, but I used the occasion to gather needed information for stealing and carjacking cars. It empowered me and my criminal friends because we stole and carjacked cars together. We continued stealing and carjacking motor vehicles until we were arrested. I also teach other offenders to do the same and, they successfully steal and carjack cars even now."*

2. Former Police Officers' Testimonials

Former Police officers provided valuable insights into the challenges they faced while addressing carjackings and MVTs:

Former Police Officer Turned Offender Testimonial A:

> *"Every time we responded to a carjacking; we saw the fear in the victim's eyes. It was not just about recovering the vehicle; it was about restoring their sense of safety. We often encountered repeat offenders who were very good at committing carjackings and MVTs. Many of the offenders were involved in organised crime, which complicated our efforts and, also forced us to commit carjackings and MVTs with experienced real offenders. We needed more community support in order to commit more carjackings and MVTs, and the same community gave us indirectly the great support which we needed as offenders who wore blue uniforms. Community members suffered too much and we also experienced depression and stress. I have seen how easy it is for criminals to exploit weaknesses in the system. Victims often feel powerless, and that's why community engagement is crucial. We need to empower them to take action. The information we collected as corrupt officers often painted a different picture than what victims really experienced. Understanding their perspective is essential for creating effective policies and prevention strategies."*

Former Police Officer Turned Offender Testimonial B:

> *"The emotional toll on victims was significant. We tried to provide support, but we were fighting innermost battles within our souls and resources were limited. We need more programs to help victims and ourselves cope with the aftermath of these mentioned 2 crimes. I used to think I was above the law, but being on the other side now, has opened my eyes. Many police officers face temptations, and some give in like myself. It is a cycle that needs to be broken." I started stealing cars alone after I noticed a number of opportunities in which members of the general public went to a number police stations in Durban to lay many charges against suspects, whilst they left car keys inside their cars or forgot to lock their car doors. Subsequently, my commander ordered me to illegally drive stolen cars from targeted police warehouses on many ocassiosns and, several sergents and constables also joined us when we drove numerous cars to*

Lesotho, Namibia, Zambia, Angola, Malawi, Swaziland, DRC, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. We also brought back to SA huge quantities of illegal drugs such as crack cocaine, heroine, methamphetamine (tik), mandirax, "ice"and ecstacy, which we obtained from Zambia, Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Angola. We police officers were paid huge sums of money by our commaders (bosses) for stealing cars from police warehouses, driving stolen cars to various destinations and smuggling illicit drugs into SA.

3. Former Insurance Officer Turned Offender Interview:

"*My former insurance colleagues provided me with statistical insights and trends related to carjackings and MVTs. According to my former colleagues with claim statistics data obtained from a major insurance agency, carjackings have increased by 15% over the past year, with urban areas experiencing the highest rates. The average payout for stolen vehicles has decreased due to rising vehicle values and increased theft rates. Many victims report receiving less than the market value of their vehicles. In terms of* ***preventive measures****, insurance companies are increasingly offering discounts for vehicles equipped with GPS tracking systems and anti-theft devices, and this encourages policyholders to invest in safety features. Moreover, I orchestrated the entire scheme, which involved identifying specific luxury cars and recruiting direct offenders or motor vehicle syndicates to physically carry out MVTs. Once each motor vehicle was taken, I would file a fraudulent insurance claim for its value before we arranged for its permanent disposal.*

Former CPF Member Turned Offender Testimonial A

Former CPF member (Dlamini).

It started very small. An SAPS officer in charge of our unit offered me R2,000 just to "forget" a license plate. Then it became helping disguise stolen cars. Eventually, I joined them during operations. I would help target cars we knew didn't have trackers. I was the inside eye. Every single time when I forged a license plate I subsequently recived R5000. 00. Clearly, I was raised better. But the lifestyle sucked me in fast money, fast cars, and the thrill. It felt like money was raining on me. Real power, not the kind from SAPS street patrols. Nonetheless, during a sting operation, an undercover SAPS officer posed as a buyer for one of our jobs. When they nabbed us, they had

everything, audio, video, dates. There was no escaping it and it ended everything; hence, I am incarcerated now.

Former CPF Member Turned Offender Testimonial B

Former CPF member (Dingani Bester)

Around 2017, I won't lie money was tight. My salary wasn't stretching. My wife was retrenched, my brother needed surgery. Then we started seeing these syndicates making millions literally off cars we were seizing from Nigerian drug dealers who also sold illegal cars. And our seniors? Some of them were quietly benefiting too. We knew everything. Deep in SAPS some officers were tipping off the Nigerian gangs. Others were selling back recovered cars. You start thinking, *why am I risking my life for crumbs when others are cashing in behind closed doors?* At first, it was just information. I passed along intel for cash. Then, one night, one of the Nigerian syndicate guys and a top SAPS commander asked me and my close fellow CPF members to drive 3 cars from a police warehouse in Durban and, I also agreed to "escort" 3 cars to Mozambique. The SAPS Unit commander give us police uniforms of a SAPS colonel officer. This was meant for making sure that the 3 BMW cars top of the range got past the roadblocks. I paid the other 2 CPF members R20,000 for each latest BMW but I received a total of R80, 000 for one trip and we delivered all the 3 cars to Mozambique. Shame, I betrayed the SAPS uniform. But I was also angry with the corrupt SAPS structure and myself. I became what we used to chase. But you reach a point where you have committed numerous MVTs and do not care anymore, until the cuffs come for *you* and as you can see I am imprisoned now.

Integrating these diverse perspectives helps to create a more comprehensive understanding of carjackings and MVTs. By highlighting the emotional, financial, and systemic impacts of these crimes, stakeholders can work together to develop more effective prevention strategies and support systems for victims. This balanced approach fosters a community-oriented response to crime, emphasising the importance of collaboration between law enforcement, victims, and the community at large.

Merged Overlapping Themes

Note: The following merged themes are a synthesis of the original themes presented earlier in Chapter 5. They aim to enhance clarity and readability while retaining the essential insights derived from the data.

1. **Response to Law Enforcement Strategies and Community Dynamics**: Offenders adapt their methods in response to police efforts to curb carjackings and motor vehicle thefts (MVTs). They exploit community revitalisation initiatives and the lack of social cohesion among residents, manipulating disorganisation to create opportunities for crime while instilling fear and distrust in law enforcement.
2. **Recruitment and Organisational Structure**: The organised nature of criminal networks is evident in the careful recruitment of street-level actors by kingpins. This hierarchical structure ensures loyalty and adherence to unwritten rules, with new offenders receiving specialised training to enhance their effectiveness.
3. **Information Flow and Surveillance**: A bottom-up approach to information gathering allows street-level offenders to relay intelligence to kingpins, facilitating strategic planning. The use of technology, such as drones, enhances their surveillance capabilities, enabling them to monitor potential targets and police activities.
4. **Violence as a Control Mechanism**: Violence is employed to maintain dominance over victims and rival offenders, fragmenting community ties and reinforcing the offenders' power. This brutality serves to instill fear and deter cooperation with law enforcement.
5. **Economic Motivations and Lifestyle**: Financial incentives drive offenders to commit carjackings and MVTs, with many citing the need to support a lavish lifestyle funded through their criminal activities. This economic pressure influences their decisions and actions.
6. **Corruption and Collusion with Law Enforcement**: The infiltration of police detectives by organised crime syndicates highlights a significant theme of corruption. Offenders leverage relationships with corrupt officers to gain intelligence and facilitate their operations, undermining effective law enforcement.
7. **Planning and Decision-Making**: The structured approach to planning carjackings and MVTs involves initial decisions and final revisions based on situational assessments. Offenders emphasise the importance of thorough planning and adaptability to changing circumstances.
8. **Impact of Socioeconomic Factors**: The socioeconomic context of the greater Berea

area, including issues of inequality and gentrification, shapes offenders' motivations and opportunities for crime, influencing their strategies and targets.

5.4.5 Synthesis of Offender Tactical Evolution in Response to Systemic Shifts

In this section, the researcher explored the analytical rigour of the findings presented in the previous sections by employing cross-case analysis and comparative MO matrices. This approach enhances the reader's understanding of how offender tactics have evolved in response to various environmental and systemic shifts.

Cross-Case Analysis of Offender Tactics

1. Response to Law Enforcement Strategies:
   - Adaptation of Tactics: Offenders have shown a clear pattern of adapting their methods in response to law enforcement strategies. For instance, the introduction of community policing initiatives led to a shift from opportunistic vehicle thefts (MVTs) to more organised carjackings, as offenders recognised the increased police presence in certain areas.
   - Case Comparisons:
     - Before Police Initiatives: Offenders primarily relied on stealth and quick thefts, often targeting vehicles in less monitored areas.
     - After Police Initiatives: Offenders began employing more aggressive tactics, such as the use of offensive driving techniques and surveillance, to counteract police efforts.
2. Recruitment and Organisational Structure:

- Special Recruitment: The recruitment of street-level offenders has evolved, with kingpins now focusing on individuals who can provide specific skills, such as driving or surveillance. This reflects a strategic shift towards creating a more organized and efficient criminal network.
- **Comparative Analysis demonstrates** a strategic evolution, moving from opportunistic recruitment based on availability and desperation to a meritocratic approach that **actively targets** individuals with specialized skills or backgrounds. This shift **significantly enhances** the crime syndicate's operational efficiency and control.
- Earlier Recruitment Practices: Initially, recruitment was based on availability and desperation.

- Current Practices: Now, recruitment is selective, targeting individuals with specific skills or backgrounds that align with the organized nature of the crime syndicate.

3. Use of Technology:
    - Surveillance and Counter-Surveillance: The use of technology, such as drones, has become a critical component of the offenders' tactics. This shift indicates a response to the increasing sophistication of law enforcement surveillance techniques.
    - Case Examples: from the data illustrate this transition, where offenders previously relied on low-tech surveillance, such as physical observation and human intelligence, but now deploy advanced tools like drones and signal jamming to execute sophisticated surveillance and counter-surveillance, enabling more precise planning and execution of carjackings with minimal risk.
    - Traditional Methods: Earlier tactics relied on physical observation and human intelligence.
    - Modern Tactics: Current methods incorporate technological tools to gather intelligence without raising suspicion, allowing for more precise planning and execution of carjackings.

Comparative MO Matrix

MO Type	Tactics Used	Environmental Factors	Evolution Over Time	
Carjacking	Offensive driving techniques	Increased police presence	Shift from stealth to aggressive tactics over time	
	Intimidation of victims	Community disorganisation	More organised and planned operations as a response to policing	
MVT	Quick thefts	Advanced car security systems	Shift from MVTs to carjackings due to improvements in vehicle security	
	Opportunistic targeting	Economic disparities	Increased focus on high-value targets as a result of market demand	
Surveillance	Use of drones	Lack of community cohesion	Transition from human intelligence to technological surveillance methods	
	Stolen mobile phones for communication	Social disorganisation	Enhanced information gathering techniques using technology	

Recruitment	**Selective recruitment of skilled offenders**	**Economic disparities**	**Move from opportunistic recruitment to strategic selection of offenders based on skills**	

Comparative MO Matrix

This format above makes it easier to read and understand the relationships between different offenders' MO, their tactics, environmental factors, and how they have evolved over time.

Implications for Policy

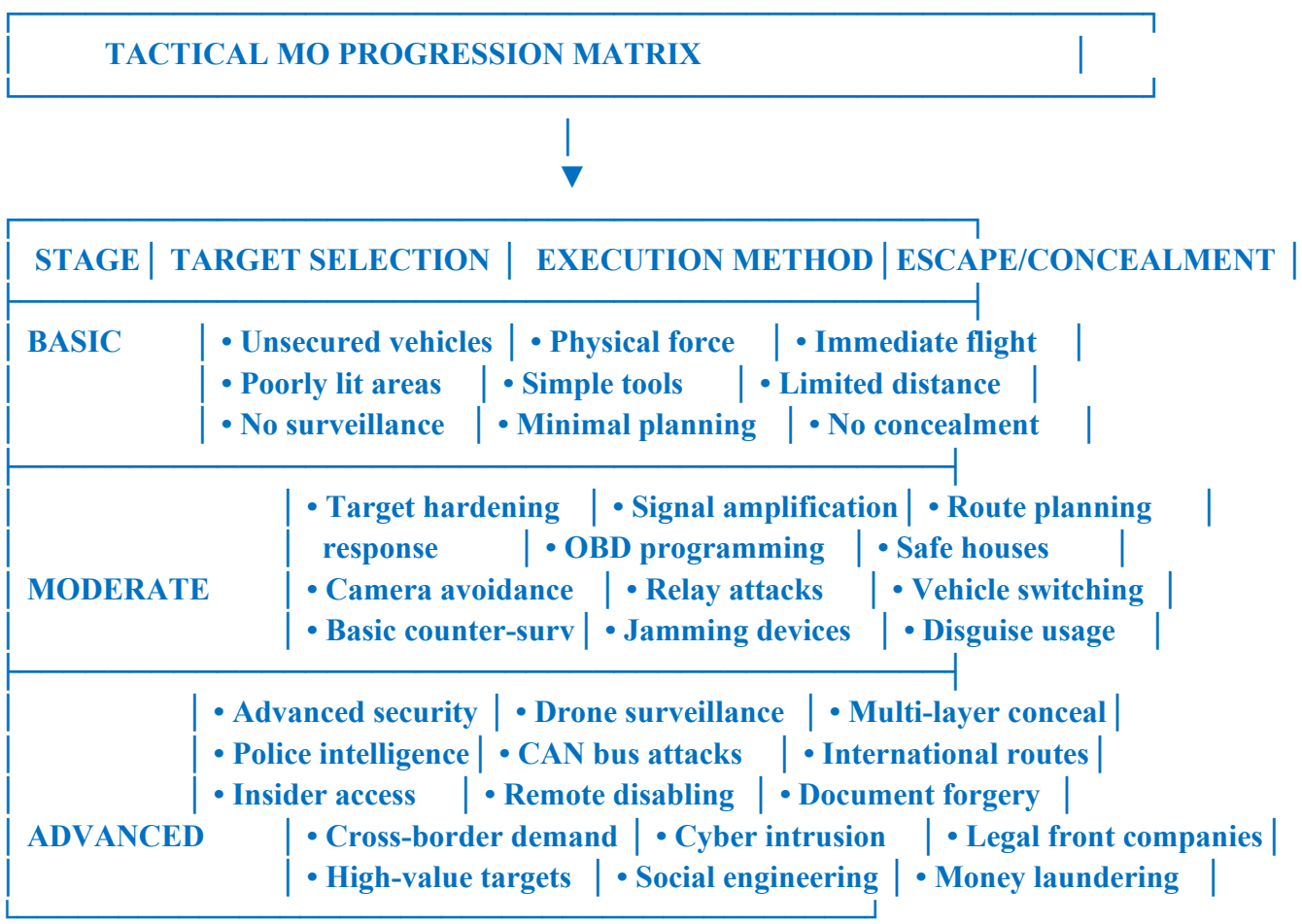
1. **Enhanced Policing Strategies: Understanding the evolution of offender tactics can inform law enforcement agencies about the need for adaptive policing strategies that anticipate and counteract these changes.**
2. **Community Engagement: Strengthening community ties and fostering cooperation between residents and law enforcement can reduce the effectiveness of organized crime by increasing social cohesion and collective efficacy.**

Utilise Visual Tools:

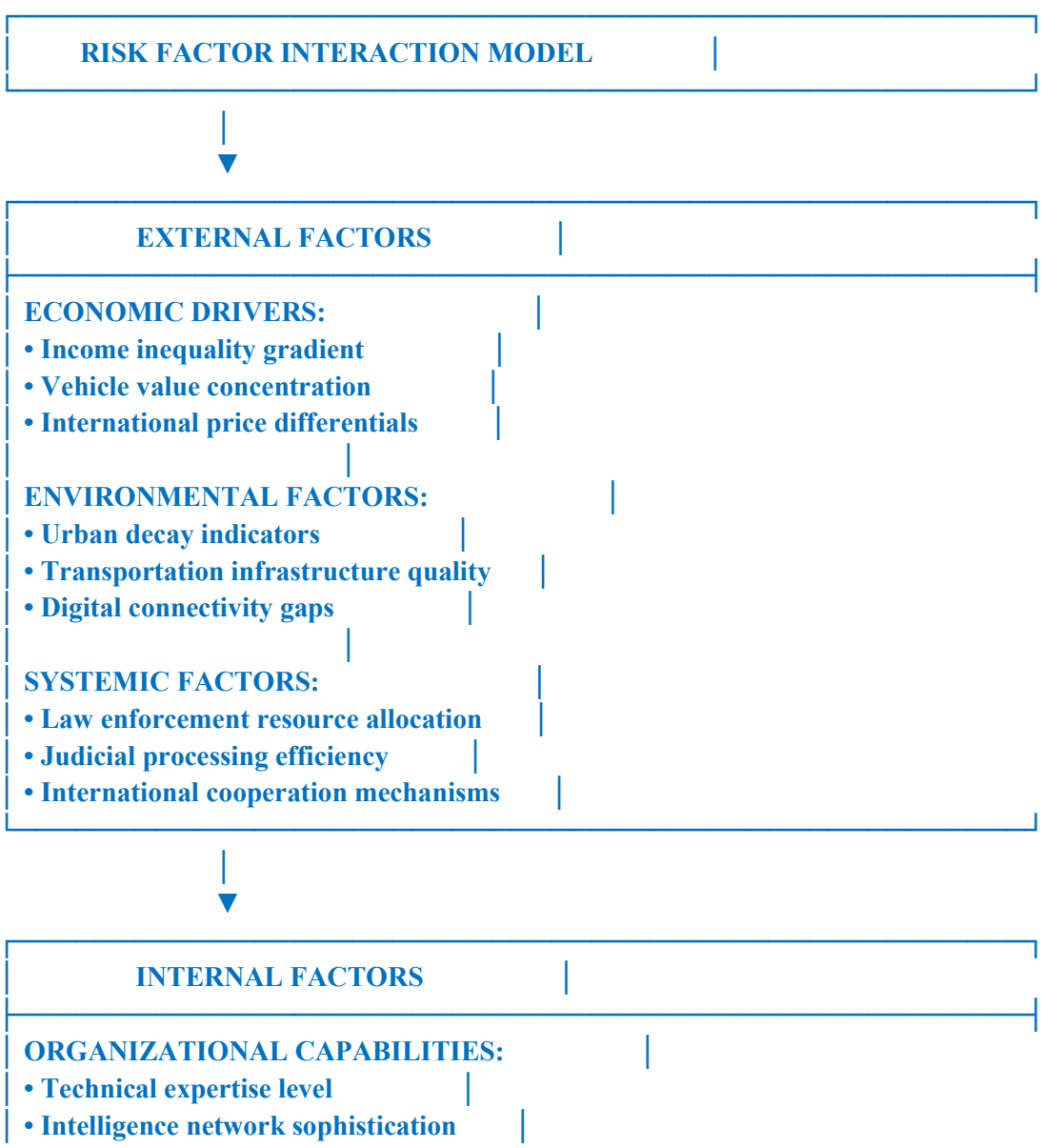
MO, risk factors models, and conceptual diagrams for the progression of criminal organisation and responses.

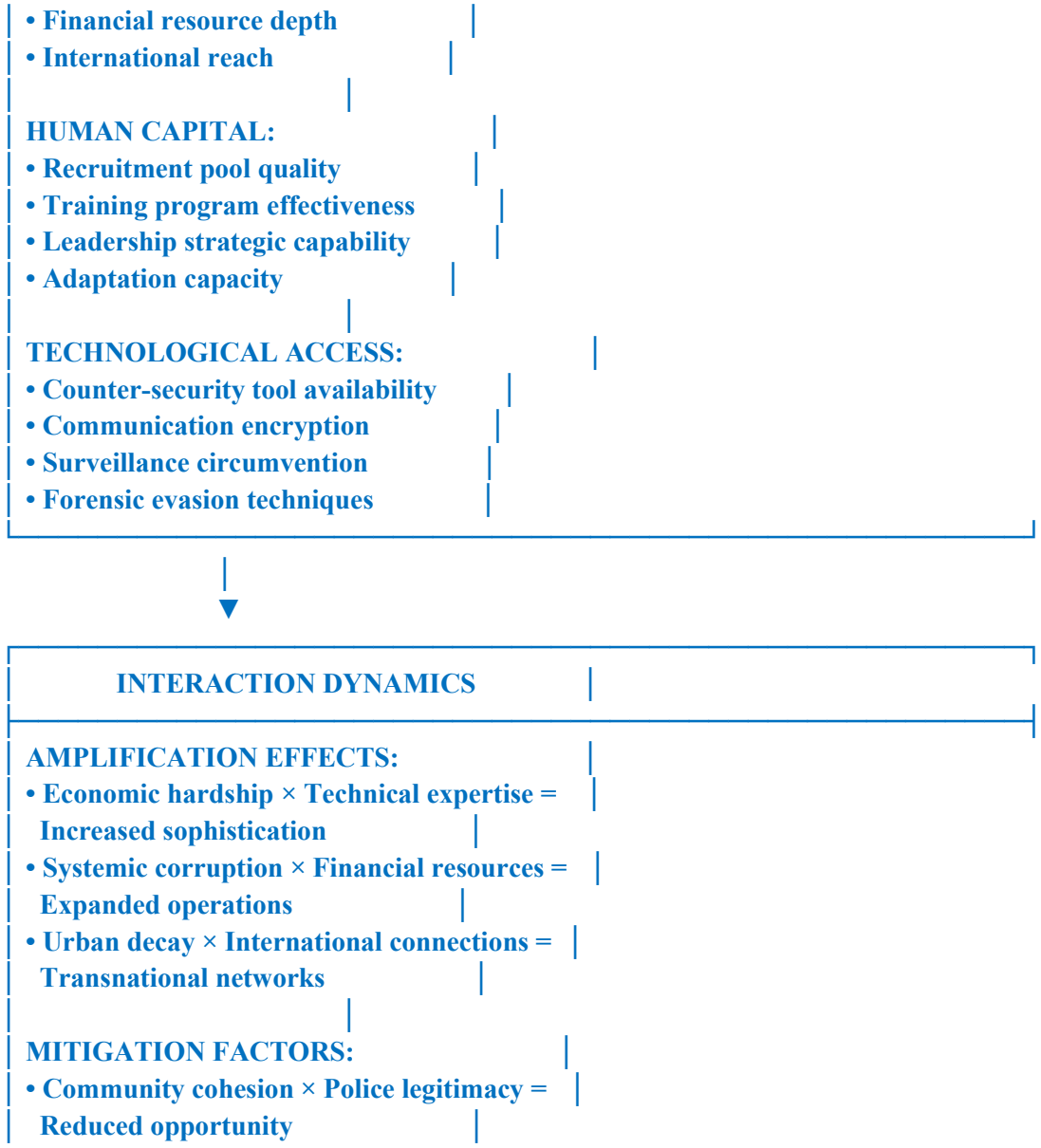
New Visual Tools for Motor Vehicle Crime Analysis

1. Tactical MO Progression Matrix



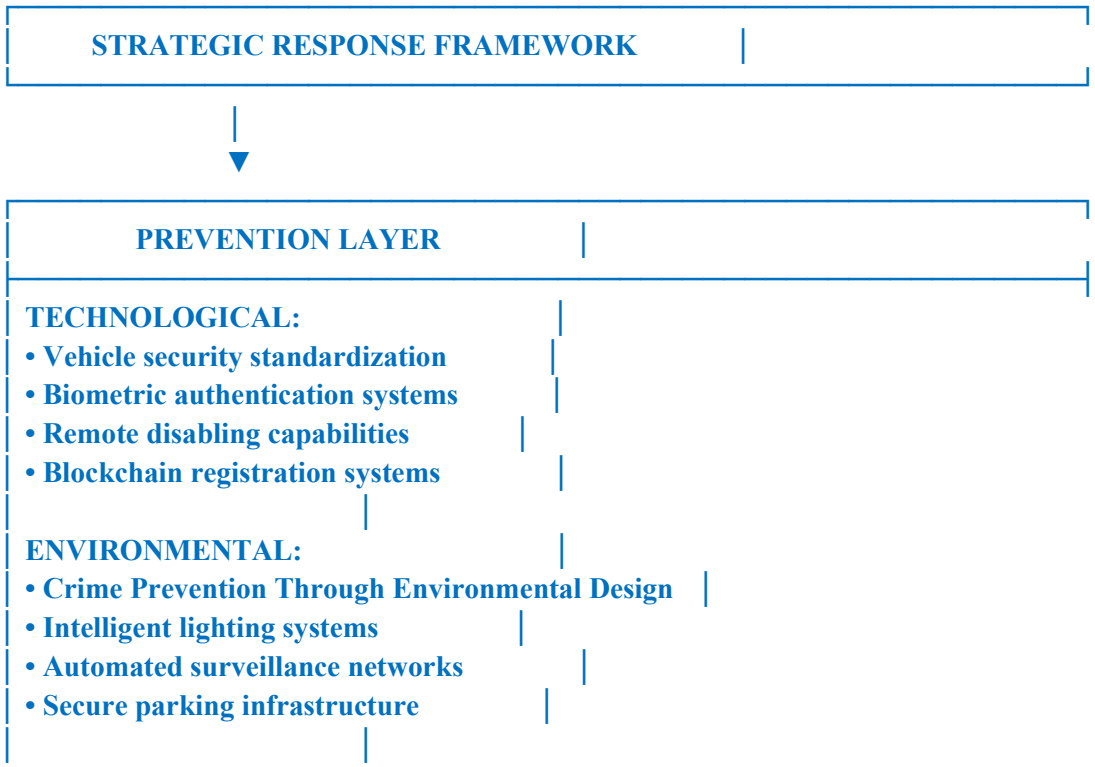
2. Risk Factor Interaction Model

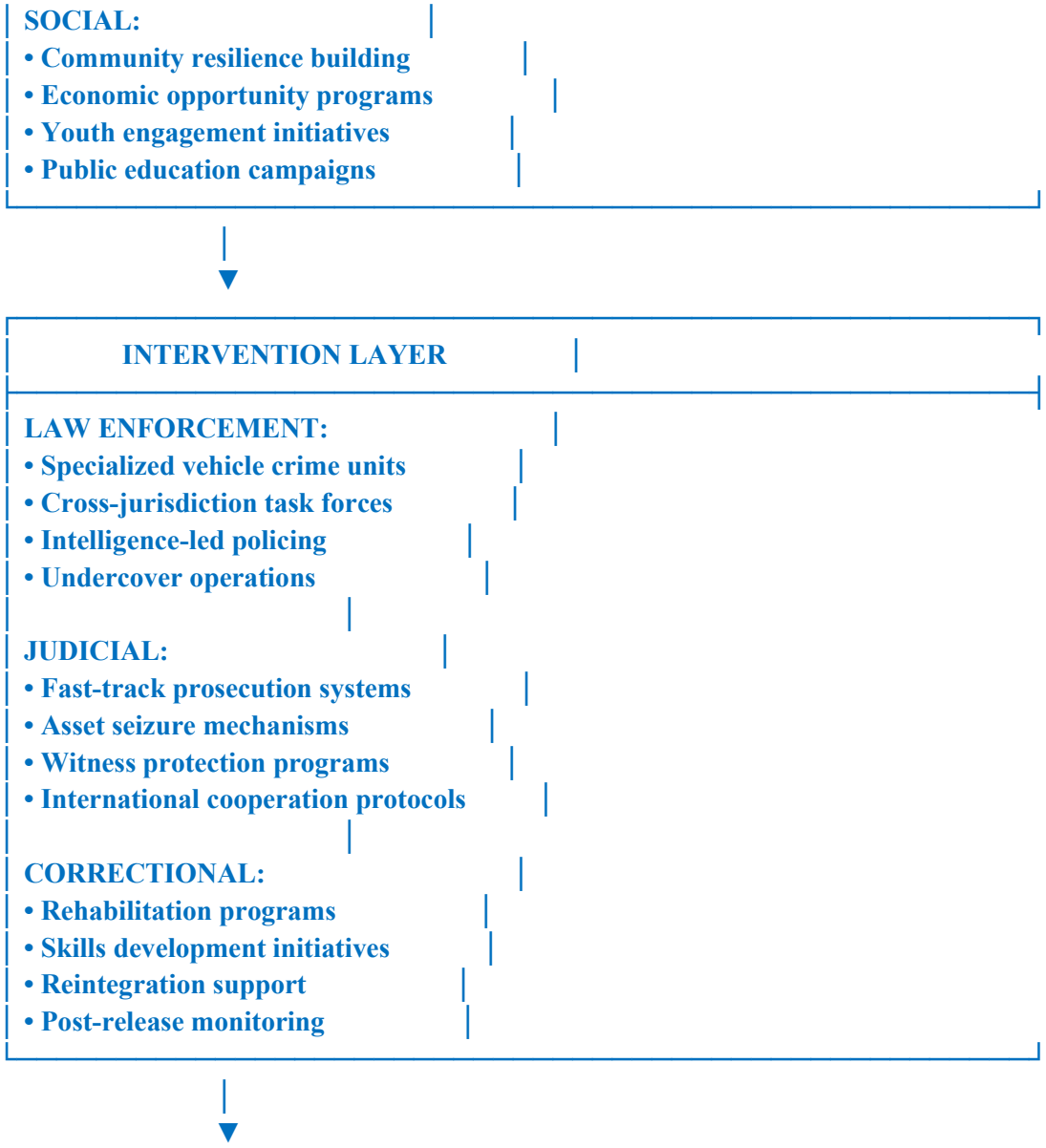


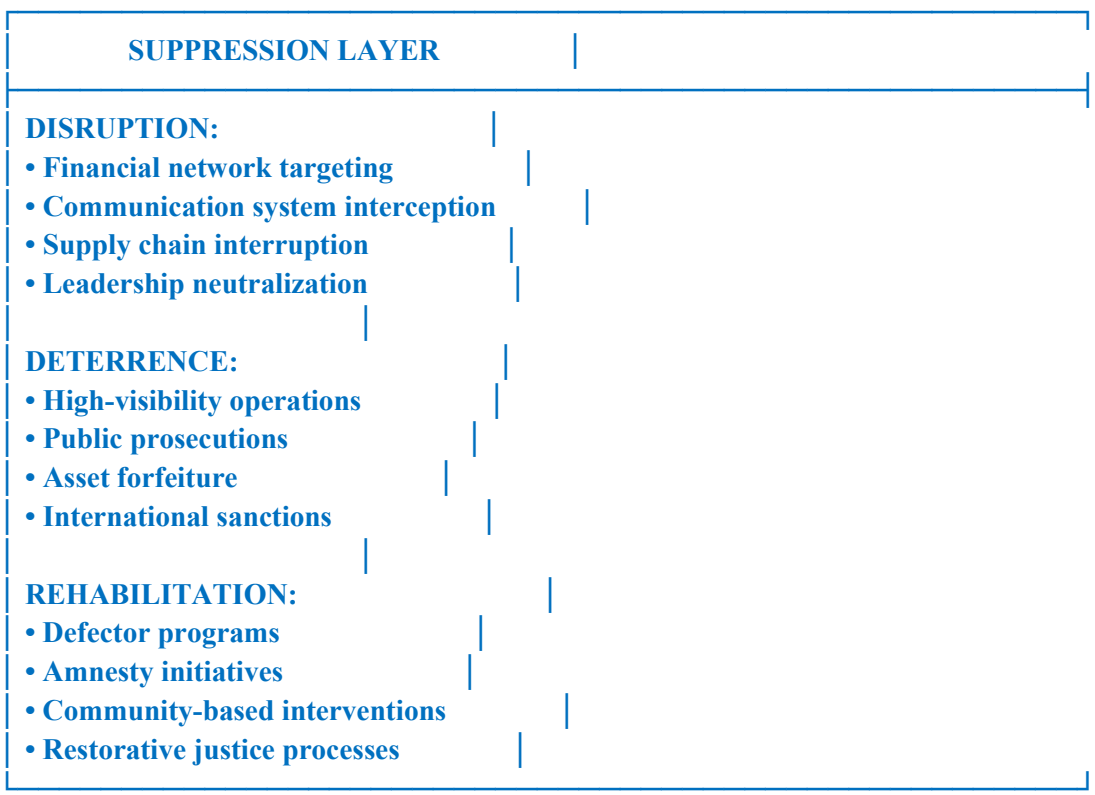

• Financial resource depth
• International reach
HUMAN CAPITAL:
• Recruitment pool quality
• Training program effectiveness
• Leadership strategic capability
• Adaptation capacity
TECHNOLOGICAL ACCESS:
• Counter-security tool availability
• Communication encryption
• Surveillance circumvention
• Forensic evasion techniques
INTERACTION DYNAMICS
AMPLIFICATION EFFECTS:
• Economic hardship × Technical expertise = Increased sophistication
• Systemic corruption × Financial resources = Expanded operations
• Urban decay × International connections = Transnational networks
MITIGATION FACTORS:
• Community cohesion × Police legitimacy = Reduced opportunity

• International cooperation × Asset seizure = Disrupted networks
• Technology investment × Training = Enhanced detection

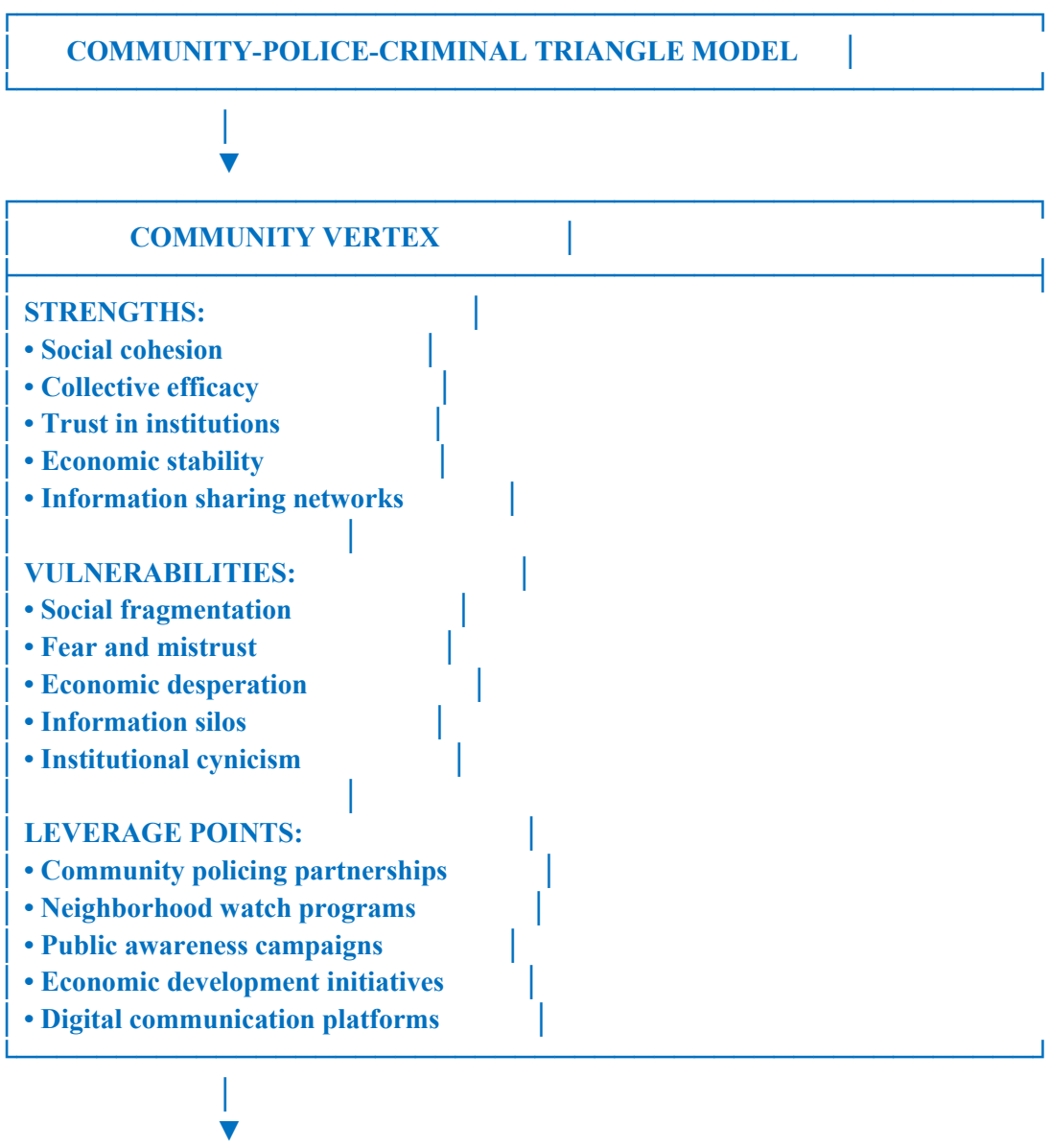
3. Strategic Response Framework

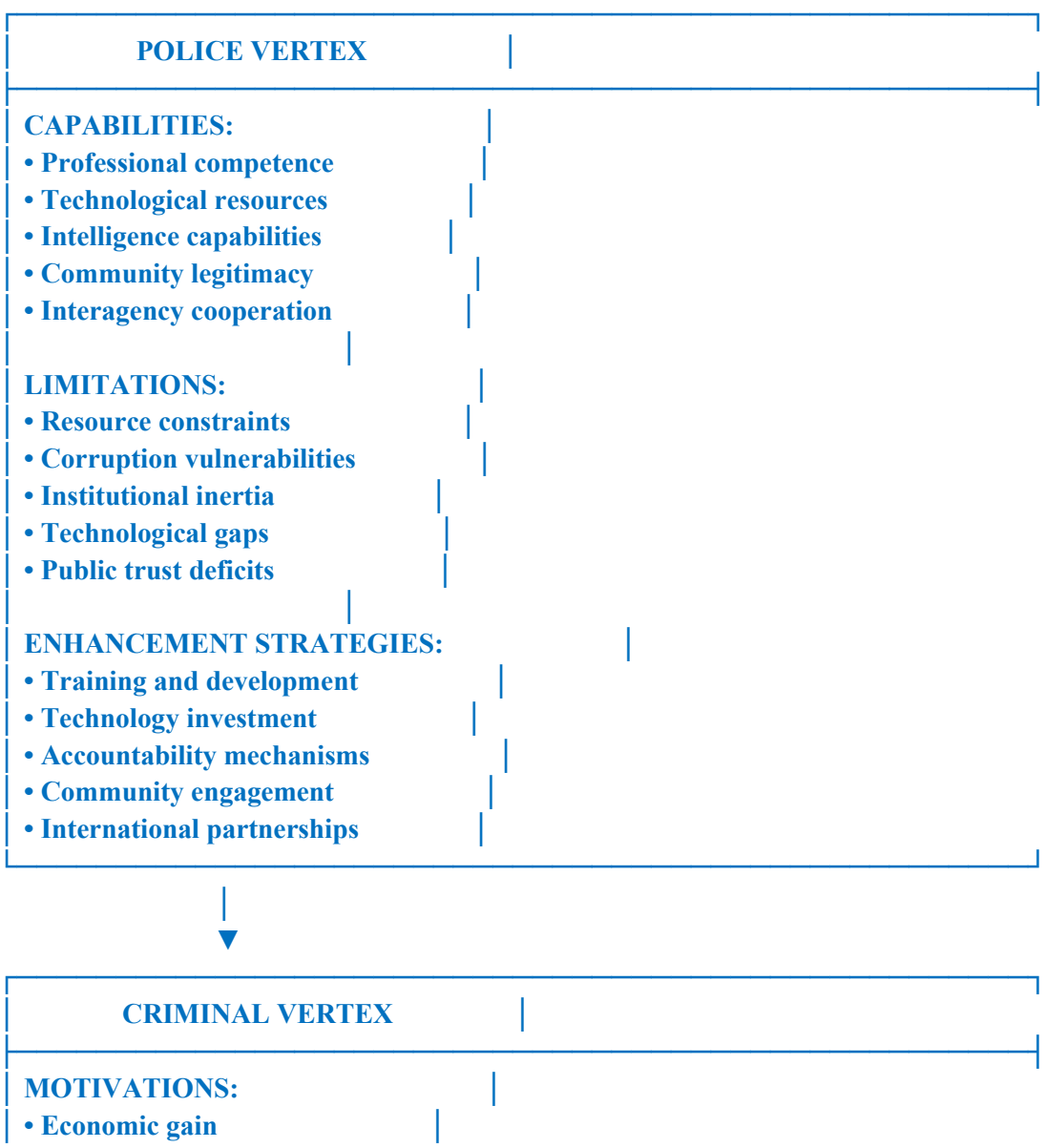


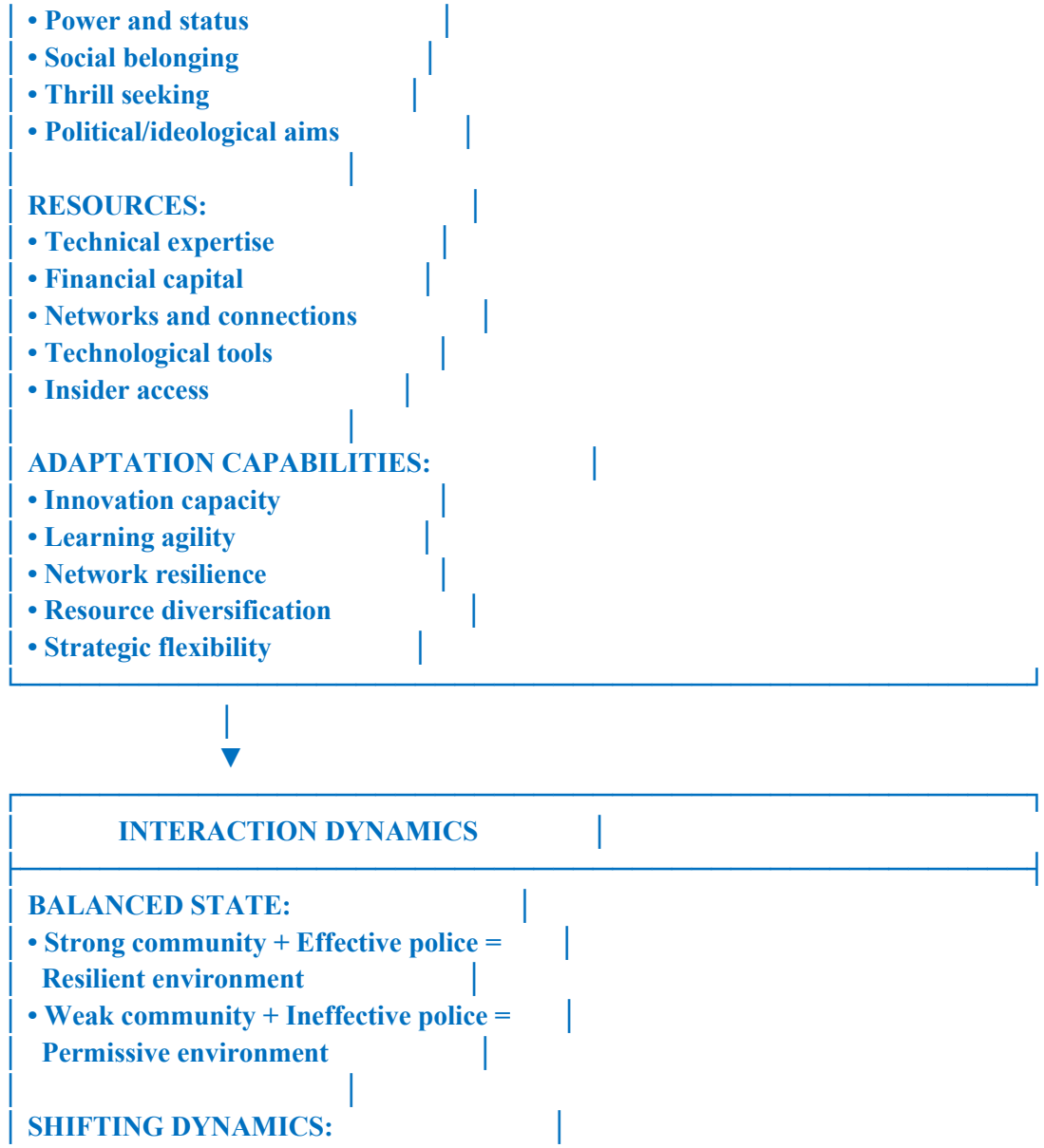

SOCIAL:
• Community resilience building
• Economic opportunity programs
• Youth engagement initiatives
• Public education campaigns
INTERVENTION LAYER
LAW ENFORCEMENT:
• Specialized vehicle crime units
• Cross-jurisdiction task forces
• Intelligence-led policing
• Undercover operations
JUDICIAL:
• Fast-track prosecution systems
• Asset seizure mechanisms
• Witness protection programs
• International cooperation protocols
CORRECTIONAL:
• Rehabilitation programs
• Skills development initiatives
• Reintegration support
• Post-release monitoring

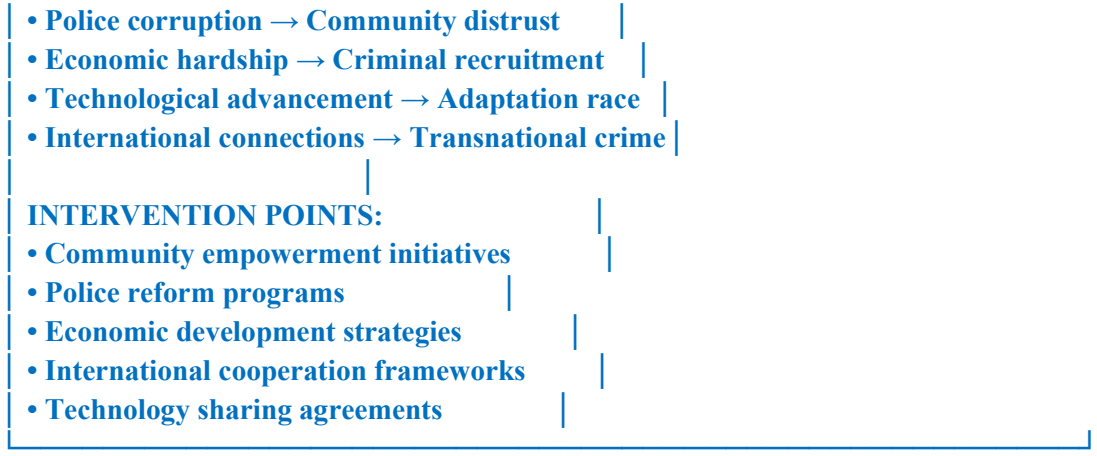

SUPPRESSION LAYER
DISRUPTION:
• Financial network targeting
• Communication system interception
• Supply chain interruption
• Leadership neutralization
DETERRENCE:
• High-visibility operations
• Public prosecutions
• Asset forfeiture
• International sanctions
REHABILITATION:
• Defector programs
• Amnesty initiatives
• Community-based interventions
• Restorative justice processes

4. Community-Police-Criminal Triangle Model

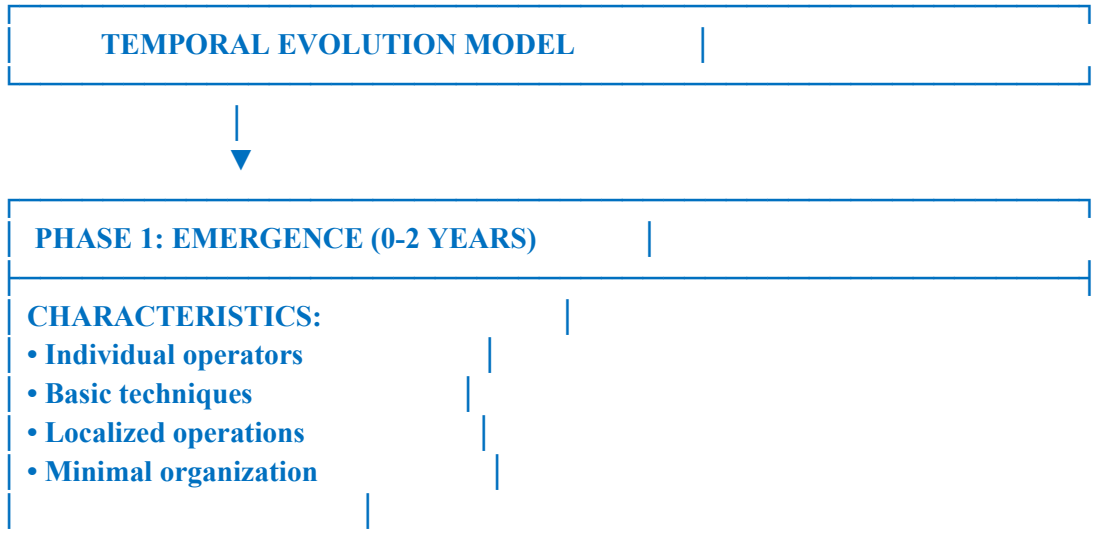


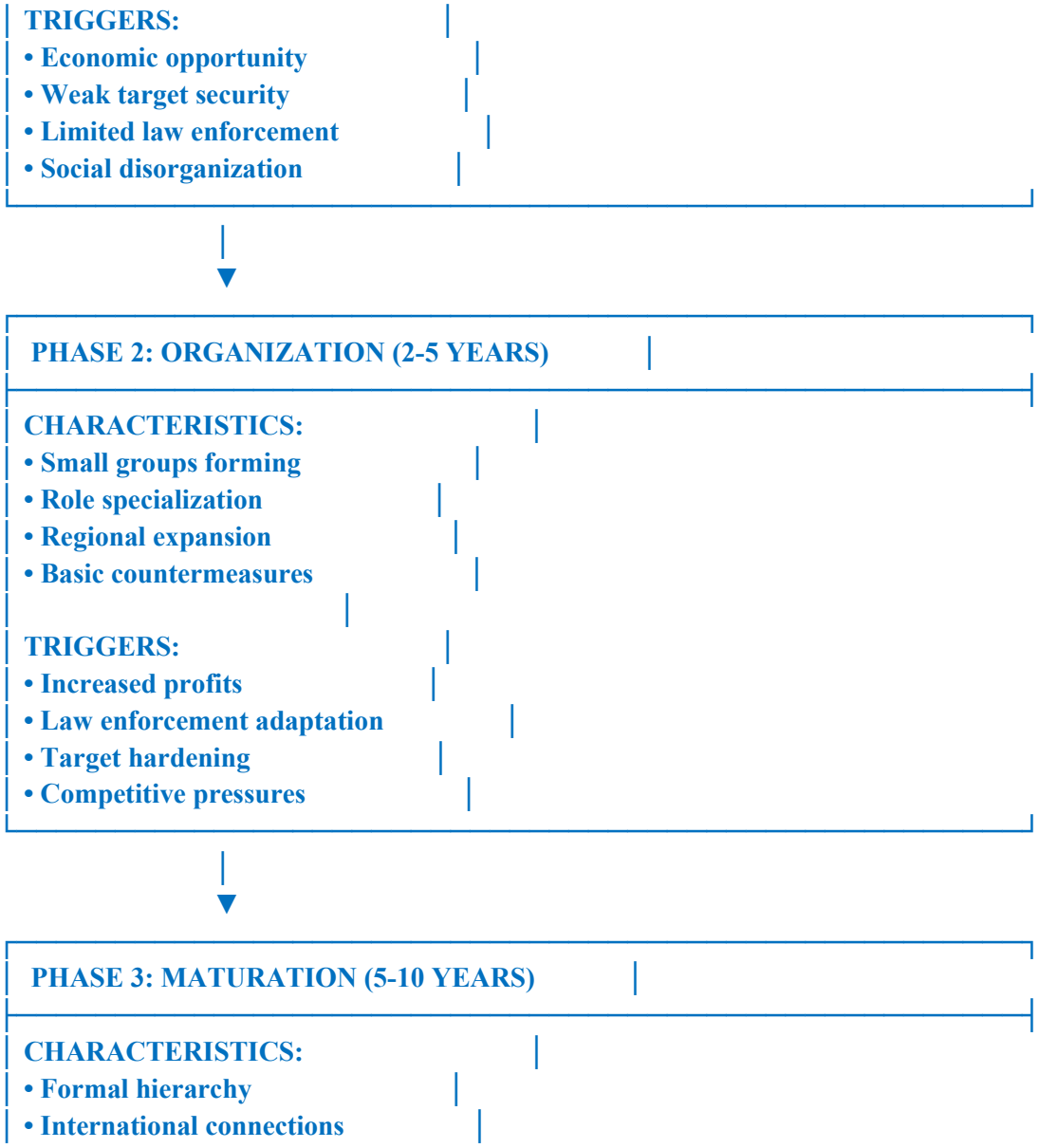

POLICE VERTEX
CAPABILITIES:
• Professional competence
• Technological resources
• Intelligence capabilities
• Community legitimacy
• Interagency cooperation
LIMITATIONS:
• Resource constraints
• Corruption vulnerabilities
• Institutional inertia
• Technological gaps
• Public trust deficits
ENHANCEMENT STRATEGIES:
• Training and development
• Technology investment
• Accountability mechanisms
• Community engagement
• International partnerships
CRIMINAL VERTEX
MOTIVATIONS:
• Economic gain

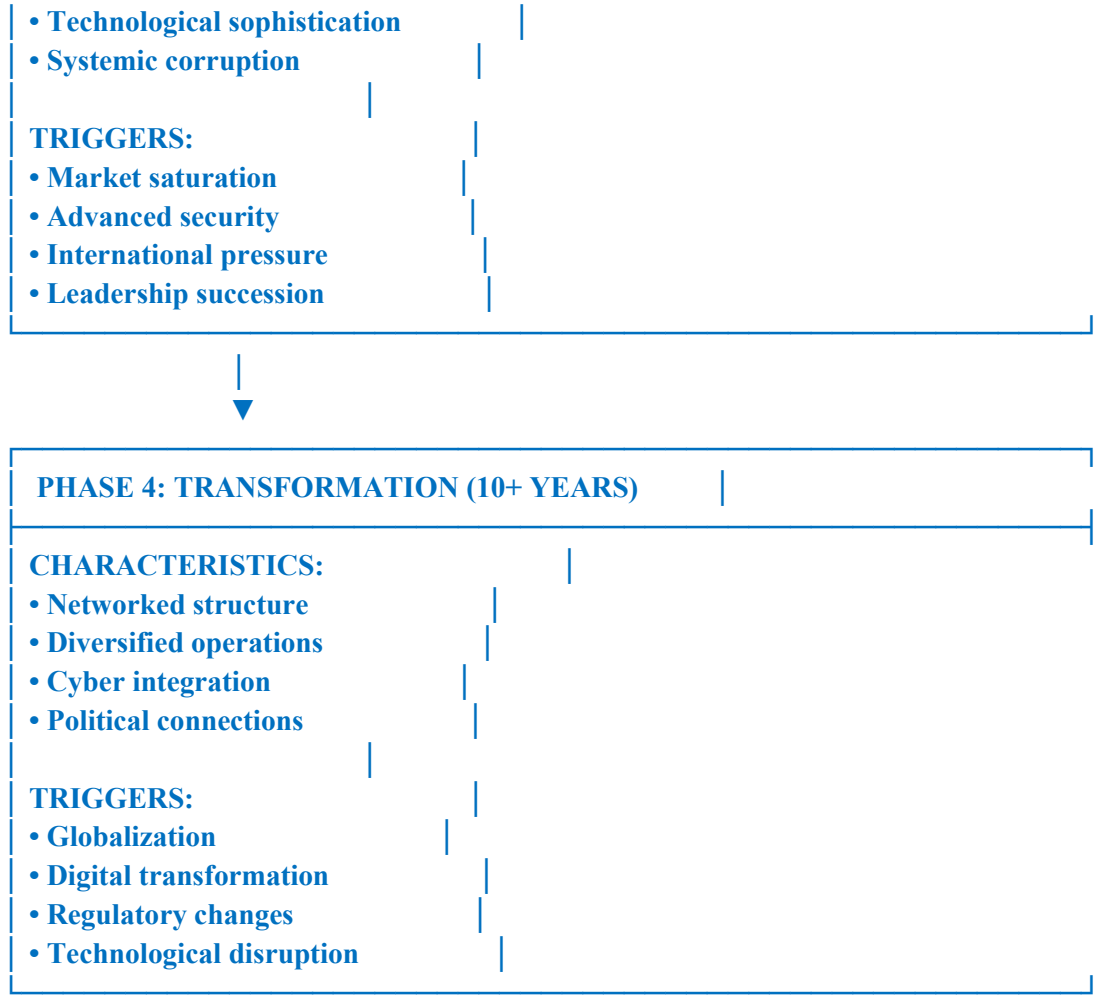

• Power and status
• Social belonging
• Thrill seeking
• Political/ideological aims
RESOURCES:
• Technical expertise
• Financial capital
• Networks and connections
• Technological tools
• Insider access
ADAPTATION CAPABILITIES:
• Innovation capacity
• Learning agility
• Network resilience
• Resource diversification
• Strategic flexibility
INTERACTION DYNAMICS
BALANCED STATE:
• Strong community + Effective police =
Resilient environment
• Weak community + Ineffective police =
Permissive environment
SHIFTING DYNAMICS:



5. Temporal Evolution Model




TRIGGERS:
• Economic opportunity
• Weak target security
• Limited law enforcement
• Social disorganization
PHASE 2: ORGANIZATION (2-5 YEARS)
CHARACTERISTICS:
• Small groups forming
• Role specialization
• Regional expansion
• Basic countermeasures
TRIGGERS:
• Increased profits
• Law enforcement adaptation
• Target hardening
• Competitive pressures
PHASE 3: MATURATION (5-10 YEARS)
CHARACTERISTICS:
• Formal hierarchy
• International connections

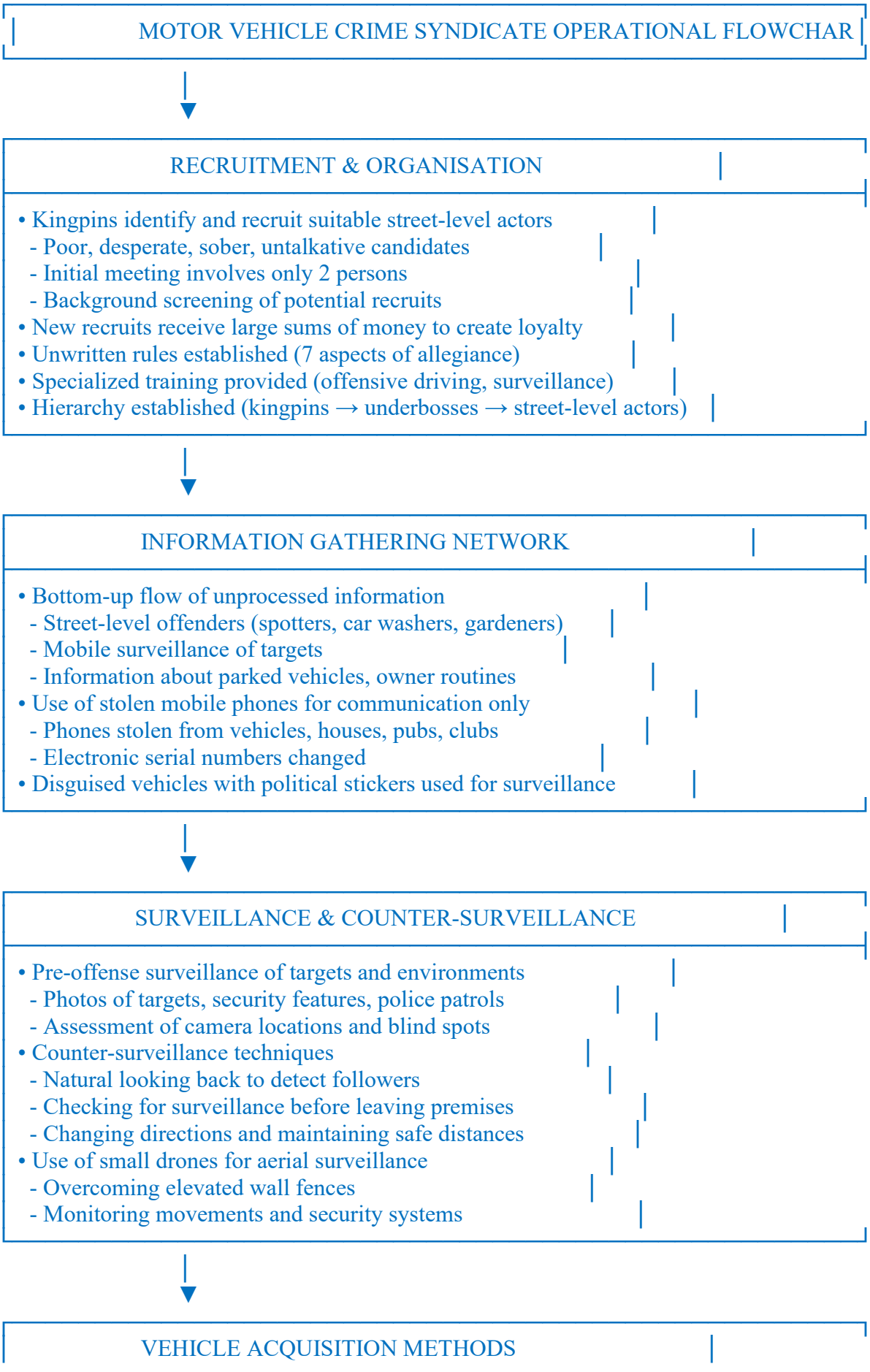


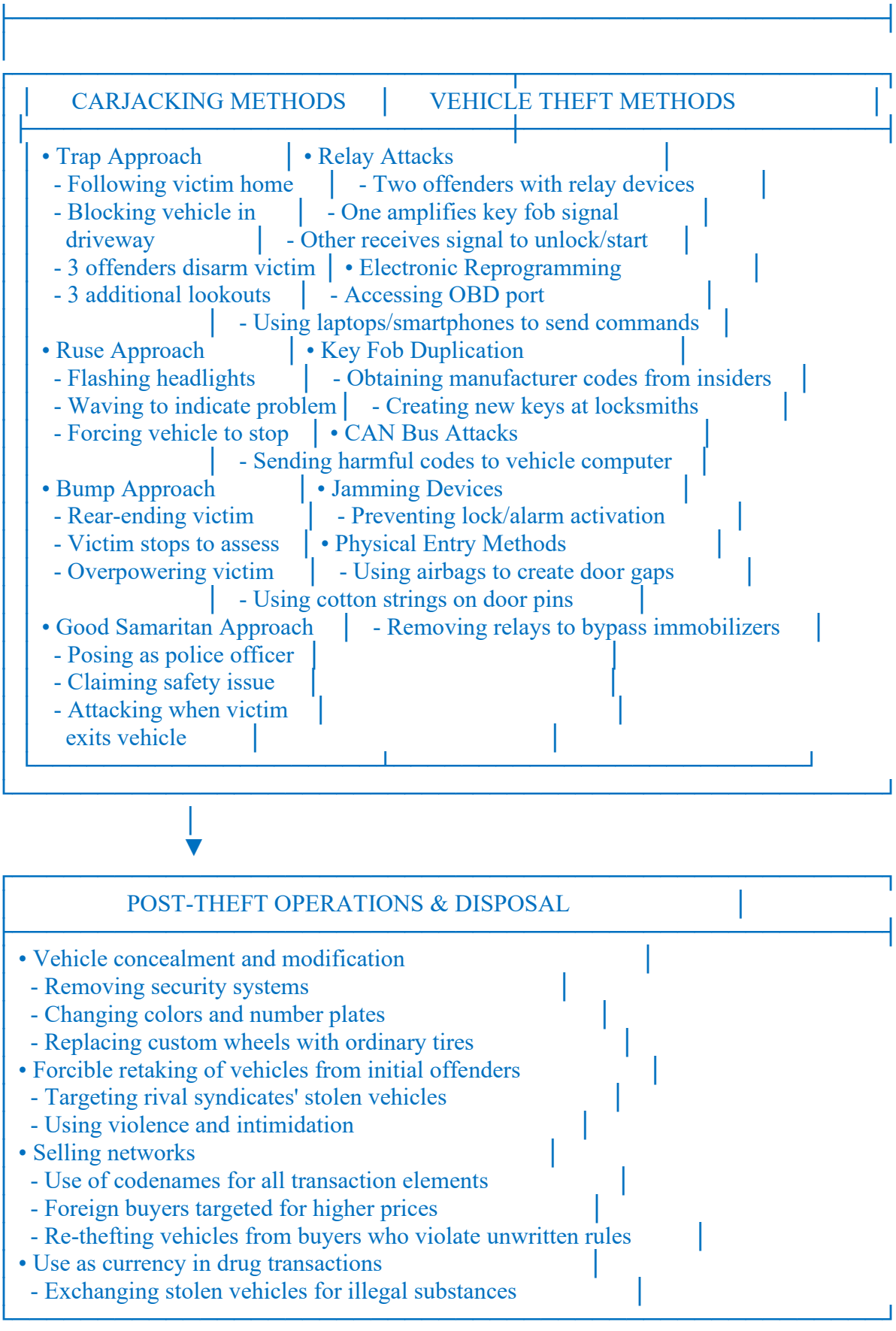
These new diagrams provide fresh perspectives on the motor vehicle crime ecosystem while incorporating all key findings from PhD research. They are included in this PhD study without concern for repetition, as they present the information through entirely new visual frameworks and analytical lenses.

5.10 Visual Analysis of Motor Vehicle Crime Syndicates in Greater Berea Area, Durban

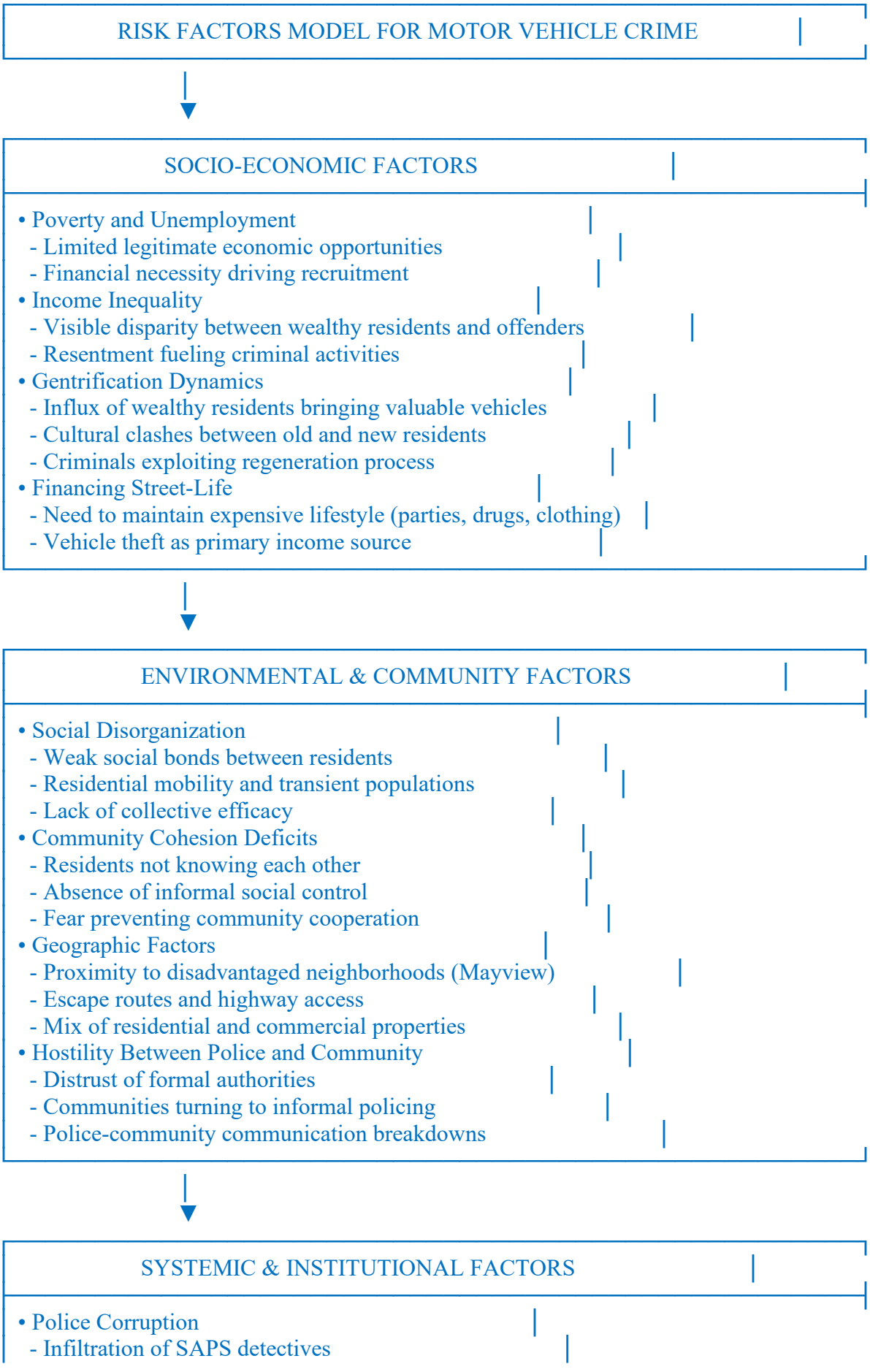
Based on the research findings, the researcher developed comprehensive visual tools to illustrate the organised nature of motor vehicle crime syndicates in the greater Berea area. These diagrams provide insight into the sophisticated methods, risk factors, and progression of these criminal organisations.

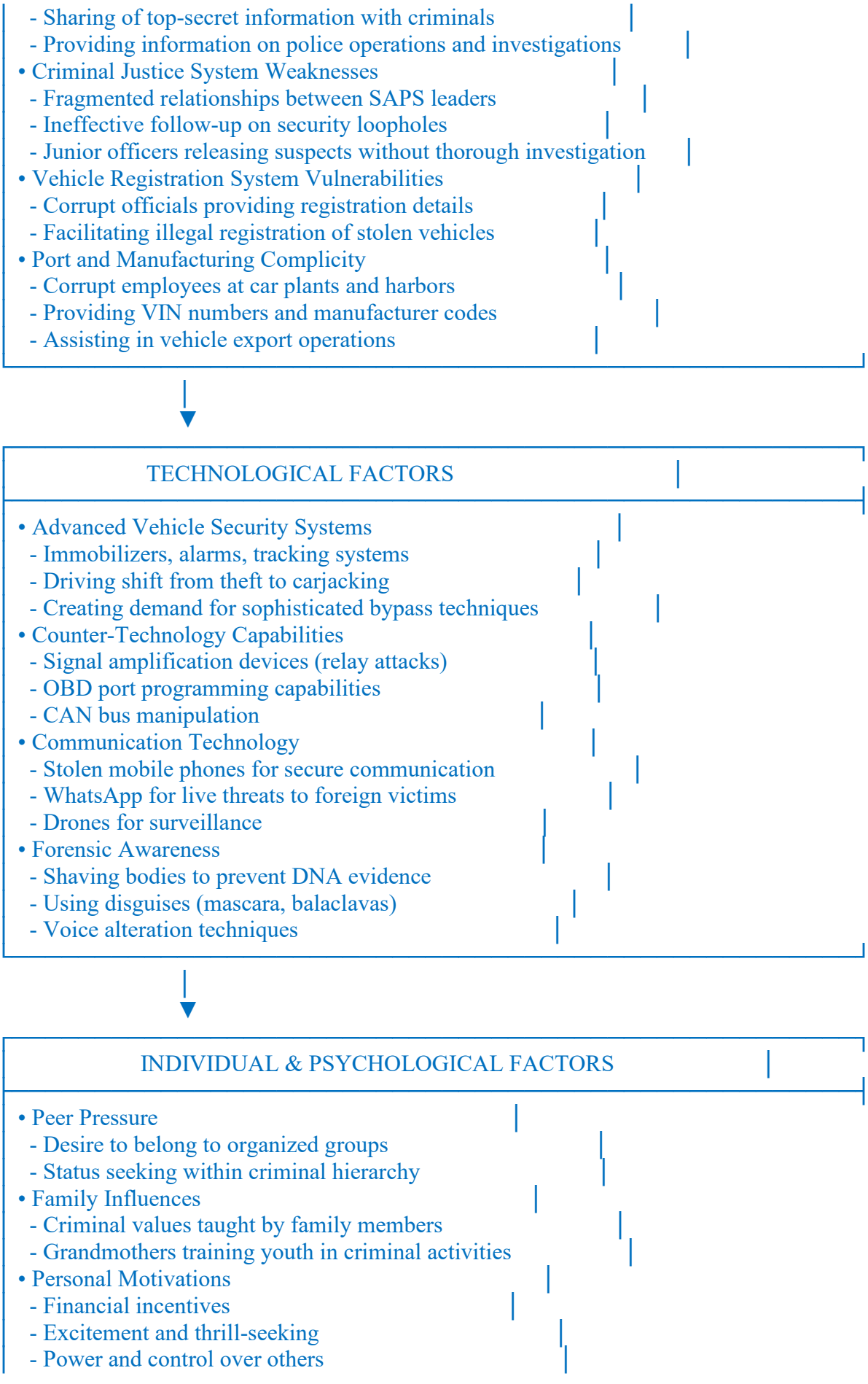
1. Flowchart of Criminal MO




CARJACKING METHODS
VEHICLE THEFT METHODS
• Trap Approach
- Following victim home
- Blocking vehicle in driveway
- 3 offenders disarm victim
- 3 additional lookouts
• Ruse Approach
- Flashing headlights
- Waving to indicate problem
- Forcing vehicle to stop
• Bump Approach
- Rear-ending victim
- Victim stops to assess
- Overpowering victim
• Good Samaritan Approach
- Posing as police officer
- Claiming safety issue
- Attacking when victim exits vehicle
• Relay Attacks
- Two offenders with relay devices
- One amplifies key fob signal
- Other receives signal to unlock/start
• Electronic Reprogramming
- Accessing OBD port
- Using laptops/smartphones to send commands
• Key Fob Duplication
- Obtaining manufacturer codes from insiders
- Creating new keys at locksmiths
• CAN Bus Attacks
- Sending harmful codes to vehicle computer
• Jamming Devices
- Preventing lock/alarm activation
• Physical Entry Methods
- Using airbags to create door gaps
- Using cotton strings on door pins
- Removing relays to bypass immobilizers
POST-THEFT OPERATIONS & DISPOSAL
• Vehicle concealment and modification
- Removing security systems
- Changing colors and number plates
- Replacing custom wheels with ordinary tires
• Forcible retaking of vehicles from initial offenders
- Targeting rival syndicates' stolen vehicles
- Using violence and intimidation
• Selling networks
- Use of codenames for all transaction elements
- Foreign buyers targeted for higher prices
- Re-thefting vehicles from buyers who violate unwritten rules
• Use as currency in drug transactions
- Exchanging stolen vehicles for illegal substances

2. Risk Factors Model for Motor Vehicle Crime Syndicates




- Sharing of top-secret information with criminals
- Providing information on police operations and investigations
• Criminal Justice System Weaknesses
- Fragmented relationships between SAPS leaders
- Ineffective follow-up on security loopholes
- Junior officers releasing suspects without thorough investigation
• Vehicle Registration System Vulnerabilities
- Corrupt officials providing registration details
- Facilitating illegal registration of stolen vehicles
• Port and Manufacturing Complicity
- Corrupt employees at car plants and harbors
- Providing VIN numbers and manufacturer codes
- Assisting in vehicle export operations
TECHNOLOGICAL FACTORS
• Advanced Vehicle Security Systems
- Immobilizers, alarms, tracking systems
- Driving shift from theft to carjacking
- Creating demand for sophisticated bypass techniques
• Counter-Technology Capabilities
- Signal amplification devices (relay attacks)
- OBD port programming capabilities
- CAN bus manipulation
• Communication Technology
- Stolen mobile phones for secure communication
- WhatsApp for live threats to foreign victims
- Drones for surveillance
• Forensic Awareness
- Shaving bodies to prevent DNA evidence
- Using disguises (mascara, balaclavas)
- Voice alteration techniques
INDIVIDUAL & PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS
• Peer Pressure
- Desire to belong to organized groups
- Status seeking within criminal hierarchy
• Family Influences
- Criminal values taught by family members
- Grandmothers training youth in criminal activities
• Personal Motivations
- Financial incentives
- Excitement and thrill-seeking
- Power and control over others

• Professional Identity
  - Viewing crime as a legitimate profession
  - Developing specialized skills (technical, driving)

3. Conceptual Diagram of Criminal Organisation Progression and Responses

PROGRESSION OF MOTOR VEHICLE CRIME SYNDICATES & RESPONSES

STAGE 1: FORMATION

CHARACTERISTICS:
- Small, fluid groups of associates
- Crimes are opportunistic and low-level
- Focus on immediate gains
- Limited geographic scope
- Minimal hierarchy

ENABLING FACTORS:
- Socio-economic deprivation
- Availability of targets
- Weak informal social control

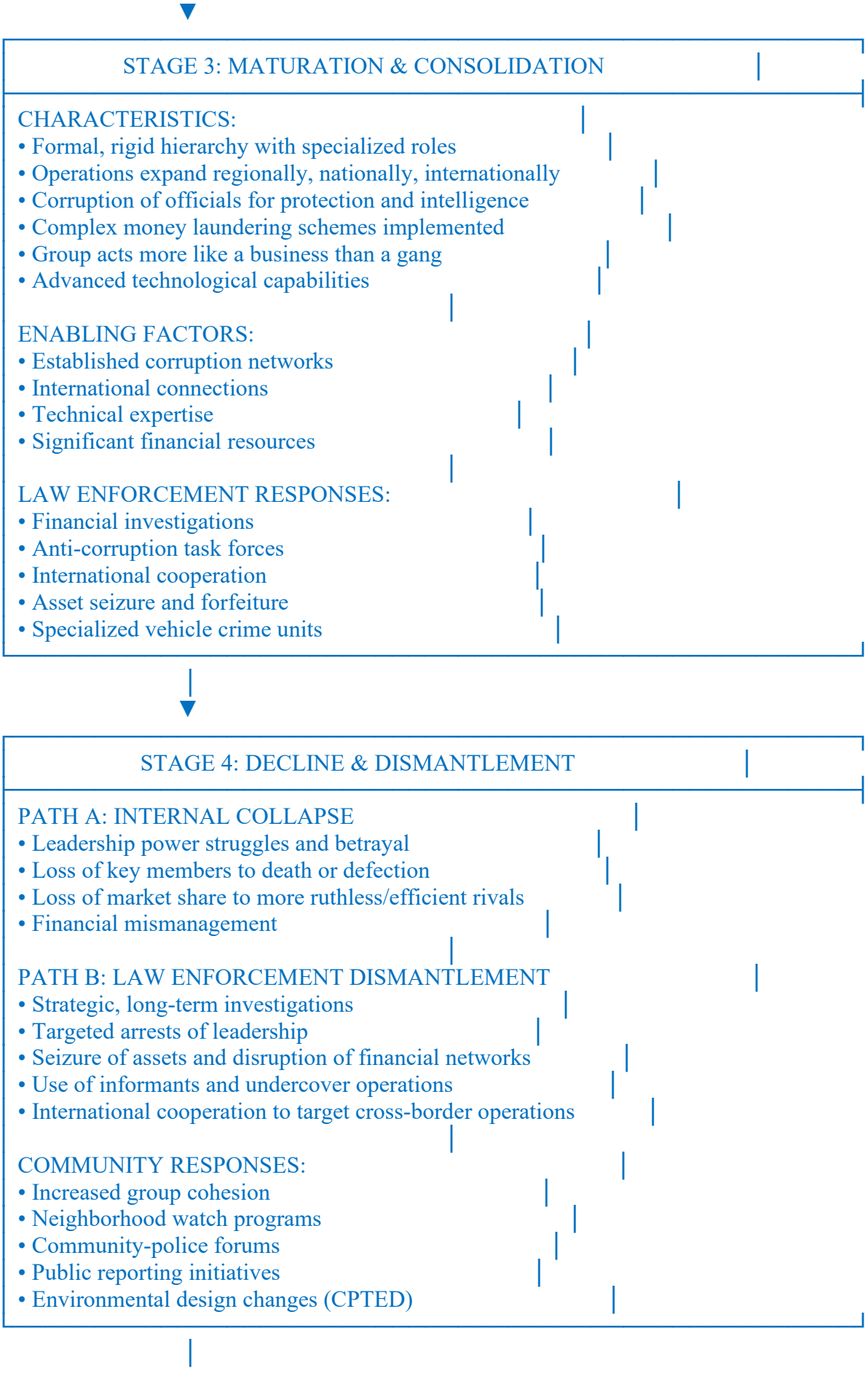
LAW ENFORCEMENT RESPONSES:
- Community policing initiatives
- Public awareness campaigns
- Basic crime prevention measures

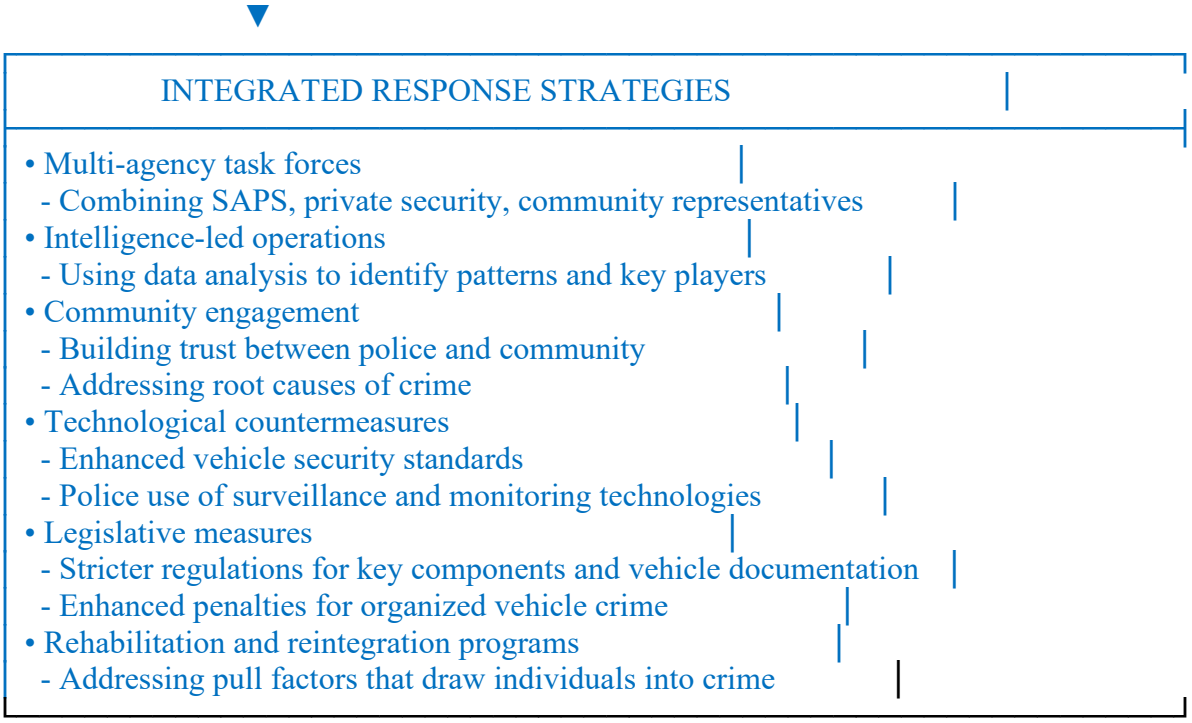
STAGE 2: GROWTH & EXPANSION

CHARACTERISTICS:
- Deliberate recruitment begins
- Hierarchy starts to form (leaders, soldiers)
- Diversification of criminal activities
- Violence used to control territory and eliminate rivals
- Geographic expansion begins

ENABLING FACTORS:
- Financial success attracting new members
- Weak law enforcement response
- Development of technical skills
- Market demand for stolen vehicles

LAW ENFORCEMENT RESPONSES:
- Targeted operations against key members
- Disruption of communication networks
- Community-police partnerships
- Enhanced surveillance technologies


STAGE 3: MATURATION & CONSOLIDATION
CHARACTERISTICS:
• Formal, rigid hierarchy with specialized roles
• Operations expand regionally, nationally, internationally
• Corruption of officials for protection and intelligence
• Complex money laundering schemes implemented
• Group acts more like a business than a gang
• Advanced technological capabilities
ENABLING FACTORS:
• Established corruption networks
• International connections
• Technical expertise
• Significant financial resources
LAW ENFORCEMENT RESPONSES:
• Financial investigations
• Anti-corruption task forces
• International cooperation
• Asset seizure and forfeiture
• Specialized vehicle crime units
STAGE 4: DECLINE & DISMANTLEMENT
PATH A: INTERNAL COLLAPSE
• Leadership power struggles and betrayal
• Loss of key members to death or defection
• Loss of market share to more ruthless/efficient rivals
• Financial mismanagement
PATH B: LAW ENFORCEMENT DISMANTLEMENT
• Strategic, long-term investigations
• Targeted arrests of leadership
• Seizure of assets and disruption of financial networks
• Use of informants and undercover operations
• International cooperation to target cross-border operations
COMMUNITY RESPONSES:
• Increased group cohesion
• Neighborhood watch programs
• Community-police forums
• Public reporting initiatives
• Environmental design changes (CPTED)



Key Insights from the Visual Analysis

Sophisticated Operations: The MO flowchart reveals that motor vehicle crime in Berea is highly organized, with specialized roles, extensive planning, and advanced technical capabilities.

Multi-Layered Risk Factors: The risk factors model shows that criminal activity is enabled by a complex interplay of socio-economic conditions, environmental factors, systemic corruption, and technological adaptations.

Adaptive Progression: The progression diagram illustrates how criminal organizations evolve through distinct stages, becoming more sophisticated and resilient over time, requiring equally sophisticated responses.

Systemic Corruption: A critical enabling factor is the infiltration of law enforcement, which allows syndicates to operate with near-impunity and access to inside information.

Community-Criminal Dynamics: The breakdown of social cohesion and trust between police and community creates an environment where criminal organizations can thrive.

These visual tools demonstrate that addressing motor vehicle crime in Berea requires a comprehensive approach that goes beyond traditional policing to address root causes, systemic vulnerabilities, and the sophisticated evolution of criminal organizations.

5.5 Chapter Summary

This study sought to answer 7 research questions pertaining to the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban, from the incarcerated offenders' perspectives. The empirical findings disclosed 7 themes, which dealt with the incarcerated offenders' perspectives regarding the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban. The empirical findings also revealed insights into possible recommendations for understanding and addressing the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban.

In describing the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area, incarcerated offenders identified different MO. The offenders' MO are not limited to the following but include: (a) offenders' use of illicit offensive driving techniques; (b) offenders' illicit use of surveillance and counter surveillance strategies before, during and after the commission of carjackings and MVTs; (c) offenders' use of a counter multi-layered approach; (d) offenders' forcible retaking of cars and mere retaking of motor vehicles from initial offenders; (e) offenders' experiences in selling stolen and carjacked cars, as well as the forcible retaking of the same cars; (f) offenders' exploitation of hostilities between the police and the community; (g) Offenders' use of small drones which record movements of victims and also capture images of targets; and (h) motor vehicle crime syndicates' infiltration of SAPS detectives.

In dealing with other research questions, incarcerated participants described numerous themes and these include: (a) the change of the progression of the organised nature of the carjackers' and motor vehicle thieves' MO from one stage to another stage; (b) links between formal organisations of offenders and the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs; (c) perspectives of incarcerated offenders on how carjackers and motor vehicle thieves plan the progression of the organised nature of their MO; (d) pull factors which draw offenders to commit carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban; and (e) specific recommendations for addressing the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs.

Finally, regarding specific recommendations, incarcerated participants offered different recommendations based on empirical findings in order to address the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs. Incarcerated participants provided different practical recommendations which included: (a) solve the consistent lack of group cohesion among greater Berea community members; (b) solve the problematic relationships between SAPS police leaders; (c) solve offenders' exploitation of bad collective police cultural attitudes and behaviours; (d) address hostilities between the police and the community; (e) address kingpins' exploitation of offenders linked to marked income inequalities within the population of the research site; (f) address the SAPS's ineffectiveness to deal with crime (for example carjackings and MVTs); (g) solve the offenders' manipulation of the role of the built environment, which unavoidably facilitates carjackings and MVTs; and (h) use effectual intelligence driven approaches required for tracing and arresting offenders who either forcibly and/or merely retake motor vehicles from their victims, accomplices or certain places.

Definitely, the empirical findings have provided deeper insights into and improved the exploration of the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings, and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban.

Chapter 6 Discussions

This introductory section sets the stage for a detailed discussion by presenting the core findings that emerged from the data analysis and outlining the methodological and structural framework of the chapter.

6.1 Introduction

The data analysis performed in this study culminated in several findings that provide insights into the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban, from the perspectives of incarcerated participants. These insights were evident throughout the entire analysis and, collectively they provide a more correct picture of the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area. As already shown in the previous chapters, the study logic is a combination of inductive and deductive taking into consideration the iterative analytic procedure ingrained in QCA (Saldana, 2016). The aforesaid methodology was chosen due to the fact that the researcher focused on this study with prejudiced ideas from the literature and own experience and, then analysed them inductively against empirical data and theoretical observations which emerged (Saunders et al., 2019).

Chapter 6 includes the combination of empirical findings and literature control, as well as theoretical observations. The researcher interpreted the meanings of the main research findings in the previous chapter regarding their interrelationship with the research questions. The key research findings were also interpreted in order to solve various issues mentioned in Chapter 1 pertaining to the 8 parts of the research problem (Gray, 2019). This chapter is divided into 7 parts and these include:

- Perspectives of incarcerated offenders pertaining to the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs.
- The change of the progression of the organised nature of the carjackers' and motor vehicle thieves' MO from one stage to another stage.
- Links between formal organisations of offenders and the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs.

- Perspectives of incarcerated offenders on how carjackers and motor vehicle thieves planned the progression of the organised nature of their MO.

- Pull factors which drew offenders to commit carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area in Durban.

- Carjackers' use of the progression of the organised nature of their MO when committing violence against the victims.

- Recommendations required for addressing the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs.

6.2 Objectives of Chapter 6

The objectives of this chapter are to:

- Analyse the perspectives of incarcerated offenders regarding the organised nature of their MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs.

- Evaluate the progression of the organised nature of carjackers' and motor vehicle thieves' MO from one stage to another.

- Explore the links between formal organisations of offenders and the progression of their MO.

- Understand how carjackers and motor vehicle thieves planned the progression of their MO.

- Identify the pull factors that drew offenders to commit carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area.

- Examine the use of violence by carjackers in the context of their organised MO.

- Provide recommendations for addressing the organised nature of offenders' MO in carjackings and MVTs.

6.3 A Dynamic Synthesis: The Interplay of Rational Adaptation and Social Processes in the Progression of Organised Criminal MO

This dynamic synthesis provides the analytical lens through which the findings for Objective 1 are now interpreted in an integrated manner.

6.3.1 Integrated Interpretation of Findings for Objective 1

The analysis of incarcerated offenders' perspectives reveals a deeply ingrained and sophisticated understanding of the progression of the organised nature of their criminal MO. Far from being random acts of opportunism, offenders describe their involvement in carjackings and MVTs as participation in a structured, hierarchical system. This self-perception can be interpreted through a dual lens of RCT and DAT, which together explain both the strategic architecture and the cultural transmission of their criminal methods.

From an RCT perspective, offenders articulate a clear top-down structure where Kingpins' reactions to law enforcement efforts serve as the primary driver for strategic adaptation. These leaders are perceived as rational actors who continuously weigh the risks of increased police pressure against the rewards of successful operations, adjusting group tactics accordingly to maximise profit and minimise capture (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). This strategic oversight ensures the group's survival and efficiency, a characteristic of clear hierarchies found in successful criminal enterprises (Varese, 2011).

However, this rational structure is entirely dependent on the social processes described by DAT. The execution of these top-down strategies relies on effective Information flow and communication strategies, which offenders identify as critical for coordination and avoiding detection. This communication is more than operational; it is the primary vehicle through which criminal skills, values, and loyalty are learned and reinforced (Sutherland, 1947). This learning process is fundamental to the recruitment of suitable street-level actors, who are sought not just for their willingness but for their ability to be mentored and integrated into the group's operational culture.

Ultimately, these theories converge in the offenders' descriptions of their tactical proficiency and preparedness. The sophisticated tactics they employ are not developed in a vacuum. They are rationally chosen in response to law enforcement, but are perfected through a process of social learning and mentorship within the network. As research indicates, this awareness of law

enforcement tactics, combined with a structured system for teaching and executing counter-strategies, leads to the development of highly proficient and adaptable criminal methods (Decker & Van Winkle, 1996). In essence, the offenders' perspectives paint a picture of a criminal enterprise that is both a rationally managed business and a close-knit subculture, where strategic direction and learned expertise combine to produce a highly organised and effective MO.

6.3.1.1 Conclusion for Objective 1

In conclusion, the analysis of incarcerated offenders' perspectives reveals that their MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs is not perceived as a series of spontaneous acts, but as a highly organised and structured operation. This organisation is sustained by a dual framework: a rational, hierarchical command structure and a robust culture of social learning. From a rational standpoint, kingpins strategically adapt to law enforcement efforts, making calculated decisions that ensure the enterprise's viability. This top-down direction is effectively implemented through the mechanisms of differential association, where sophisticated tactics, secure communication strategies, and loyalty are systematically taught to carefully recruited street-level actors. Therefore, the study concludes that the perceived sophistication of the offenders' MO stems directly from the fusion of a rational, business-like command structure with a deeply ingrained system of mentorship and learned criminal expertise. This combination creates a resilient and adaptable criminal enterprise capable of both strategic planning and proficient execution. The offenders' narratives consistently highlighted a process of differential association, where specific techniques, skills, and rationalisations were learned through mentorship and intimate group interaction. Therefore, the sophisticated nature of their criminal enterprise is a direct outcome of the synergy between calculated decision-making and the formalised transmission of criminal knowledge. Ultimately, this integrated understanding underscores that effective crime prevention strategies must not only disrupt rational calculations of risk but also intervene in the social networks through which criminal expertise is cultivated and passed on.

6.3.1.2 Purpose of Objective 1

The purpose of Objective 1 was to move beyond a superficial understanding of criminal behaviour and to empirically investigate the dual, intersecting forces that shape the development of a sophisticated criminal MO. It aimed to uncover the extent to which offenders act as rational strategists, adapting their methods based on cost-benefit analyses, while

simultaneously exploring their role as "social products" who learn and refine their craft through group interaction and mentorship (differential association). Ultimately, the purpose was to determine if the organised nature of their crimes was a product of individual calculation, social transmission, or as the conclusion confirms, the critical synergy between these two forces.

6.3.2 Integrated Interpretation of Findings for Objective 2

The findings for Objective 2 reveal that the progression of the organised nature of carjackers' and motor vehicle thieves' MO is not a linear process but a sophisticated, cyclical evolution driven by a dynamic interplay with their environment and law enforcement. This progression is best understood through an integrated theoretical lens that combines the environmental context of SDT with the opportunistic framework of RAT.

The study found that the initial stages of these crimes often flourish in environments characterised by Social Disorganisation, where weak community ties and a lack of collective efficacy mean there is minimal informal social control (Shaw & McKay, 1942). This absence of community guardianship creates a permissive environment where the basic elements of RAT such as a motivated offender and a suitable target can converge with minimal risk (Cohen & Felson, 1979). However, the true evolution of the MO begins when offenders face formal resistance from law enforcement.

At this point, the theme of Adaptation to law enforcement strategies becomes the primary catalyst for progression. As law enforcement introduces new technologies like GPS tracking or increased patrols, offenders do not cease their activities; instead, they strategically adapt. Research confirms that offenders demonstrate a high level of planning and flexibility, modifying their tactics to circumvent new security measures and police presence (Decker & Van Winkle, 1996). This adaptive capacity marks the transition from opportunistic crime to a more organised and calculated MO.

This adaptation then evolves into more proactive measures, such as Tactical diversion and exploitation. Offenders learn to actively create opportunities rather than just wait for them. This includes staging accidents to facilitate carjackings or exploiting systemic vulnerabilities, such as weaknesses in keyless entry systems or shipping port logistics. This stage demonstrates a higher level of organisation, as it requires foresight, planning, and technical skill, moving beyond simple reaction to proactive exploitation.

The most advanced stage of MO progression is characterised by Infiltration and corruption. This represents the ultimate neutralisation of "capable guardianship." Instead of merely adapting to or bypassing law enforcement, organised groups seek to compromise it. By corrupting officials within agencies that regulate vehicles, ports, or even policing itself, they can systematically create a landscape where law enforcement is perceived as weak or complicit (Hagan, 1994). This allows for large-scale, low-risk operations, signifying the pinnacle of an organised criminal enterprise.

6.3.2.1 Conclusion for Objective 2

The evaluation of the offenders' MO reveals that its progression is not a simple escalation but a sophisticated, multi-stage process of strategic adaptation and control. This evolution is rooted in environments of social disorganisation, which provide the initial permissive conditions for crime. However, the true progression is catalysed by law enforcement pressure, forcing offenders to evolve beyond basic opportunism. The MO advances through distinct phases: beginning with tactical Adaptation to police presence, escalating to proactive Infiltration and Corruption to neutralise guardianship from within, and culminating in sophisticated Tactical Diversion and Exploitation to manipulate the environment itself. Ultimately, this progression demonstrates a calculated effort by offenders to systematically manufacture the conditions of RAT, actively ensuring the absence of capable guardianship rather than merely benefiting from it. Therefore, the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO is a dynamic response to external pressures, highlighting that effective crime prevention must address not only the initial community vulnerabilities but also the entire adaptive cycle that allows criminal enterprises to thrive and outmaneuver formal controls.

6.3.2.2 The Purpose of Objective 2

The purpose of Objective 2 is to analyse and explain the sophisticated, multi-stage evolution of carjackers' and motor vehicle thieves' MO as dynamic, adaptive responses to environmental pressures, particularly law enforcement strategies. More specifically, Objective 2 aims to: 1. Deconstruct the Evolutionary Process: It seeks to demonstrate that the progression of criminal MO is not a simple, linear escalation (for example, just getting "better" at crime) but a complex, cyclical, and adaptive process. It breaks this evolution down into distinct, identifiable stages. 2. Identify the Primary Catalyst: The objective pinpoints the main driver of this evolution: pressure from law enforcement. It shows that as police adapt and introduce new strategies,

offenders are forced to strategically adapt in response, which is the core mechanism behind their MO's progression.

6.3.2.3 Illustrate the Stages of Progression

Objective 2 details the specific phases of this evolution: Initial Stage: Crimes of opportunity flourishing in environments of social disorganisation. Adaptation Stage: Offenders modifying their tactics to bypass new law enforcement measures. Proactive Stage: Offenders shifting from reactive adaptation to actively creating opportunities through tactical diversion and exploitation. Advanced Stage: The ultimate progression of infiltrating and corrupting systems to neutralise "capable guardianship" from within.

6.3.2.4 Integrate Theoretical Frameworks

It uses an integrated lens of SDT and RAT to explain this phenomenon. Social Disorganisation Theory accounts for the initial permissive environment, while the MO's evolution is framed as offenders' calculated effort to systematically manufacture the conditions of RAT (a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of a capable guardian) to their advantage. In essence, the purpose of Objective 2 is to move beyond a simple description of criminal tactics and to provide a deep, strategic analysis of how and why criminal enterprises evolve, adapt, and become more sophisticated in response to external pressures, particularly those from law enforcement. This understanding is presented as crucial for developing effective, long-term crime prevention strategies.

6.3.3 Integrated Interpretation of Findings for Objective 3

The findings for Objective 3 reveal a significant and synergistic link between the formal organisation of offenders and the progression of their MO. This progression is not incidental but is facilitated by a triad of interconnected processes: the establishment of trust-building mechanisms, the formation of robust criminal networks, and the subsequent strengthening of these criminal ties. This evolution can be interpreted through an integrated theoretical lens that combines both rational and social learning perspectives. From an RCP standpoint, the decision to form or join a formal organisation is a calculated strategic move. Offenders collaborate to enhance their operational capabilities such as pooling resources, dividing labour, and executing more complex schemes, because the perceived benefits of this collaboration outweigh the inherent risks of increased exposure and potential betrayal (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). The formation of a criminal network is, therefore, a rational choice designed to maximise criminal

success and profit, which directly necessitates a more sophisticated and progressive MO.

However, this rational framework is only possible because of the social dynamics described by DAT. The very foundation of these networks is built on sustained social interaction, where criminal behaviours, techniques, and, crucially, codes of loyalty and trust are learned and internalised (Sutherland, 1947). The trust-building mechanisms such as; shared experiences, demonstration of reliability, and enforcement of group norms are the social glue that allows the rational choice to collaborate to be actualised safely. As these ties are strengthened over time, loyalty becomes paramount, reducing the perceived risk of betrayal and enabling even more ambitious criminal operations.

This integrated interpretation aligns with existing research. Studies confirm that organised crime thrives in environments where such strong, trust-based networks exist, allowing for the resource sharing and strategic planning that are hallmarks of an advanced MO (Decker & Van Winkle, 1996). Furthermore, the deepening of trust within these organisations is shown to directly increase operational efficiency and success, marking a clear and measurable progression in their MO (Varese, 2011). In essence, this study's findings suggest that the evolution of an offender's MO is profoundly accelerated by their integration into formal organisations, where rational cost-benefit analyses and learned social trust coalesce to create a more effective, resilient, and sophisticated criminal enterprise.

6.3.3.1 Conclusion for Objective 3

In conclusion, this study's findings robustly demonstrate that the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO is intrinsically linked to their integration into formal criminal organisations. This progression is not merely a function of association but is driven by a synergistic interplay between rational calculation and socially-learned trust. Offenders rationally seek to form networks to enhance operational capabilities, as posited by RCT. However, the success and sophistication of these networks are contingent upon the trust-building mechanisms and strengthened ties fostered through social interaction, a process explained by DAT. Ultimately, the fusion of these rational and social dynamics creates an environment where criminal networks can share resources, engage in strategic planning, and operate with increased efficiency, leading directly to a more sophisticated and evolved MO. Therefore, the study concludes that formal organisations act as a catalyst for MO progression by providing the structural framework for rational collaboration, which is solidified by the

essential social bonds of trust and loyalty.

6.3.3.2 Purpose for Objective 3

The primary purpose of Objective 3 is to move beyond the analysis of individual offenders and investigate the social and structural catalysts that accelerate the evolution of criminal behaviour. Specifically, it aims to understand how and why an offender's MO progresses from basic or opportunistic tactics to more sophisticated, efficient, and resilient methods when they are embedded within a formal criminal organisation. More specifically, the purpose is to: 1. Identify the Mechanisms of Collaboration: To pinpoint the specific social processes such as trust-building, network formation, and the strengthening of ties that transform a group of individuals into a cohesive and effective criminal unit. 2. Establish a Causal Link: To demonstrate that the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO is not merely a result of individual experience but is significantly enhanced and shaped by the dynamics of the group. It seeks to answer the question: "Does the organisation itself make the offender 'better' at their craft, and if so, how?" 3. Provide a Theoretical Explanation: To use established criminological theories (Rational Choice and Differential Association) to create a comprehensive model that explains this phenomenon. The purpose is to show that the decision to collaborate is rational, but its success is dependent on socially learned skills like trust and loyalty. 4. Inform Practical Application: To generate findings that have real-world implications for law enforcement and crime prevention. By understanding the very foundations of how organised crime becomes more effective, strategies can be developed to disrupt these key processes such as targeting trust networks, or intercepting resource-sharing channels, rather than only focusing on arresting individual offenders.

6.3.4 Integrated Interpretation of Findings for Objective 4

The findings for Objective 4 reveal that the planning and progression of the offenders' MO is not an impulsive act but a methodical, multi-stage process grounded in rational calculation and practical application. This sophisticated planning can be understood through the combined lenses of RCT and RAT, which together explain the entire cognitive and operational sequence from conception to execution.

The process begins with Initial offending decisions aligned with pre-offence tasks. This phase is the practical application of RAT, where offenders actively work to engineer the perfect conditions for a crime. They engage in meticulous tasks such as scouting locations, identifying

vulnerabilities in security systems, and assessing the absence of capable guardianship (Cohen & Felson, 1979). This is not random searching; it is a deliberate effort to identify the most "suitable target" that aligns with their capabilities.

This information then feeds directly into the importance of planning and target selection. Here, the findings show a clear shift to the principles of RCT. The data gathered during the pre-offence tasks is used to conduct a systematic cost-benefit analysis. Offenders evaluate potential targets not just for their value, but against the perceived risks of detection, confrontation, or capture (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). This calculated approach ensures that their efforts are focused on maximising rewards while systematically minimising potential downsides.

Ultimately, this entire process culminates in a final decision-making process that is the embodiment of rational choice. After all the planning and evaluation, a conscious, final "go" or "no-go" decision is made. This final sanction represents the culmination of the risk-reward assessment. As research confirms, this level of meticulous planning is a hallmark of organised crime, allowing offenders to optimise their operations and significantly reduce the likelihood of detection (Varese, 2011; Hagan, 1994). In essence, this study demonstrates that the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO is driven by a feedback loop where successful planning informs the future, even more sophisticated, criminal endeavours.

6.3.4.1 Conclusion for Objective 4:

In conclusion, the study demonstrates that the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO is fundamentally driven by a deliberate and systematic planning process. This process is not a single act but a multi-stage cycle that integrates the principles of RAT and RCT. It begins with the practical application of RAT, where offenders engage in pre-offence tasks to identify suitable targets and engineer opportunities. This intelligence is then subjected to a rigorous cost-benefit analysis, reflecting the core tenets of RCT, to determine the optimal balance of risk and reward. The entire sequence culminates in a conscious, final decision-making stage that sanctions the act only after thorough evaluation. Therefore, the study concludes that the evolution of these offenders' MO is not a product of chance or impulse, but the direct outcome of a disciplined, rational, and methodical planning cycle. This calculated approach, which systematically minimises risk while maximising reward, is the hallmark of their operational sophistication and the primary engine for the advancement of their criminal methods.

6.3.4.2 The Purpose of Objective 4

The primary purpose of Objective 4 is to deconstruct the cognitive and operational blueprint that offenders use to plan and evolve their criminal activities. While previous objectives establish the organisational structure (Objective 1), the adaptation to external pressures (Objective 2), and the role of social bonds (Objective 3), Objective 4 zooms in on the specific, step-by-step process of planning a crime. It moves beyond the "what" and the "why" to explain the "how" of criminal execution. More specifically, the purpose is to:

- **Map the Decision-Making Sequence**: To create a clear, empirically-grounded model of the offender's planning process. This involves identifying the distinct stages from initial target selection and pre-offence reconnaissance to the final, conscious "go/no-go" decision, revealing it as a methodical sequence rather than a single act.

- **Bridge Criminological Theory and Practical Application**: To demonstrate how offenders practically apply and integrate core criminological theories in real-time. The purpose is to show that RAT (identifying suitable targets) and RCT (assessing risks and rewards) are not just abstract concepts but are sequential, functional steps in the offender's decision-making toolkit.

- **Isolate the "Engine" of MO Sophistication**: To identify the disciplined planning cycle as the primary mechanism that drives the advancement of the MO. The purpose is to argue that the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO is not accidental, but is the direct result of a systematic, repeatable process that is refined over time to maximise success and minimise risk.

- **Counter the Stereotype of the Impulsive Offender**: To provide strong evidence that these carjackers and motor vehicle thieves are not impulsive actors but methodical, strategic thinkers. By detailing their planning, this study aims to reframe them as disciplined criminals whose success is predicated on preparation and rational calculation, not just opportunism. In essence, if Objective 3 explains the social catalyst that allows a group to become more sophisticated, then the purpose of Objective 4 is to explain the individual and group-level mental process that translates that potential into a successfully executed, progressively more complex criminal act. It is the study of the criminal mind in action, from conception to completion.

6.3.5 Integrated Interpretation of Findings for Objective 5

The analysis of pull factors drawing offenders to commit carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area reveals a complex and synergistic interplay between social dislocation, peer influence, and economic necessity. The findings indicate that criminal behaviour is not born in a vacuum but is fostered within a context of weakened social structures and compelling immediate needs.

The foundational themes of family disruptions and broader social influences provide the backdrop for this criminal activity, a dynamic powerfully explained by SDT. As posited by Shaw and McKay (1942), when traditional social institutions like the family unit falter, they leave a void of social control and support. This breakdown of conventional ties creates a vulnerability, where individuals, particularly youth, lack a sense of identity and belonging. This void becomes a fertile ground for the emergence of the second major theme: peer pressure and the desire to belong to organised groups. These groups offer the acceptance, structure, and perceived status that are missing from their disrupted home lives, effectively substituting a criminal network for a functional family or community. This transition is further illuminated by DAT. The peer groups that fill the social vacuum are not merely social clubs; they are vehicles for learning and normalising criminal behaviour. As Sutherland (1947) argued, through intimate interactions, individuals are exposed to techniques, motives, and attitudes that favour law violation. In the context of the greater Berea area, this means that carjacking and MVT are not seen as inherently wrong but are normalised as acceptable, even commendable, activities for gaining group approval and status. This aligns with research by Warr (2002), which underscores the profound influence of peers in shaping criminal behaviour, suggesting that the desire to belong is a primary motivator that can override personal or legal apprehensions.

Compounding these social and relational pressures is the theme of economic necessity and the need to finance a "street life." The criminal activities are not only a means of social integration but also a practical solution to financial hardship. The proceeds from carjackings and MVTs provide the capital for daily survival, consumer goods, and reinforcing one's position within the peer group. This economic driver is situated within a larger context of systemic disadvantage, as Sampson and Wilson (1995) demonstrated that concentrated poverty and unemployment are significant predictors of elevated crime rates. Therefore, the choice to offend

is a rational response to an irrational set of circumstances, where legitimate economic opportunities are perceived as limited or inaccessible.

6.3.5.1 Conclusion for Objective 5

The pull factors for carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area are not separate issues but are intricately woven into a complex, self-reinforcing cycle. This cycle begins with social disorganisation, such as family breakdown, which creates a void and a need for belonging. This need is filled by peer groups that, through the process of differential association, normalise and incentivise criminal behaviour. The criminal acts of carjacking and MVT then serve a dual purpose: they provide social validation within the group and finance the economic necessities of a "street life." This, in turn, reinforces the individual's dependence on the criminal network, perpetuating a continuous cycle of offending. Ultimately, for offenders in the greater Berea area, carjacking is a multifaceted act, a means to belong, to survive, and to gain status in a world where conventional pathways to success are perceived as unavailable.

6.3.5.2 Purpose of Objective 5

To investigate and explain the underlying "pull factors" that motivate offenders to commit carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area. More specifically, the objective aimed to: Identify and analyse the key social, peer-related, and economic influences that draw individuals into these above-stated crimes. Examine the synergistic interplay between these factors, demonstrating how they are not separate issues but are intricately woven together to create a self-reinforcing cycle of offending. Contextualise the findings within established criminological theories (SDT and DAT) to build a comprehensive explanatory model for why the 2 said crimes occur in this specific context. Illustrate that carjacking and MVT serve multifaceted purposes for offenders, acting as a means to gain social belonging, achieve economic survival, and attain psychological validation within a criminal network.

6.3.6 Integrated Interpretation of Findings for Objective 6

The examination of violence within the carjackers' organised MO reveals it to be a highly strategic and multi-functional tool, rather than an act of random brutality. The use of extreme violence is a calculated tactic designed to achieve several interconnected goals that ensure the success and sustainability of their criminal operations, a dynamic best understood through the complementary lenses of SDT and RAT.

The primary function of this violence is the systematic fragmentation of community ties. This process is powerfully explained by SDT, as originally conceptualised by Shaw and McKay (1942). They posited that crime flourishes not because of the inherent qualities of a population, but due to the breakdown of social institutions and informal social control within a neighbourhood. The carjackers' violence is a direct assault on this informal social control. It erodes what Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls (1997) later termed "collective efficacy", the social cohesion among neighbours combined with their willingness to intervene for the common good. By instilling pervasive fear, offenders destroy the trust necessary for collective efficacy to exist. As research by Sampson and Groves (1989) indicates, this breakdown of community structures allows organised crime to flourish. The resulting withdrawal from community engagement, a direct response to this fear, further exacerbates the challenges faced by law enforcement, creating a socially disorganised space where offenders can operate with impunity (Taylor, 2001).

This community-wide breakdown is achieved by deliberately spreading the fear of extreme violence, a tactic that aligns precisely with RAT. Developed by Cohen and Felson (1979), this theory argues that crime occurs when a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of a capable guardian converge in time and space. The offenders' violent MO is a direct strategy to manipulate the "capable guardian" element. Each brutal act serves as a public message, establishing a reputation that deters potential witnesses from intervening and ensures victims comply without resistance. In effect, the violence creates a perception that there are no capable guardians, neither informal (neighbours or bystanders) nor formal (police, who are seen as too slow or overwhelmed). This proactive shaping of the environment makes future crimes easier and safer to execute, perfectly illustrating the core tenets of Cohen and Felson's theory. Finally, this violence is crucial for maintaining a cycle of respect and fear within the offenders' own social ecosystem. In the criminal subculture, a reputation for ruthlessness is a form of social currency that commands respect and establishes dominance. This internal dynamic reinforces the hierarchy within the group, ensures compliance from members, and enhances the group's status among rivals. This internal cohesion is critical, as it creates a disciplined and motivated unit capable of effectively implementing the very strategies of fear and intimidation that the theories describe.

6.3.6.1 Conclusion for Objective 6

The use of violence by carjackers is a deliberate and multi-faceted component of their organised MO, serving as a critical tool for control and success. It functions strategically on both at community and situational level. At the community level, extreme violence systematically fragments social ties and erodes collective efficacy, a process explained by SDT, which creates an environment where offenders can operate with impunity. At the situational level, the deliberate spread of fear serves to neutralise "capable guardians," ensuring victim compliance and witness non-intervention, as predicted by RAT. Furthermore, this violence is essential for maintaining an internal cycle of respect and fear that solidifies the gang's hierarchy and power. In essence, violence is the central mechanism that creates a permissive environment, facilitates individual crimes, and reinforces the internal structure of the criminal group, establishing a self-perpetuating cycle where fear begets power, and power enables further violence.

6.3.6.2 Purpose of Objective 6

To examine and analyse the strategic use of violence by carjackers as an integral component of their organised MO. More specifically, the objective aimed to: Deconstruct the role of violence by demonstrating that it is not an act of random brutality, but a calculated, multi-functional tool used to achieve specific goals. Identify and explain the distinct functions of violence on three interconnected levels: (a) Community Level; to fragment community ties, erode collective efficacy, and create a socially disorganised environment where offenders can operate with impunity, as explained by SDT; (b) Situational Level, to spread fear and neutralise "capable guardians," thereby, ensuring victim compliance and witness non-intervention for the successful execution of individual crimes, as explained by RAT; and (c) Internal Group Level, to maintain a cycle of respect and fear that solidifies the gang's internal hierarchy, discipline, and power. Integrate these findings to illustrate that violence is the central mechanism that links community breakdown, situational criminal success, and internal group cohesion, thereby creating a self-perpetuating cycle of offending.

6.3.7 Integrated Interpretation of Findings for Objective 7

Effectively addressing the organised nature of offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs requires a strategic approach that moves beyond conventional policing to target the systemic vulnerabilities that offenders exploit. The themes of fragmented relationships within the SAPS, the exploitation of distractive behaviours, and hostilities between SAPS and the community are not isolated issues; they are interconnected symptoms of a broader breakdown

in the formal and informal guardianship systems that criminals deliberately manipulate. A successful counter-strategy must therefore be informed by both SDT and RCT to rebuild community resilience and increase the perceived costs of offending.

The foundational problem, as highlighted by SDT, is the erosion of collective efficacy. The "hostilities between SAPS and community members" and "fragmented relationships within SAPS" create a perfect storm of social disorganisation. As Shaw and McKay (1942) argued, when trust between the community and its formal institutions of control breaks down, the entire social fabric weakens. Offenders are acutely aware of this void; they exploit it by using distractive behaviours, knowing that a fragmented police force and a fearful, non-cooperative public are unlikely to mount an effective or coordinated response. This creates a permissive environment where the risks of their sophisticated MO are perceived as low.

Therefore, the primary recommendation must be to actively reverse this disorganisation. Research consistently demonstrates that strengthening police-community relations is a powerful crime reduction tool. As Tyler (2004) emphasises, when law enforcement is viewed as legitimate and trustworthy, public cooperation and compliance increase significantly. Initiatives that foster dialogue, transparency, and procedural justice can begin to heal the hostilities, transforming the community from a passive or fearful observer into an active partner in safety. This aligns with the findings of Sampson and Groves (1989), who showed that community engagement initiatives are instrumental in fostering the social cohesion necessary to disrupt criminal networks.

This rebuilding of social ties directly informs the application of RCT. Offenders commit carjackings and MVTs because they have made a calculated assessment that the benefits outweigh the costs. The recommendations, therefore, must focus on systematically increasing the perceived costs, as suggested by Cornish and Clarke (1986).

Increase the Perceived Risk of Apprehension: This can be achieved by directly addressing the "fragmented relationships within SAPS." The formation of specialised, inter-departmental task forces focused specifically on carjacking and MVT hotspots can break down internal silos. Improved intelligence sharing and coordinated operational responses will make SAPS a more capable and unpredictable guardian, directly countering the offenders' exploitation of distractive tactics.

Increase the Perceived Effort Required: A community that trusts the police is more likely to report suspicious activities, serve as witnesses, and share valuable intelligence. This makes it significantly harder for offenders to operate covertly. Their "distractive behaviours" become less effective when an engaged neighbourhood is alert and a responsive police force is ready to act.

6.3.7.1 Conclusion for Objective 7

In conclusion, effectively countering the organised MO of carjackers and MVT offenders requires a dual-pronged strategy that simultaneously addresses systemic disorganisation and manipulates offender decision-making. The core vulnerabilities of fragmented SAPS relationships and community hostilities create a permissive environment that offenders exploit. Therefore, the recommendations are intrinsically linked: by applying the principles of SDT to rebuild collective efficacy and heal police-community relations, we create the necessary foundation for applying RCT. A unified police force working in tandem with an empowered and trusting community fundamentally alters the offenders' risk-reward calculation, dramatically increasing the perceived costs and risks of their actions and rendering their sophisticated MO a far less rational and viable option.

6.3.7.2 Purpose of Objective 7

To provide strategic, theory-informed recommendations for addressing the organised nature of offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs. More specifically, the objective aimed to: Identify and target the systemic vulnerabilities such as fragmented relationships within SAPS and hostilities between the police and the community, which offenders exploit to facilitate their crimes. Formulate a dual-pronged counter-strategy grounded in criminological theory, using SDT to address the breakdown of community cohesion and RCT to alter the offenders' cost-benefit analysis. Propose concrete, actionable solutions that would simultaneously rebuild collective efficacy (by improving police-community relations) and increase the perceived costs and risks for offenders (by enhancing policing capabilities and community cooperation), thereby rendering their sophisticated MO a less rational and viable option.

Objective 1 emphasizes the importance of understanding offenders' perspectives, revealing how their MOs are shaped by communication and hierarchical structures. Objective 2 illustrates the

progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO, highlighting the adaptability of offenders in response to law enforcement strategies. Objective 3 explores the links between formal organisations and the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO, emphasising the role of trust and collaboration within criminal networks. Objective 4 underscores the systematic planning involved in criminal activities, demonstrating how offenders assess risks and rewards. Objective 5 identifies the pull factors that drive individuals to commit carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area, emphasising the influence of social ties and economic necessity. Objective 6 examines the use of violence as a tool for control and intimidation. Objective 7: In relation to the current study, Objective 7 provides recommendations needed for solving the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs, particularly, in the greater Berea area in Durban.

6.9 The Exploitation of Vehicle Technology by Modern Carjackers and Motor Vehicle Thieves

This study examines the increasingly sophisticated methods employed by carjackers and motor vehicle thieves to exploit advanced technological features in modern motor vehicles. Drawing on RCT, DAT, RAT, and SDT, this analysis provides a comprehensive theoretical understanding of this phenomenon, as evidenced by the behaviours and strategies of the research participants.

6.9.1 Integrated Discussion of Offender Methods

To illustrate the practical application of the technological sophistication discussed above, this section will now examine a specific and increasingly common tactic: the exploitation of keyless entry systems via relay attacks.

6.9.1.1 Exploitation of Keyless Entry Systems via Relay Attacks

A critical and increasingly prevalent method employed by offenders in the greater Berea area is the exploitation of vehicle keyless entry systems through relay attacks. This research has demonstrated that offenders have evolved beyond traditional, force-based theft methods to become sophisticated technicians who systematically manipulate the very technologies designed for vehicle security. This method represents a significant shift in the offender's MO, prioritising stealth, technical skill, and the exploitation of digital vulnerabilities over brute force, fundamentally altering the landscape of motor vehicle crime.

6.9.1.2 Theoretical Underpinnings and Integration

This offender method is robustly explained by the study's multi-theoretical framework, which collectively illuminates why this technique is adopted and how it is so effective.

- **Rational Choice Perspective (RCP)**: At its core, the decision to execute a relay attack is a calculated choice based on a perceived cost-benefit analysis. The method presents an extremely favourable equation for the offender. The cost is low: it requires no physical force, creates minimal noise or evidence, and the necessary equipment is commercially available. The reward is high: it provides access to often expensive, modern vehicles that would otherwise be difficult to steal. As Cornish and Clarke (1986) would argue, offenders perceive the risk of apprehension as minimal due to the non-confrontational and swift nature of the crime, making it a highly rational choice compared to more risky methods like carjacking.

- **Routine Activity Theory (RAT)**: The relay attack method perfectly illustrates the convergence of the three elements required for crime. The motivated offender is the individual or team equipped with the technical knowledge and devices. The suitable target is any vehicle with a keyless fob, often parked in a residential driveway or on a quiet street. Crucially, the method creates a profound lack of capable guardianship. The technology itself creates a vulnerability where the physical guardian (the car) is separated from its electronic key (the fob), which is often inside a home. The offender exploits this temporal and spatial gap, a form of guardianship that traditional security measures like alarms or steering locks cannot address.

- **Differential Association Theory (DAT)**: DAT posits that criminal techniques are learned through intimate associations. The knowledge of how to execute a relay attack is not innate; it is a specialised skill learned within the offender's network. As Sutherland (1947) identified, techniques, motivations, and rationalisations are transmitted through peer groups. In this context, a "tech expert" within the syndicate teaches others how to acquire or build the relay devices, identify vulnerable targets, and execute the attack. This creates a shared, pro-social (within the criminal context) definition of this as a "smart" and efficient way to steal, reinforcing its use within the group.

- **Social Disorganisation Theory (SDT)**: While a high-tech method, its prevalence is often linked to the underlying environment. Offenders operating from socially disorganised areas may be incentivised to adopt "smarter," non-confrontational methods to avoid violent encounters with police or community members in areas with weak informal social control. Furthermore, the community's collective inability to comprehend or guard against such an invisible, technologically advanced threat is a symptom of its disorganisation and lack of resources to counter modern criminal innovation.

6.9.1.3 Empirical Support from the Literature

The findings of this research are strongly corroborated by the broader literature and industry reports. This PhD study's observation of this method aligns with analyses from security experts. For instance, a report by the Leasing.com Group (2021) detailed the relay technique, noting it involves "multiple offenders: the first offender amplifies the key fob signal, a second offender receives it to unlock and start the motor vehicle, and a third offender acts as a lookout." This coordinated effort highlights the organised nature of the method. Furthermore, research by Goward (2018) into the capabilities of signal jammers and other devices confirms that offenders have access to sophisticated tools that can "mute" tracking and communications systems, facilitating the theft. This body of work confirms that the abuse of keyless technology is not an isolated phenomenon but a widespread and evolving threat.

6.9.1.4 Practical Implementation of the Method (Offender's Steps)

To execute this method, offenders follow a structured, multi-step process: 1. Target Identification: Offenders surveil residential or commercial areas to identify a desirable motor vehicle equipped with a keyless entry system, often observing the owner's routine to confirm the fob is likely inside a nearby building. 2. Team and Equipment Assembly: A minimum of two offenders is required. They equip themselves with a relay attack kit, which typically consists of a signal amplifier/transmitter and a receiver. 3. Signal Capture: One offender approaches the residence with the amplifier device, positioning it as close as possible to the location where the key fob is likely located (for example, near the front door or window) to capture its weak radio signal. 4. Signal Relay and Unlock: A second offender stands near the target vehicle with the receiver device. This device captures the amplified signal from the first unit and transmits it to the car, tricking the vehicle's system into believing the legitimate key is present. This unlocks the doors and, in many cases, allows the engine to be started. 5. Theft and

Escape: The offenders enter the now-unlocked vehicle, start the engine, and drive away quickly and silently. The entire process can be completed in under a few minutes or less, leaving no signs of forced entry and often activating no alarms, delaying discovery and reporting.

6.9.2 Neutralisation of GPS Tracking Systems

A critical and highly sophisticated method employed by organised offenders in the greater Berea area is the systematic neutralisation of in-built GPS tracking and telematics systems. This research has demonstrated that offenders are not merely focused on the initial acquisition of the vehicle but have evolved to master the post-theft phase, ensuring the asset remains unrecoverable and secure for disposal. This method represents a significant escalation in the offender's operational planning, transforming the crime from a simple theft into a technologically-informed counter-security operation that directly challenges a primary pillar of modern vehicle recovery.

6.9.2.1 Theoretical Underpinnings and Integration

This offender method is robustly explained by the study's multi-theoretical framework, which collectively illuminates why this technique is a necessary component of their organised MO.

- **Rational Choice Perspective (RCP)**: At its core, the decision to neutralise a GPS tracker is a calculated choice to manage risk. A functioning tracker dramatically increases the probability of apprehension and the cost of the theft, as it provides a direct digital trail to the stolen asset. As Cornish and Clarke (1986) would argue, a rational offender's primary objective is to minimise this risk. The effort and technical skill required to disable the system are viewed as a necessary investment to secure the high reward of an unrecoverable vehicle. This transforms the theft from a high-risk venture into a controlled, low-risk enterprise, making it a fundamentally rational choice for an organised network.

- **Routine Activity Theory (RAT)**: RAT posits that crime is prevented by capable guardianship. A GPS tracking system is a form of technological guardian that can monitor the vehicle's location and guide law enforcement to it. The offender's method is specifically designed to eliminate this guardian. By using jammers to create a signal "dead zone" or by physically removing the device, the offender effectively creates a situation where the target (the stolen vehicle) is no longer under capable guardianship. This allows them to move the vehicle to a secure location for "chopping" or export

without the immediate threat of interception, successfully completing the crime cycle.

- **Differential Association Theory (DAT)**: DAT posits that criminal techniques are learned through intimate associations. The knowledge of how to neutralise a GPS system is a specialised skill that is not common knowledge. This research found that it is learned and transmitted within the offender network. A more experienced member or a designated "tech expert" teaches others how to acquire signal jammers, how to identify the physical location of different tracker brands in various vehicle models, and the step-by-step process for disabling them. This shared knowledge reinforces the group's identity as a professional, intelligent organisation, providing a favorable definition of their craft that contrasts with "amateur" thieves who are easily caught.

- **Social Disorganisation Theory (SDT)**: While offenders operate from socially disorganised environments, their adoption of this method demonstrates a level of organisation that stands in stark contrast to their surroundings. The formal guardianship in these areas (police) may be under-resourced or slow to respond to tracking alerts. However, the organised offender does not rely on this systemic weakness. Instead, they proactively and systematically neutralise the technological threat, creating their own micro-environment of control and security. This highlights how criminal networks bring a high degree of order and technical precision to their operations, exploiting the very chaos that defines their community.

6.9.2.2 Empirical Support from the Literature

The findings of this research are strongly corroborated by the broader literature. The current study's observation of this method aligns with analyses from international law enforcement. As Europol (2021) reported, organised crime groups now view the disabling of telematics as a "standard procedure" in vehicle theft. Research by Savona and Saint'Anna (2020) confirms that offenders employ signal jammers to "briefly 'mute'" tracking devices, providing an "interim cover" during the critical escape phase. Furthermore, Goward (2018) provided detailed technical descriptions of multi-channel jammers that can block not only GPS signals but also cellular and Bluetooth frequencies, demonstrating the commercial availability of sophisticated tools used for this purpose. This body of work confirms that neutralising tracking systems is a widespread and essential component of modern, organised motor vehicle theft.

6.9.2.3 Practical Implementation of the Method (Offender's Steps)

To execute this method, offenders follow a structured, multi-step process: 1. Tool Acquisition and Reconnaissance: Offenders acquire signal jammers from dark web marketplaces or specialist suppliers. They also gather intelligence on the location of factory-fitted GPS devices in common target vehicle models. 2. Immediate Isolation: Upon stealing the vehicle, the offenders immediately drive to a pre-determined, isolated "safe house" or location away from public view. This is a critical step, as the neutralisation process cannot be performed on a public street. 3. Signal Jamming: During transit and upon arrival at the safe house, offenders activate a high-powered signal jammer. This device creates a localised "dead zone," preventing the tracker from communicating its location to the owner or the monitoring company via satellite or cellular networks. 4. Physical Location and Removal: Once the vehicle is secure, offenders use their knowledge to physically locate the tracking device. Common locations include under the dashboard, inside the trunk, in wheel wells, or within the vehicle's wiring harness. They then use tools to disconnect the device's power supply or physically remove it entirely. 5. Verification and Disposal: After a period of monitoring to ensure no signals are being emitted, the offenders are confident the vehicle is "clean." They can then proceed with their ultimate goal: stripping the vehicle for parts, cloning its identity for resale, or preparing it for illegal export.

6.9.3 Bypassing Advanced Security Systems via Electronic Reprogramming

A critical and highly specialised method employed by skilled offenders in the greater Berea area is the electronic bypass of a vehicle's advanced security systems, such as immobilisers and alarms. This research has demonstrated that offenders have evolved beyond simple theft to possess the technical knowledge and equipment to directly manipulate a vehicle's core computer systems. This method represents a significant methodological evolution, shifting the focus from overcoming physical barriers to hacking digital ones, allowing offenders to defeat the very technologies designed to make modern vehicles theft-proof.

6.9.3.1 Theoretical Underpinnings and Integration

This offender method is robustly explained by the study's multi-theoretical framework, which collectively illuminates why this technique is a necessary and defining feature of organised vehicle crime.

- **Rational Choice Perspective (RCP)**: At its core, the decision to acquire and use diagnostic tools is a calculated investment. The cost is high, involving the purchase of

expensive equipment and the time invested in learning complex technical skills. However, the reward is immense: it provides access to the newest, most valuable, and previously "secure" vehicles on the market. As Cornish and Clarke (1986) would argue, this is a rational choice for an organised offender seeking to maximise profit. The investment in technology opens up a class of targets that are inaccessible to opportunistic thieves, providing a significant competitive advantage and a higher return on investment.

- **Routine Activity Theory (RAT)**: RAT posits that capable guardianship deters crime. Advanced immobilisers and alarms are a form of technological guardian. The offender's method is a direct and systematic neutralisation of this guardian. By plugging a diagnostic tool into the OBD-II port and reprogramming the vehicle's computer, the offender effectively disables the alarm and immobiliser systems. This action removes the technological barrier, instantly converting a highly secured, unsuitable target into one that can be started and driven away with ease, thus allowing the crime to be completed.

- **Differential Association Theory (DAT)**: DAT posits that criminal techniques are learned through intimate associations. The knowledge of how to use diagnostic tools to reprogram a vehicle is not innate; it is a highly specialised skill acquired within the criminal network. As Sutherland (1947) identified, this learning process is facilitated by criminal networks that share information and resources. An individual designated as the "tech expert" holds a high-status position within the syndicate, teaching others how to use the software, identify vulnerable vehicle models, and execute the reprogramming. This shared, pro-social (within the criminal context) knowledge reinforces the group's identity as a professional, intelligent organisation.

- **Social Disorganisation Theory (SDT)**: This method highlights the sophisticated internal organisation of the criminal network, which stands in stark contrast to the social disorganisation of the environment in which it operates. While the community may lack formal resources and institutions, the syndicate invests in its own "R&D" by acquiring tools and training members. This demonstrates a high degree of internal order and strategic planning, allowing the group to overcome technological barriers that would be insurmountable for disorganised, individual offenders. The core argument of the paragraph is that the criminal group or motor vehicle syndicate is highly organised,

which is the opposite of the "social disorganisation" in its environment. By saying that the syndicate has its own "R&D," the researcher shows that it has a structured, purposeful system for self-improvement, much like a legitimate corporation. Furthermore, "R and D" stands for research and development in this context. Moreover, "research" involves finding out which tools work, how to bypass new security systems, and identifying vulnerable targets. This is often done through training members of the motor vehicle syndicates. Whilst "development" requires acquiring the necessary tools (like relay attack devices) and putting the research into practice.

6.9.3.2 Empirical Support from the Literature

The findings of this research are strongly corroborated by the broader literature. The current study's observation of this method aligns with international analyses of vehicle theft. Siegel (2014), in his study of Lithuanian itinerant gangs in the Netherlands, found that offenders "employ laptops with specialised software to reprogram vehicle electronics." Similarly, Symes (2021) documented UK thieves using sophisticated methods, including the use of diagnostic tools to bypass security systems. Europol (2021) has explicitly identified this as a key trend, noting that organised crime groups use "sophisticated instruments to bypass anti-theft devices." This body of work confirms that the electronic reprogramming of vehicles is a widespread and technically advanced method central to modern, organised motor vehicle theft.

6.9.3.3 Practical Implementation of the Method (Offender's Steps)

To execute this method, offenders follow a structured, multi-step process: 1. Tool Acquisition and Training: The syndicate acquires specialised diagnostic tools, which may be legitimate devices purchased for illicit use or black-market tools. A designated expert within the group learns how to use the software to communicate with different vehicle manufacturers' electronic control units (ECUs). 2. Target Selection and Initial Access: Offenders target a specific vehicle known to be vulnerable to their tools. They must first gain physical entry into the car, often by smashing a window or using a "fishing" technique to steal keys through a letterbox, specifically to gain access to the interior. 3. Port Access: Once inside the motor vehicle, the offender locates the On-Board Diagnostics (OBD-II) port, which is a standardised port typically located under the dashboard on the driver's side. 4. Electronic Reprogramming: The offender plugs the diagnostic tool into the OBD-II port. Using the software, they communicate with the vehicle's immobiliser and key recognition system. They can either command the system to accept a new, blank key they have brought with them, or in some cases, they can send a command directly to

the engine control unit to start the car without any key at all. 5. Vehicle Start and Escape: Once the system has been tricked into recognising a new key or bypassed entirely, the offender can start the engine and drive the vehicle away. The entire process, from gaining entry to driving off, can take only a few minutes.

6.9.4 Strategic Operation within Socially Disorganised Environments

A critical and strategic method employed by offenders in the greater Berea area is the deliberate exploitation of community dynamics characterised by weak social ties and low collective efficacy. This research has demonstrated that offenders are not merely technicians who operate in a vacuum; they are astute strategists who actively select and leverage environments where their technological methods will face the least resistance. This method represents a sophisticated layer of operational planning, where the community itself becomes a key component of the crime, chosen specifically for its permissive nature and lack of informal social control.

6.9.4.1 Theoretical Underpinnings and Integration

This offender method is robustly explained by the study's multi-theoretical framework, which collectively illuminates why offenders choose these environments and how the conditions facilitate their success.

- **Rational Choice Perspective (RCP)**: At its core, the decision to operate within a socially disorganised community is a calculated choice to minimise risk. The cost of committing the crime is drastically reduced. The perceived risk of being detected by a nosy neighbour or a concerned citizen is virtually zero. The risk of a community member immediately alerting law enforcement is also low. As Cornish and Clarke (1986) would argue, this environment significantly alters the offender's cost-benefit analysis, making the use of sophisticated technological tools a much safer and more rational choice, as the primary human element of risk has been effectively neutralised.

- **Routine Activity Theory (RAT)**: RAT posits that crime occurs when a motivated offender, a suitable target, and a lack of capable guardianship converge. A socially disorganised neighbourhood provides the perfect conditions for this convergence. The motivated offender with technological tools is drawn to the area. The suitable targets (modern vehicles) are present. Most importantly, the community suffers from a profound lack of capable guardianship. The formal guardian (police) may be slow to

respond, and the informal guardians (neighbours, community watch) are absent, apathetic, or fearful. This creates the ideal environment for an offender to deploy their technological methods without interruption.

- **Differential Association Theory (DAT)**: DAT posits that criminal techniques are learned through intimate associations. Socially disorganised communities often serve as fertile recruiting grounds and training grounds for criminal networks. The lack of strong pro-social institutions (schools, community centers) and collective supervision means that potential offenders, particularly juveniles, spend more time on the streets. This environment facilitates their exposure to and learning from the "tech experts" within the syndicate. The community itself becomes the classroom where the techniques for exploiting technology are learned, practiced, and normalised.

- **Social Disorganisation Theory (SDT)**: This theory is the central pillar explaining this method. As Shaw & McKay (1942) and Sampson & Groves (1989) established, communities with weak social ties, residential instability, and poverty lack the collective efficacy to regulate behaviour. In such environments, there is no shared expectation that residents will intervene or report suspicious activity. This lack of cohesion allows offenders to operate with a sense of impunity. The use of advanced technological theft methods becomes normalised, not as a shocking event, but as another feature of a landscape where formal and informal controls have broken down.

6.9.4.2 Empirical Support from the Literature

The findings of this study are strongly corroborated by the broader literature. The current study's observation that offenders target these specific environments aligns with foundational criminological research. Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls (1997) demonstrated that "collective efficacy" is a powerful predictor of lower violence and crime, concluding that shared expectations for social control can mobilise residents to intervene. Conversely, Sampson and Groves (1989) found that "socially disorganised communities are less likely to engage in collective action against crime, allowing offenders to operate with impunity." This body of work confirms that the social fabric of a community is a critical, and often exploited, component in the offender's strategic calculation.

6.9.4.3 Practical Implementation of the Method (Offender's Steps)

To execute this method, offenders follow a structured, multi-step process that treats the community as a key operational variable: 1. Target Area Selection: The first step in the offender's operational plan is not selecting a vehicle, but selecting a neighbourhood. They use their local knowledge to identify areas with clear signs of social disorganisation: visible neglect, poor lighting, lack of community activity, and minimal foot traffic from residents. 2. Reconnaissance and Timing: Offenders conduct surveillance to confirm the lack of informal guardianship. They observe that residents do not interact, that blinds remain closed, and that strangers are not questioned. They meticulously time their theft for periods when this community inactivity is at its peak, such as during a workday afternoon. 3. Deployment of Technology with Confidence: Because they feel shielded from community observation, offenders can take the necessary time to execute their technological methods (e.g., a relay attack or using a diagnostic tool) without rushing or fearing interruption. They can use equipment like laptops or signal amplifiers more openly, knowing that the risk of a resident noticing and caring is minimal. 4. Exploiting the Escape Environment: The disorganised nature of the area often provides multiple, unmonitored escape routes. Offenders factor this into their plan, using the confusing street layouts or lack of community vigilance to facilitate a swift and unimpeded getaway after the theft has been completed. This study concludes that motor vehicle theft has undergone a paradigm shift, becoming a technology-driven enterprise marked by strategic foresight. Offenders now systematically defeat digital security measures while leveraging socially disorganised environments to their advantage, challenging the core premises of modern vehicle safety. This fusion of technical skill and strategic planning has initiated a continuous arms race with manufacturers and demands a fundamental re-evaluation of crime prevention and recovery strategies.

6.10 Integrated Discussion of Recommendations

The successful implementation of these integrated recommendations is fundamentally contingent upon the strategic engagement of healthcare professionals for vulnerability assessment and intervention.

6.10.1 Engagement of Healthcare Professionals for Vulnerability Assessment and Intervention

A critical, multi-faceted recommendation emerging from this study is the systematic engagement of healthcare professionals, particularly psychologists and psychiatrists, to assess

and address the psychological vulnerabilities of offenders involved in organised MVT and carjacking networks. This research has demonstrated that offenders are not monolithic entities driven solely by rational economic calculation; rather, they are often individuals shaped by profound psychological distress, trauma, and socio-economic deprivation, which are actively exploited by criminal syndicates. A professional, clinical engagement moves beyond traditional policing to address the root causes of criminality, offering a more sustainable and humane pathway to crime reduction.

6.10.1.1 Theoretical Underpinnings and Integration

This recommendation is robustly supported by the study's multi-theoretical framework, which collectively illuminates why such an intervention is necessary and how it would be effective.

- **Rational Choice Perspective (RCP)**: At its core, an offender's decision to cooperate with law enforcement or desist from criminal activity is a rational choice based on a perceived cost-benefit analysis. As the literature notes, "addressing psychological needs can alter the perceived costs and benefits of cooperation" (Harris, 2010). An offender suffering from unaddressed trauma, anxiety, or other mental health conditions may perceive the "benefits" of the criminal lifestyle such as belonging, identity, or a perceived sense of power, as outweighing the risks. By providing access to professional mental healthcare, the intervention directly alters this equation. It reduces the psychological "cost" of leaving the syndicate (by providing alternative coping mechanisms) and increases the "benefit" of cooperation (by offering a tangible path to well-being and rehabilitation). This transforms the offender's choice from one of survival within a criminal network to a reasoned decision to pursue a healthier, non-criminal life.

- **Social Disorganisation Theory (SDT)**: This study identified that offenders in the greater Berea area are products of socially disorganised environments characterised by poverty, weak social institutions, and a lack of collective efficacy. The engagement of healthcare professionals represents a direct, formal institutional intervention designed to counteract this disorganisation. It introduces a capable, professional "guardian" into the ecosystem, providing a critical resource that is absent from the community. By addressing the psychological sequelae of growing up in a disorganised environment such as the internalising disorders identified by Pillay et al. (2024), this strategy helps to mend the social fabric at the individual level, thereby building resilience against the

pull of criminal networks that thrive on systemic neglect.

- **Differential Association Theory (DAT)**: DAT posits that criminal behaviour is learned through intimate associations with others who provide definitions favourable to the violation of law. The introduction of a healthcare professional into an offender's life creates a powerful new, pro-social differential association. In a confidential, therapeutic setting, the offender is exposed to an alternative set of definitions, attitudes, and rationalisations that favour mental health, law-abiding behaviour, and personal responsibility. This professional can directly challenge the techniques of neutralisation and criminal philosophies learned within the syndicate, providing the cognitive tools necessary for the offender to redefine their identity and motivations outside of a criminal context.

6.10.1.2 Empirical Support from the Literature

The findings of this research are strongly corroborated by the broader literature. The study identified that offenders often have histories of victimisation, family disruption, and psychological distress, which are the very vulnerabilities that syndicates exploit (Pillay et al., 2024; Baidawi & Piquero, 2021). Research indicates that "understanding offenders' mental health can enhance communication and cooperation" (Bennett & Holloway, 2005), as a trusted clinical relationship can break down the barriers of hostility and distrust that offenders typically maintain towards authorities. Furthermore, the literature on juvenile offenders consistently shows that addressing underlying psychological issues is more effective for long-term behavioural change than purely punitive measures (Cunneen & White, 1995). By focusing on the "why" behind the criminal behaviour, the psychological pain and unmet needs, this approach offers a direct line to disrupting the offender's progression within the organised network.

6.10.1.3 Practical Implementation Strategies

To translate this recommendation into practice, a structured, multi-pronged strategy is essential: 1. Multi-Disciplinary Task Forces: Establish formal partnerships between the SAPS, DCS, and public/private mental healthcare providers. These task forces would be responsible for developing protocols for the assessment and referral of offenders. 2. In-Custody Vulnerability Assessments: Implement mandatory, confidential psychological screenings for all individuals arrested for MVT and carjacking. These screenings, conducted by trained clinicians, would identify key risk factors, including trauma, substance abuse, and personality disorders. 3.

Specialised Training for Law Enforcement: Train police officers and investigators to recognise signs of acute psychological distress and to understand the role of mental health in criminal behaviour. This training would equip them to make appropriate referrals and to interact with offenders in a way that builds, rather than destroys, rapport. 4. Guaranteed Confidentiality: A cornerstone of this strategy must be a clear policy of confidentiality. Offenders must be assured that information shared in a clinical setting will not be used punitively against them, except in cases of imminent harm. This trust is essential for honest engagement and for the clinical process to be effective.

6.10.2 Presence of Trained 'Appropriate Adults'

A second, crucial recommendation is the formal implementation of a policy requiring the presence of a trained, independent 'appropriate adult' during all police interviews with suspects involved in organised carjacking and MVT. This research has identified that offenders, particularly juveniles and those from disadvantaged backgrounds, often possess vulnerabilities, such as lower IQs (Kandel et al., 1988), neurodevelopmental disorders (Baidawi & Piquero, 2021), and high levels of psychological distress (Pillay et al., 2024), that make them susceptible to pressure and coercion. An appropriate adult acts as an impartial safeguard, ensuring that the suspect's rights are protected, that they fully understand the questions being asked, and that any information provided is given voluntarily and reliably. This is not merely a procedural nicety; it is a strategic necessity for ensuring procedural fairness and for the integrity of the intelligence gathered.

6.10.2.1 Theoretical Underpinnings and Integration

The utility of this recommendation is powerfully illuminated when viewed through the integrated theoretical framework of this study.

- **Rational Choice Perspective (RCP)**: The police interrogation is a high-stakes environment where the suspect must make a series of rational choices. Their decision to cooperate, confess, or remain silent is based on a careful calculation of perceived risks and rewards. As the research notes, "a fair environment encourages cooperation" (Kassin et al., 2010). The presence of an appropriate adult fundamentally alters this calculation. It reduces the perceived risk of being tricked, intimidated, or misunderstood. It increases the perceived benefit of cooperation, as the suspect feels their rights are protected and their statements will be accurately recorded. This creates a more transparent and trustworthy environment, making a rational choice to provide

truthful, high-quality information a more likely outcome.

- **Social Disorganisation Theory (SDT)**: This study highlighted that offenders from the greater Berea area emerge from communities characterised by a deep-seated distrust of formal institutions like the SAPS. The appropriate adult serves as a vital bridge across this chasm of distrust. As an independent, non-police figure, they act as a procedural guardian, legitimising the investigative process in the eyes of the suspect and their community. By ensuring fairness, they help to repair the fractured relationship between the community and the police, which is a cornerstone of social disorganisation. This intervention, therefore, operates at the micro-level to counteract the macro-level forces of institutional illegitimacy that enable criminal networks to thrive.

- **Differential Association Theory (DAT)**: Offenders learn specific techniques for neutralising their actions and for interacting with authority figures within their criminal networks. These learned scripts often involve silence, deception, and hostility towards law enforcement. The appropriate adult disrupts this learned behaviour by introducing a pro-social counter-narrative. They can clarify legal jargon, explain the consequences of lying, and ensure the suspect understands their rights, thereby challenging the definitions favourable to the violation of the law that they have learned from their associates. This intervention provides a new, pro-social learning opportunity at a critical juncture, potentially interrupting the offender's commitment to the criminal code of silence.

- **Routine Activity Theory (RAT)**: This framework can be applied to prevent the "crime" of a coerced or false confession. In this context, the elements are: a motivated offender (the police officer, under pressure to secure a conviction), a suitable target (a vulnerable suspect who may be young, psychologically distressed, or have a cognitive impairment), and the absence of a capable guardian. The appropriate adult is, quite literally, the capable guardian. Their sole purpose is to be present, to observe, and to intervene if the interview becomes unfair or coercive, thereby preventing the miscarriage of justice before it can occur.

6.10.2.2 Empirical Support from the Literature

The findings of this study are strongly supported by established research. The literature review identified that a significant portion of offenders have vulnerabilities that impair their decision-

making and comprehension during high-pressure situations. Research consistently "shows that appropriate adults improve the quality of information obtained" (Harris, 2010), as the information is more likely to be voluntary, accurate, and legally admissible. The work of Kassin et al. (2010) on interrogation tactics further underscores the need for such safeguards, demonstrating that the perceived risk of coercion is a major barrier to truthful cooperation. By implementing this policy, the SAPS can move away from interrogation models that may yield unreliable information and towards an evidence-based process that fosters trust and elicits higher-quality intelligence.

6.10.2.3 Practical Implementation Strategies

To make this recommendation operational, a clear and actionable framework is required: 1. Legislative and Policy Mandate: Formally codify the right to an appropriate adult into SAPS interviewing policy, mandating their presence for all interviews with suspects under 18 or any adult identified as vulnerable due to mental health issues, learning disabilities, or other factors. 2. Establishment of an Appropriate Adult Service: Create a dedicated unit or partner with registered social workers, psychologists, and trained legal professionals to serve as a pool of appropriate adults. These individuals must be rigorously vetted and undergo specialised training in police procedures, suspect rights, and the dynamics of interrogation. 3. Integration into SAPS Procedures: Develop clear, standard operating protocols for police officers on how and when to summon an appropriate adult. This should be a non-negotiable step before any interview with a vulnerable suspect can commence, ensuring the practice becomes routine rather than exceptional. 4. Community Engagement and Awareness: Launch a public information campaign to inform communities about this right. This builds public trust in the fairness of the justice system and empowers suspects and their families to request this protection, further enhancing the legitimacy of police investigations.

6.10.3 Cutting Deals with Multiple Suspects

A highly strategic and potent recommendation is the implementation of a formalised policy for offering negotiated deals such as plea bargains, reduced charges, or immunity in exchange for testimony to multiple suspects within a single organised carjacking or MVT network. This research has demonstrated that these networks, while appearing cohesive, are often held together by fragile bonds of self-interest, fear, and economic necessity. By simultaneously presenting members of the same syndicate with the opportunity to cooperate, law enforcement can exploit these internal fractures. This tactic creates a controlled "prisoner's dilemma," where

the perceived benefits of being the first to provide corroborated intelligence vastly outweigh the perceived costs of remaining loyal, thereby encouraging a "race to the station" that can dismantle the entire criminal enterprise.

6.10.3.1 Theoretical Underpinnings and Integration

This recommendation is a masterclass in applied criminological theory, leveraging the core tenets of the study's framework to turn the offenders' own rationality and social structures against them.

- **Rational Choice Perspective (RCP)**: This is the most direct and powerful application of RCT. The recommendation explicitly "increases the perceived benefits of cooperation" (Harris, 2010). For each suspect, the rational calculation is no longer just about their own fate but about the likely actions of their co-conspirators. The "cost" of silence becomes the risk of being the only one left standing while others receive lenient sentences. The "benefit" of cooperation is maximised by the promise of a better deal for being the first to provide verifiable information. This strategy deliberately engineers a situation where the most rational choice for every individual involved is to defect from the group and cooperate with law enforcement.

- **Social Disorganisation Theory (SDT)**: Criminal syndicates often flourish in socially disorganised areas by offering a perverse form of social order and economic stability that is absent from the wider community. However, as this study identified, the internal trust within these networks is a critical vulnerability. The offer of a deal from the state, a formal and powerful institution, acts as a direct counter-narrative to the syndicate's authority. It exploits the very lack of social cohesion and institutional trust that characterises the offenders' environment, presenting the state as a more reliable and beneficial guarantor of their future than their criminal associates.

- **Differential Association Theory (DAT)**: DAT explains that offenders learn a strict code of conduct, the primary rule of which is "no snitching." This strategy directly confronts and seeks to "unlearn" this core tenet. By offering a tangible, life-altering benefit for cooperation, it provides a powerful new definition that is favourable to the violation of the syndicate's code. It forces the offender to weigh the abstract, learned loyalty to their peers against the concrete, rational benefit of self-preservation offered by law enforcement.

- **Routine Activity Theory (RAT)**: This framework can be applied by reframing the "crime." The new "suitable target" for the offender's action is the deal itself. The "motivated offender" is the suspect, driven by self-interest. The "capable guardian" is the prosecutor or detective who facilitates the deal, ensuring the process is legitimate and the promise is credible. The entire investigative process is thus transformed into a new routine activity where the offender's rational choice is to participate in the "legal act" of providing evidence against their former associates, rather than remaining silent.

6.10.3.2 Empirical Support from the Literature

The findings of this study are strongly supported by empirical research on informant management and prosecutorial strategy. The literature review established that organised crime is a business, and its members are rational actors seeking to minimise risk and maximise reward. Research "shows that informant deals enhance crime intelligence and conviction rates" (Braga et al., 2010), as they provide the critical, inside information necessary to move beyond low-level operatives and target the leadership of a syndicate. The work of Harris (2010) reinforces this by highlighting how the perceived benefits are the key lever in encouraging cooperation. This study's own findings on the "tactical exploitation of vulnerabilities" and the "trust dynamics within criminal networks" provide the theoretical justification for why this tactic is so effective: it weaponises the very vulnerabilities and trust deficits that define these organisations.

6.10.3.3 Practical Implementation Strategies

To deploy this powerful tool effectively and ethically, a structured and legally sound framework is essential: 1. Develop a Tiered Deal Framework: Create a clear, transparent policy outlining a tiered system of benefits. The most valuable information (for example, evidence against kingpins, details of corruption) should be rewarded with the most significant benefits (such as, immunity, entry into a witness protection program). This incentivises suspects to provide high-quality, actionable intelligence. 2. Simultaneous, Coordinated Contact: Operational security is paramount. Plans must be made to contact and make offers to multiple key suspects simultaneously or in rapid succession. This prevents the syndicate leadership from learning of the investigation and intimidating or eliminating potential cooperators before they can act. 3. Requirement for Corroboration: A deal must be explicitly contingent on the suspect providing information that can be independently corroborated. This prevents false confessions and ensures that the intelligence gathered is reliable enough to secure convictions against other

members of the network. 4. Specialised Negotiation Teams: Establish and train a dedicated team of detectives and prosecutors skilled in the art of negotiation. They must be able to accurately assess the value of a suspect's information, communicate the terms of a deal clearly, and manage the psychological dynamics of the interrogation to encourage a rational choice to cooperate.

6.10.4 Personalised Approaches

A sophisticated and highly effective recommendation is the adoption of personalised, motivation-based engagement strategies when interacting with offenders. This research has revealed that offenders are not a homogenous group driven by a single motive; rather, they are a diverse collection of individuals with unique interests, aspirations, and psychological drivers. A one-size-fits-all approach to interrogation and intelligence gathering is therefore destined to fail. By moving beyond generic questioning and instead utilising personalised approaches that resonate with an offender's specific interests, be it financial gain, family security, social status, or thrill-seeking, law enforcement can create a powerful sustained flow of information. This strategy transforms the engagement from an adversarial confrontation into a negotiated interaction where cooperation is framed as the most logical path to achieving the offender's personal goals.

6.10.4.1 Theoretical Underpinnings and Integration

This recommendation represents the pinnacle of applied theory, synthesising the entire framework to create a highly nuanced and effective investigative tool.

- **Rational Choice Perspective (RCP)**: This is the theoretical heart of the recommendation. Personalisation is the practical application of RCP at its most granular level. As the research notes, "tailoring strategies to offenders' motivations enhances perceived benefits" (Bennett & Holloway, 2005). A generic offer of a reduced sentence may appeal to one offender, but another may be more motivated by the promise of protection for their family, assistance with a substance abuse problem, or the opportunity to maintain a sense of status. By identifying the specific "currency" of the individual offender and framing the benefits of cooperation in those terms, law enforcement maximises the perceived reward, making the rational choice to cooperate almost irresistible.

- **Differential Association Theory (DAT)**: To personalise an approach, an officer must

first understand the offender's worldview. This requires a form of active listening and communication that mirrors the learning process of DAT. The officer must learn the offender's "definitions", their rationalisations for crime, their understanding of loyalty, and their personal code of ethics. By demonstrating an understanding of these learned attitudes, the officer builds rapport and trust, creating a temporary, pro-social association. This allows the officer to frame the offer in a way that aligns with the offender's existing mindset, making it more likely to be accepted.

- **Social Disorganisation Theory (SDT)**: This study highlighted that offenders often turn to crime to fulfill needs that are not met in their socially disorganised communities, such as the need for economic stability, respect, or a sense of belonging. A personalised approach directly addresses this void. For example, for an offender whose primary motivation is the "street culture" and masculine identity (Katz, 1988), an appeal might focus on how cooperation is a "smarter," more powerful move than remaining loyal to a syndicate. For an offender driven by financial need, the appeal will be purely economic. By acknowledging and offering a pro-social pathway to the very same goal the crime was achieving, this strategy demonstrates a deep understanding of the socio-economic drivers of their behaviour.

- **Routine Activity Theory (RAT)**: In this context, the "suitable target" for the offender's cooperation is the personalised offer itself. A generic, impersonal offer is a poor target, it may not be seen as valuable or trustworthy. A personalised offer, however, is a highly suitable target because it is specifically designed to align with the offender's motivations. The officer acts as the "capable guardian" of this process, ensuring the offender feels safe and that the promise is credible, thereby facilitating the convergence of the motivated offender and the suitable target.

6.10.4.2 Empirical Support from the Literature

The findings of this study are strongly supported by the literature on investigative psychology and behavioural science. The literature review identified a wide range of offender motivations, from the thrill-seeking "going with the flow" attitude (Shover, 1996) to the calculated financial pursuit of "bankrolling street life" (Bourgois, 1995). A single strategy cannot possibly address this diversity. Research consistently "indicates that personalised engagement improves cooperation rates" (Harris, 2010), as it fosters a sense of being understood and respected, which is a critical precursor to building trust. The work of Bennett & Holloway (2005) reinforces this

by showing that when the perceived benefits are tailored to the individual, the decision to cooperate becomes significantly more compelling.

6.10.4.3 Practical Implementation Strategies

To embed this sophisticated approach into law enforcement practice, a focus on advanced training and intelligence integration is required:

- **Motivational Interviewing Training**: Develop and mandate specialised training for detectives in the techniques of motivational interviewing. This skill set, borrowed from clinical psychology, teaches officers how to ask open-ended, non-confrontational questions to uncover an offender's core values, goals, and motivations without triggering defensiveness.

- **Creation of a "Motivation Profile"**: For high-value targets, investigators should be tasked with creating a "motivation profile" based on intelligence gathered from surveillance, informants, and analysis of their lifestyle. This profile would identify the offender's primary drivers (for example, family, money, status, addiction) to inform the engagement strategy.

- **Flexible Incentive Framework**: Move beyond a rigid menu of plea bargains. Work with prosecutors and social services to develop a flexible framework of potential benefits that can be tailored. This could include anything from placement in a specific vocational training program to assurances of family support or assistance with starting a legitimate small business upon release.

- **Scenario-Based Role-Playing**: Conduct regular, realistic training exercises where officers practice crafting personalised appeals based on a given offender's profile. This builds the practical skills and confidence needed to apply these techniques effectively in high-pressure real-world interrogations.

6.10.5 In-Camera Proceedings for State Witnesses

A critical and non-negotiable recommendation is the formal implementation of robust in-camera proceedings and comprehensive identity concealment measures for state witnesses who testify against organised carjacking and MVT syndicates. This research has established that these criminal networks are not merely profit-driven enterprises; they are violent, coercive

organisations that maintain discipline and silence through the credible threat of lethal retaliation. The fear of retribution, not just against the witness, but against their family, is the single most powerful barrier to cooperation. By providing a secure, anonymous platform for testimony, the state can dramatically lower the perceived risks of cooperation, thereby empowering individuals to provide the crucial evidence needed to dismantle these networks from within.

6.10.5.1 Theoretical Underpinnings and Integration

This recommendation is a direct application of criminological theory to the practical mechanics of the justice system, designed to manipulate the decision-making environment of the witness in favour of the state.

- **Rational Choice Perspective** (RCP): This recommendation is a textbook case of manipulating the variables in an offender's (or witness's) cost-benefit analysis. The decision to testify is fraught with immense potential cost: death, injury, or harm to loved ones. As research notes, "minimising risks increases engagement likelihood" (Harris, 2010). In-camera proceedings and identity concealment act to drastically reduce this perceived cost, making it a manageable or even negligible factor. With the primary risk removed, the rational choice to cooperate, driven by the benefits of a reduced sentence, justice, or a clear conscience, becomes overwhelmingly logical.

- **Social Disorganisation Theory** (SDT): In the socially disorganised contexts where these syndicates thrive, the state is often perceived as weak, distant, and incapable of protecting its citizens. The syndicate, by contrast, presents itself as a powerful, immediate, and brutal force. By implementing iron-clad witness protection, the state directly challenges this perception. It demonstrates its capacity as a "capable guardian" not just for the community at large, but for the individual who takes the courageous step of testifying. This builds institutional legitimacy and sends a clear message that the state's power exceeds that of the criminal network, a crucial step in restoring order in disorganised areas.

- **Differential Association Theory** (DAT): The most important rule learned within any criminal syndicate is the code of silence. This is a learned behaviour, reinforced by harsh examples made of those who "snitch." In-camera proceedings provide a powerful structural intervention that breaks this learned association. They offer tangible, credible

proof that the old rule, "snitches get stitches", is no longer absolute. This allows the witness to adopt a new definition of their situation: one where cooperation is no longer an automatic death sentence but a survivable, and even desirable, course of action.

- **Routine Activity Theory** (RAT): This framework can be used to analyse the "crime" of witness intimidation. The elements are: a motivated offender (the syndicate), a suitable target (the witness), and the absence of a capable guardian. In-camera proceedings and witness protection programs are the ultimate form of a capable guardian. They remove the witness from the syndicate's reach, making the convergence of offender and target impossible. By securing the witness in a safe house, concealing their identity in court, and providing long-term protection, the state effectively prevents the "crime" of retaliation before it can occur.

6.10.5.2 Empirical Support from the Literature

The findings of this study are strongly supported by empirical research on witness protection and prosecutorial success. The literature review highlighted the ruthlessness of the syndicates operating in the greater Berea area, including their willingness to use violence and their infiltration of state structures. This context makes the fear of retaliation not just a possibility, but a near certainty. Research "shows that protective measures enhance cooperation and conviction rates" (Weisburd et al., 2010). Without such measures, potential witnesses will rationally choose silence, leading to collapsed cases and the continued impunity of organised criminals. The work of Harris (2010) reinforces this, demonstrating that when the state can credibly minimise the risks, witnesses are far more likely to engage with the justice process, providing the testimony needed for successful prosecutions.

6.10.5.3 Practical Implementation Strategies

To make this recommendation effective, a multi-layered and resolute strategy is essential, extending far beyond the courtroom itself. 1. Formal Legislative and Policy Framework: Enact and enforce clear legislation that mandates the use of in-camera proceedings for all witnesses facing credible threats from organised crime. This framework must empower judges to order these proceedings and protect the witness's identity in all court records. 2. Comprehensive Witness Protection Program: Establish a well-funded and professionally managed witness protection program. This is not just about courtroom screens; it must include the possibility of complete relocation, a new identity, financial support, and ongoing security for the witness and their immediate family for as long as the threat persists. 3. Specialised Units and Training:

Create a dedicated unit within the SAPS or the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) responsible for the security of protected witnesses. Officers and prosecutors involved in these cases must receive specialised training in managing anonymous witnesses and handling sensitive information to prevent leaks. 4. Inter-Agency Coordination: Ensure seamless and secure communication between the police, prosecutors, and the courts. A single breach of information can be fatal, so robust protocols for information management are critical to the integrity of the entire process.

6.11 Discussion of Themes

A central theme to emerge from the data concerns the dynamic interplay between criminal leadership and law enforcement, which is examined here through the lens of kingpins' reactions to anti-carjacking initiatives in the Greater Berea area.

6.11.1 Theme 1 (5.3.2.1): Kingpins' Reactions to the Authorities' Attempts to Reduce Carjackings and MVTs in the Greater Berea Area

The findings of 5.3.2.1 Theme 1 reveal that criminal kingpins did not perceive the authorities' urban challenges foundational literature, such as the seminal works by Davis (1999) renewal initiative as a threat, but as an "opportunity for us to manipulate" (IKP1). This strategic adaptatio and n Steenkamp (1999), which treated offender's MO as a static response to existing conditions. In contrast, these kingpins actively co-opted urban policy to engineer a more lucrative, target-rich environment. This study's "inside" perspective bridges the "contemporary fragmentation" of recent scholarship, connecting macro-level trends on tech- This sophisticated response is best understood through an integrated theoretical lens. The findings enabled syndicates (Gumede, 2020-2024) with the micro-level tactics of social engineering and geographical exploitation. align with SDT (Shaw & McKay, 1942), as participants identified the area's inherent weaknesses.

However, the critical insight is that they were not passive beneficiaries; they actively worsened social disorganisation, with one stating, "our actions made the greater Berea area even more socially disorganised" (IKP1). This active manipulation is further illuminated by RAT (Cohen & Felson, 1979), which posits that crime occurs when a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of a capable guardian converge. The renewal plan created suitable targets, but the offenders' masterstroke was eliminating the "capable guardian" by "posing as responsible community members" (IUP) to dismantle guardianship from within, thus engineering the

opportunity rather than simply finding it. The entire narrative exemplifies the RCP (Cornish & Clarke, 1986), which views criminal behaviour as a calculated decision-making process. The kingpins' response was a business strategy, not an impulsive reaction. As one explained, "We, mob bosses, cautiously formulated our own MO and also fine-tuned existent MO in line with the regeneration procedure" (IKP2). This demonstrates a high level of criminal intelligence that transcends the opportunistic crime of earlier studies and refutes systemic-failure-centric arguments (Mthimkhulu, 2022).

6.11.2 Theme 2 (5.4.2): Offenders' Use of Small Drones Which Record Movements of Victims and also Capture Images of Targets

Theme 2 reveals that offenders' use of small drones represents a sophisticated, technologically advanced evolution of their MO, driven by a rational need to overcome physical security measures. This is a clear manifestation of the RCP, where offenders invest in and deploy technology to maximise reward and minimise risk. As Participant QCP explained, drones are used to overcome "elevated wall fences" which were designed to be guardians, turning a security feature into a vulnerability. Participant ICP2 detailed how they operate "noiseless drones" from mobile minibuses or apartments to gather intelligence on owners' routines and security systems without arousing suspicion. This calculated, intelligence-led approach directly addresses the literature's gap by providing the offender's perspective on the "how" and "why" behind the technological arms race (for example, Vinith et al., 2023), showing a methodical progression beyond older, riskier methods.

The strategic use of drones is a powerful tool for manipulating the core tenets of RAT. By using aerial surveillance, offenders can precisely assess the convergence of a suitable target (the vehicle) and the absence of capable guardianship (the owner being away or unaware) before ever exposing themselves to risk. This technological advantage allows them to control the timing and location of the crime, ensuring optimal conditions for success. However, this sophisticated tactic is only viable within a specific socio-environmental context that validates SDT. Participants IKP1 and IKP2 described the greater Berea area as having "weak social connections," "absence of social controls," and "elevated residential mobility." This disorganised environment means that offenders can operate drones from parked minibuses or apartments without drawing the attention of neighbours who lack the social cohesion or collective efficacy to question suspicious activities.

Ultimately, the adoption of drone technology demonstrates the learned and adaptive nature of modern criminal networks, aligning with DAT. The knowledge of how to acquire, operate, and integrate drone footage into operational planning is a specialised skill that is shared and refined within the offender network. This theme powerfully illustrates the "progression of the organised nature of the MO" by showing how offenders not only react to their environment but actively use technology to reshape it to their advantage, creating a comprehensive intelligence picture that allows them to perpetrate carjackings and MVTs with a high degree of precision and safety.

6.11.3 Theme 1 (5.1.1): Offenders' Perception of Consistent Police Surveillance

The findings reveal that offenders' perception of consistent police surveillance, both direct and indirect, serves as a primary catalyst for the evolution of their MO. This is not a simple reaction but a calculated, adaptive process. As Participant IKP1 stated, the "progression of the organised nature of MO...is partially caused by the manner in which we perceive constant direct and indirect police surveillances." This perception drives a sophisticated counter-surveillance strategy, where offenders actively work to neutralise state monitoring, demonstrating a level of criminal foresight that challenges conventional views of offender awareness and aligns with research on how syndicates adapt to law enforcement tactics (Nkosi, 2023).

This adaptive behaviour is best understood through the lens of RCP. The offenders are making rational, calculated decisions to manage risk. Participant IUP described a "well-calculated" strategy of "counter surveillance methods," creating a false impression of abandoning crime to "reduce direct police surveillance." This is a dynamic application of RCP (Cornish & Clarke, 1986), where the cost-benefit analysis is not static but continuously updated based on perceived environmental threats. The decision to change MO frequently, as Participant ICHRP noted, to "confuse the police and their royal informers," is a tactical choice designed to maximise the benefits of a successful crime while minimising the risk of detection, a sophisticated form of the bounded rationality discussed by Cornish and Clarke (1986).

Crucially, this dynamic unfolds within a context of profound SDT (Shaw & McKay, 1942). The offenders are operating in an environment where the informal social control between the community and the police has completely broken down. Participant ICHRP highlighted that "tasking and cooperation between the SAPS and specific community members is not effectual" because residents "discredit the police." This lack of collective efficacy (Sampson, Raudenbush, & Earls, 1997) is the very weakness the syndicate exploits. The syndicate doesn't

just evade the police; it actively co-opts the community's surveillance network. As Participants IKP1 and IKP2 explained, they recruit domestic workers to uncover the "trusted eyes and ears of the police," gathering intel on private conversations and surveillance locations. This transforms the community's weakness into a criminal strength, allowing the syndicate to build its own intelligence apparatus to counter the state's flawed efforts, a direct manifestation of the dynamics described in foundational SDT research.

This intelligence-led approach allows the syndicate to systematically manipulate the elements of RAT (Cohen & Felson, 1979). By gaining advance knowledge of police movements and community informant activities through their domestic worker network, the offenders can effectively engineer the absence of a capable guardian. They control the flow of information, ensuring they can commit carjackings and MVTs with a reduced risk of interruption. This process of learning and applying sophisticated counter-surveillance techniques is a product of DAT (Sutherland, 1947), as the knowledge of how to "identify police," conduct surveillance, and recruit informants is a learned skill transmitted within the criminal organisation. This demonstrates a progression from opportunistic crime to a highly organised, intelligence-led operation that actively manipulates its environment, characteristic of the formal organisations of offenders described by Von Lampe (2009, 2016).

6.11.4 Theme 3 (5.4.3): Offenders' Tactical Exploitation of Offending and Distractive Behaviours

A profoundly sophisticated finding is the offenders' systematic exploitation of chaos and distractive behaviours to actively manipulate the justice system and the community. As Participant IMP explained, professional offenders "manipulate offending and distractive behaviours," using "marauding criminals" to create chaos and "imposters" to take the blame, all designed to "discredit the SAPS and distract investigating officers." This reveals a level of strategic, psychological warfare that is entirely absent from foundational literature and represents a critical gap in recent scholarship, which describes syndicate structures but not their active efforts to dismantle the state's capacity to respond.

This strategy is a masterclass in RCP. The significant effort required to orchestrate this chaos is a calculated investment with a clear return: the destruction of police legitimacy and the creation of a smokescreen behind which their core operations can thrive. By "pitting SAPS officers against the victims" (IKP1) and exploiting police "oversights" and "blunders," they

systematically increase the costs and reduce the effectiveness of law enforcement, making their own criminal activities more profitable and less risky. This is further contextualised by SDT, as the offenders are not merely operating within a disorganised environment; they are actively engineering it. Participant QCP noted that their actions create "bitterness" and destroy the "partnership" between the community and police, thereby eroding collective efficacy and making the area even more permissive for crime.

This manipulation is enabled by specialised knowledge learned within the syndicate DAT and is a direct perversion of RAT. By discrediting and distracting the police, they effectively neutralise the primary "capable guardian." As Participant ICHRP revealed, their engagement in "informal policing" is a dual-purpose tactic: it presents a facade of community control while serving as a reconnaissance mission to "look into the weaknesses of car owners" and "revise and improve our own offending MO." This theme demonstrates that the progression of organised MO has evolved into a form of criminal insurgency, where the syndicate's primary tactic is to attack and dismantle the very systems designed to stop it.

6.11.5 Theme 4 (5.4.4): Systematic Infiltration of SAPS as a Catalyst for MO Progression

The findings reveal that offenders systematically infiltrate corrupt SAPS detectives, transforming the formal guardian into a primary source of intelligence and tactical guidance, which directly drives the progression of the organised nature of their MO. This is evidenced by Participants IMP and IUP, who described a "planned infiltration" of SAPS CID detectives to obtain "positive feedback", defined as lucrative, top-secret information that enables them to "steal many cars, whilst we experienced minimum risks." This active manipulation of law enforcement addresses a critical gap in the literature. While studies like Bila (2015) identified SAPS communication failures and Mthimkhulu (2022) highlighted systemic weaknesses, they treated these as passive background conditions. This PhD study's "inside" perspective bridges that gap, revealing that offenders do not merely exploit pre-existing corruption; they actively manufacture and manage it as a core component of their operational strategy.

This sophisticated subversion of law enforcement is best understood through the lens of RCT. As Participant IKP1 noted, the relationship is a "mutually beneficial arrangement" where offenders provide material benefits to police colonels in exchange for information that drastically reduces the "perceived risks" of carjacking and MVT (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). The decision to infiltrate SAPS is a calculated cost-benefit analysis where the payoff; for instance,

access to real-time intelligence, pre-selected targets, and advanced tactical advice, far outweighs the investment in recruitment and bribery. This process fundamentally distorts the core tenets of RAT. Instead of an absence of a capable guardian, offenders create a co-opted guardian who actively engineers the convergence of motivated offenders and suitable targets (Cohen & Felson, 1979). This is only possible within the context of severe SDT, where the formal social control mechanisms of the SAPS have eroded to the point of being weaponised by criminal networks (Shaw & McKay, 1942). The syndicate's ability to "control the flow of information" from senior officers demonstrates a criminal hierarchy that has replaced the state's disorganised authority with its own efficient, albeit illicit, order.

The tactical sophistication of this relationship is further informed by DAT. Offenders learn the nuanced techniques of police infiltration, such as building trust by discussing "sports" or "family problems", through socialisation within the syndicate (Sutherland, 1947). The corrupt police colonels become agents of criminal learning, teaching offenders advanced MOs like using "thick white wet mascara" as a disguise or altering their voices, demonstrating a direct transmission of state-level tactical knowledge into the criminal ecosystem. Ultimately, this theme demonstrates that the progression of organised nature of the offenders' MO is not solely driven by offender innovation, but is profoundly shaped by the strategic co-option of state power. By transforming the SAPS from an adversary into an asset, offenders create a self-reinforcing cycle of intelligence and tactical advantage, bridging micro-level criminal adaptation with macro-level institutional decay.

6.11.6 Theme 2 (5.9.2): Resolving SAPS Leadership Dysfunction to Re-establish Guardianship

The findings reveal that problematic relationships between SAPS police leaders create a cascade of institutional failures that offenders systematically exploit, transforming the formal justice system into an enabler of crime. All incarcerated participants identified this leadership dysfunction as a critical vulnerability, where "heated arguments" and "competition" between senior officers (IKP1) erode the entire command structure. This represents a form of institutional SDT, where the internal cohesion necessary for effective formal social control collapses, mirroring the community-level breakdown described by Shaw and McKay (1942) but within the police organisation itself. This internal decay directly sabotages RAT "capable guardian" function, as vividly illustrated in the interrogation room. Participant IKP1 described how a "most senior chief detective" would be interrupted, allowing another officer to use

"purposeful carefully planned movements of the fingers" to signal the suspect with messages like "do not confess" and "the police do not have any evidence" (IKP2). This active subversion of the investigative process exemplifies a complete neutralisation of guardianship, creating a rational choice environment (RCP) where offenders correctly calculate that non-cooperation is the optimal strategy due to insider information (Cornish & Clarke, 2014).

These corrupt techniques represent a perverse application of DAT, where offenders learn sophisticated methods of evasion not from criminal peers, but from the very authority figures meant to apprehend them (Sutherland, 1947). The proposed solutions, ranging from leadership training and independent "interview managers" to technology like body-worn cameras (IUP, IKP2), are essentially attempts to externally impose accountability and rebuild the fractured internal controls. Furthermore, the recommendation for community engagement initiatives (for example, "Community Action Group," "cooldrink or coffee with a police officer") seeks to reconstruct the informal social controls and police-community partnerships that are also eroded by this institutional decay (ICP1, ICHRP). Ultimately, the theme demonstrates that the progression of organised MO is inextricably linked to the progression of institutional dysfunction; without resolving the "problematic relationships between SAPS police leaders," any tactical or technological interventions will remain insufficient to restore the integrity of the criminal justice system.

6.11.7 Theme 2 (5.6.2): Final Revised Offending Decisions

The findings reveal that final offending decisions are not static, pre-crime calculations but a dynamic, continuous process of re-evaluating costs and benefits, often occurring in real-time during the commission of the crime. This is evidenced by Participants IKP1 and IMP, who described a "second phase" where offenders are interested in "selecting a real successful act" and where the kingpin's decision-making is a "continuous procedure" of re-evaluation until the crime is completed. This directly challenges foundational applications of RCP, which often frame the cost-benefit analysis as a singular event preceding the offence (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). This PhD study's "inside" perspective bridges that gap, revealing a fluid, adaptive process that recent scholarship on sophisticated MO (for example, Europol, 2021) implies but does not explicitly detail, connecting the macro-level concept of organised crime to the micro-level, in-the-moment tactical adjustments described by the participants.

This sophisticated, adaptive decision-making is best understood through the lens of "bounded

rationality" within RCP. As Participants IUP and ICHRP explained, decisions are made under "flawed circumstances" due to a lack of perfect information or time. However, the critical insight is how experience mitigates these constraints. They stated that while direct offenders are "bounded by limited available information," experienced kingpins "utilised their skills to re-evaluate initial decisions," making them more "methodical, practical and tactical." This process is informed by DAT (Sutherland, 1947), as the kingpin's superior "experience" is a product of learned criminal knowledge transmitted within the syndicate. This allows the kingpin to act as a central processor, dynamically updating the plan based on unfolding events, a level of criminal sophistication not fully captured in traditional RCP models.

These rational, experience-driven decisions operate within a structured framework designed to systematically exploit opportunities. Participant QCP noted that kingpins identify "goals," "perceived benefits," and "perceived risks," and that their "incidents... are always well planned" following a "well organised MO." This aligns with RAT, as the MO is the tool used to engineer the convergence of a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of a capable guardian (Cohen & Felson, 1979). This entire process is contextualised by SDT, as the syndicate's ability to make such calculated decisions and impose its own order is a direct response to the chaotic environment of the greater Berea area (Shaw & McKay, 1942). The syndicate's rationality thus becomes a form of social control, replacing the community's weakened informal controls with a highly efficient, albeit criminal, decision-making hierarchy.

6.11.8 Theme 3 (5.6.3): Planning

The findings reveal that planning is not a static, pre-crime event but a dynamic and highly flexible component of the kingpin's decision-making process. As Participants IKP1 and IKP2 explained, the "planning processes come after the initial decision to offend is made," and the timeline for this planning can vary dramatically, from "few months or a number of weeks" down to "a handful of hours or minutes" before the crime. This provides a direct, empirical window into the sophisticated cognitive processes of organised offenders, challenging simplistic models of criminal planning.

This multi-stage approach is a clear application of RCP. The participants delineate between the "initial decision to offend" (what Cornish & Clarke, 1985, term the "participation/involvement decision") and the subsequent planning phase (the "event decision"). The critical insight is the variable timeline, which is a perfect example of "bounded rationality." The kingpins are not

irrational; they are adaptive, tailoring the depth and duration of their planning to the specific circumstances, whether it's a long-term, high-value target or a short-notice, opportunistic crime. This demonstrates a high level of criminal expertise and strategic thinking.

This sophisticated planning ability is a learned skill, a product of DAT. The kingpins' "reasoning procedures" and their ability to develop effective plans on different timelines are not innate but are criminal competencies honed through experience and learned within the syndicate. Furthermore, this planning is the active mechanism of RAT; it is the deliberate work offenders do to engineer the convergence of a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of a capable guardian. This adaptive, time-sensitive planning process is a clear indicator of the "progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO," moving beyond simple pre-crime calculation to a dynamic, real-time strategic capability.

6.11.9 Theme 4 (5.6.4): Target Selection as a Structured, Intelligence-Led Process

The findings reveal that target selection is not an opportunistic act but a highly structured, pre-planned process centrally controlled by kingpins. As Participant IKP2 explained, kingpins operate "between opportunistic delinquency" and a "structure of target selection," where the decision to offend is made "beforehand." The kingpin provides specific criteria, instructing direct offenders to target vehicles that are "poorly protected" or have "neutralisable car security systems", who then conduct surveillance in the greater Berea area to find a match. This represents a significant evolution from spontaneous theft to a calculated, intelligence-driven operation.

This structured approach is a direct application of RCP. It embodies the "event decision" phase described by Cornish & Clarke (1986), where the choice of a specific target and method is a deliberate cost-benefit analysis. The kingpin's criteria are designed to maximise the reward (acquiring the vehicle) while minimising the cost and effort (by avoiding highly secure cars). This process is further contextualised by RAT, as offenders are not passively waiting for opportunities but are actively engineering the convergence of a "suitable target" by systematically assessing and exploiting weaknesses in security systems, effectively neutralising the "capable guardian."

The specialised knowledge required to identify "neutralisable" systems is not innate; it is a learned skill, a product of DAT. This expertise is transmitted within the syndicate, representing

a sophisticated criminal curriculum that informs the rational decision-making process. In essence, the participants' accounts reveal that target selection is a sophisticated, intelligence-led operation that exploits environmental opportunities, demonstrating a clear progression in the organised nature of offenders' MO.

6.11.10 Theme 2 (5.4.2): Technological Counter-Surveillance as a Rational Tool for Opportunity Engineering

The findings reveal that the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO is driven by the proactive adoption of advanced technological counter-surveillance, specifically the use of small drones. This is not merely a response to environmental factors but a calculated effort to control and manipulate them. As Participant QCP stated, offenders "employed drones fitted with cameras... to track motor vehicle owners' movements and take advantage of elevated wall fences." This technological sophistication challenges foundational opportunity theories that do not fully account for offender-driven innovation in creating and exploiting vulnerabilities (for example, Clarke & Harris, 1992). This study's "inside" perspective reveals a fluid, adaptive process where technology is used to bridge the gap between macro-level criminal strategy and micro-level target selection, a level of detail implied but not explicitly detailed in broader reports on tech-enabled crime (for instance, Europol, 2021).

This technological adoption is a clear manifestation of RCP. Offenders are making a calculated investment in technology to overcome environmental barriers and reduce the uncertainty inherent in their operations (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). As Participant ICP2 explained, "silent drones enabled us to see whether car owners were awaiting us... We utilised the intelligence to prepare, formulate and change our MO." This demonstrates a sophisticated application of bounded rationality, where offenders use technology to gather near-perfect information, thereby minimising risk and maximising the probability of a successful outcome.

The acquisition and application of this technological skill are best understood through DAT (Sutherland, 1947). The expertise to operate "noiseless drones" and analyse the gathered intelligence is a specialised technique learned and transmitted within the intimate criminal group. This aligns with DAT's principle that offenders learn complex methods and motivations from their associates, with the drone becoming another sophisticated tool in the criminal arsenal, much like the "Polish keys" or OBD hackers described by Siegel (2014).

This intelligence-led approach allows offenders to systematically engineer the conditions for crime, perfectly aligning with RAT (Cohen & Felson, 1979). By using drones to bypass physical barriers like "elevated wall fences," offenders gain critical information that ensures the convergence of a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of a capable guardian. The drone becomes the ultimate tool for identifying and exploiting opportunities, transforming a potentially high-risk target into a predictable and manageable one.

This entire process is contextualised by SDT (Shaw & McKay, 1942). The offenders operate in the greater Berea area, a neighbourhood characterised by Participant IKP1 as having an "absence of social controls," "weak social connections," and stark "income inequality." Participant IKP2 further noted "elevated residential mobility" and "decreased social bonds." This socially disorganised environment provides both the motivation (addressing material disparities) and the permissive conditions for a sophisticated criminal enterprise to emerge. The syndicate's use of technology is thus a direct response to this chaotic context, allowing them to impose their own order and exploit the community's weaknesses far more effectively than they could through traditional, low-tech methods.

6.11.11 Theme 2 (5.8.2): Fragmenting Community Ties as a Deliberate Organisational Strategy

The findings reveal that extreme violence is not an incidental feature of carjackings but a deliberate, organisational strategy designed to systematically dismantle community cohesion. Participants IKP1 and IKP2 described a sophisticated structural tactic where kingpins "break up a grouping of 5 offenders into 5 separate sections" and expand them with new, trusted members. This cellular structure is engineered to "spread carjackings and extreme violence across the neighbourhood" with the explicit purpose of fracturing community bonds. This represents a proactive application of SDT, where offenders do not merely exploit pre-existing weaknesses but actively manufacture them to cripple informal social controls (Shaw & McKay, 1942). This violent strategy is continuously refined through organisational learning, as Participants IUP, ICP1, and ICP2 detailed mandatory meetings "every after 3 days" to "discuss matters regarding the utilisation of extreme violence." These sessions ensure that underperforming members are forcibly re-socialised, absorbing the "knowledge used by best performing carjackers," a clear and brutal process of criminal learning as defined by DAT (Sutherland, 1947). Ultimately, the fragmentation of community ties is a calculated prerequisite for sustaining their "moneymaking illicit venture."

6.11.12 Theme 3 (5.8.3): Spreading the Fear of Extreme Violence for Psychological Dominance

The findings demonstrate that the systematic use of extreme violence is a calculated tool for psychological warfare, intended to spread a pervasive climate of fear that secures operational dominance. As Participant QCP starkly stated, "We carjackers employ brutality to threaten our victims, residents, opponents and competitors... we spread the fear of maximal violence." This strategy is designed to create a powerful brand of terror that validates their criminal capabilities and establishes a reputation for being "swift and savagely brutal." This exemplifies a sophisticated application of the RCP, where the immediate physical costs of violence are strategically weighed against the long-term benefits of a reputation that minimises future resistance, deters witness cooperation, and neutralizes competition (Cornish & Clarke, 2014). By proving they are "stronger than the SAPS and personal security firms," offenders effectively undermine RAT's "capable guardian" element, not through evasion, but through psychological domination (Cohen & Felson, 1979). The fear becomes a self-perpetuating asset, ensuring the community's compliance and the syndicate's continued freedom of operation.

6.11.13 Theme 4 (5.8.4): Maintaining a Cycle of Respect and Fear to Enforce Criminal Order

The findings reveal that violence is the primary mechanism for enforcing a rigid internal hierarchy and sustaining a criminal order based on a dual foundation of respect and fear. Participant ICHRP explained this two-pronged approach: "drilling courtesy and fear into juvenile carjackers" to enforce absolute loyalty to older, experienced offenders (the "OGs"), while simultaneously "hammering respect and fear into the psyches of community members." This is achieved by demonstrating the power to forcibly take vehicles "in the presence of the SAPS," a public display of dominance that replaces conventional authority with the syndicate's violent rule. This process is a stark manifestation of DAT, where norms of extreme violence and absolute defference are learned and ruthlessly enforced within the criminal organisation (Sutherland, 1947). It also aligns with SDT by illustrating how the syndicate's value system, enforced through brutality, actively supplants the community's conventional social controls. This "cycle of respect and fear" is not static; it is maintained by the "brutal offending conduct" which both inspires the offenders to continue their criminal activities and ensures the community remains in a state of terrified submission.

6.11.14 Theme 2 (5.3.2.2): Special Recruitment of the Most Suitable Street-Level Actors

The findings reveal that the recruitment of street-level actors is not a haphazard process but a highly strategic, initial step in cultivating organised carjacking and MVT syndicates. This is evidenced by Participant IKP2, a kingpin, who explained, "I am responsible for choosing the most suitable offenders. I only identify and select poor, desperate, sober and somewhat untalkative would-be offenders." This meticulous screening process, which involves private meetings and assessing a recruit's needs, directly challenges foundational literature that, while identifying syndicate structures (e.g., Kerner, 1973), often lacked the granular, "offender-centric" detail of the recruitment mechanism. Recent scholarship, such as Bila and Roelfose (2016), began to map syndicate architecture but remained limited by a static, organisational focus. This study's "inside" perspective bridges that gap, revealing the human agency and calculated tactics that transform vulnerable individuals into loyal assets, providing the missing link between macro-level analyses of organised crime and the micro-level processes of recruitment and socialisation.

This sophisticated recruitment process is best understood through an integrated theoretical lens. The findings strongly align with DAT, as Participant IKP1 described how new offenders are taught specific techniques and must follow "unwritten rules" learned from senior offenders. However, the process transcends simple peer influence, representing a structured pedagogical framework. This is further illuminated by RCP, where the kingpin's actions are a calculated investment in human capital. As IKP2 stated, he gives new recruits "huge amounts of money" to create immediate debt and loyalty, a cost-benefit analysis designed to ensure long-term compliance. This rational exploitation is contextualised by SDT, as the syndicate's recruitment pool consists of individuals made vulnerable by the very conditions of poverty and weakened social controls that SDT describes, offering a perverse form of order and economic opportunity absent from their community.

Finally, the maintenance of control within these syndicates underscores their organised nature and reliance on fear as a regulatory mechanism. Participant IUP noted that leaders "have abilities to penalise them," a statement that culminates in Participant IMP's stark declaration: "I waste [kill] offenders who betray me or sell out what our organisation stands for." This enforcement aligns with RAT, where the syndicate leadership acts as a powerful "handler"

(Eck, 1994) controlling the "motivated offender." The severe consequences for breaking the unwritten rules are a rational mechanism for maintaining organisational integrity, minimising risk, and ensuring the successful execution of increasingly sophisticated crimes. This entire system of strategic recruitment, structured training, and brutal enforcement is the foundational mechanism that enables the "progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO," a critical insight that synthesises structural theories with the lived realities or truths of offender behaviours.

6.11.15 Theme 4 (5.3.2.4): A Strict Preferential Use of Stolen Mobile Phones by Offenders for Only Communicating Illicit Activities.

A fourth critical theme is the offenders' strict and preferential use of stolen mobile phones exclusively for communicating illicit activities. All ten participants confirmed this practice, which serves three core functions: counter-surveillance of targets, illicit surveillance of risks, and enabling the commission of carjackings and MVTs. This sophisticated operational security measure highlights the rational and calculated nature of the criminal enterprise.

The process begins with street-level offenders stealing phones from various locations and then "rebirthing" them, by using software to unblock the devices and changing their electronic serial numbers to make them untraceable. These phones become the exclusive channel for transmitting sensitive intelligence to underbosses. As Participant IUP explained, this information is detailed and tactical, including "photos of targets, photos of security features, average number of police patrols," and even images of unmarked police vehicles and plain-clothed officers. This practice is a clear manifestation of the RCP, as it is a deliberate strategy to minimise the risk of law enforcement interception, thereby reducing the potential costs of their criminal activities (Cornish & Clarke, 1985, 1986).

To facilitate this intelligence gathering, offenders employ a sophisticated social engineering tactic. Street-level operatives are trained to feign respect and perform helpful errands for residents, such as carrying groceries, guarding cars, or trimming gardens, so as to create a veil of legitimacy and lower community suspicion. Participant IKP2 noted, "Our guys were really liked by Berea residents, but our guys just put on an act in order to deceive those community members." Through the lens of RAT, this tactic effectively neutralises capable guardianship by causing the community to perceive the offenders as non-threatening, thereby creating an environment ripe for surveillance and target selection (Cohen & Felson, 1979). The specific

techniques for "rebirthing" phones and the coded communication protocols are learned skills, a direct application of DAT, where such specialised knowledge is transmitted and reinforced within the intimate criminal group (Sutherland, 1947). In essence, the stolen phone is not just a communication tool but a central component of a disciplined, risk-averse, and highly organised criminal methodology.

6.11.16 Theme 4 (5.4.4): Offenders' Infiltration of SAPS Detectives and the Positive Feedback from the Latter were Jointly Identified as Additional and Special Aspects among Factors, Which Changed Offenders' MOs from One Stage to Another Stage

The findings reveal that the systematic infiltration of SAPS detectives is not a peripheral facilitator but a central, transformative factor that fundamentally drives the progression of offenders' MO. This was articulated by all participants, with IMP and IUP identifying the "planned infiltration of SAPS detectives" and the "positive feedback" from them as critical elements that "changed the progression of the organised nature of our MO." This directly builds upon literature that identifies systemic failures within the SAPS as a key enabler of organised crime (Bila, 2015; Mthimkhulu, 2022). However, this study's "inside" perspective moves beyond diagnosing general failure to detail the mechanism of that failure: a transactional relationship that provides offenders with high-quality, "top-secret information," effectively eliminating the information asymmetry that typically constrains criminal operations.

This corrupt symbiosis is best understood through the lens of RCP. Foundational RCP posits that offenders operate under conditions of "bounded rationality," making decisions with limited information (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). As Participant IKP2 noted, this infiltration provided "required opportunities" and "lucrative information," enabling offenders to "correctly evaluate information and decrease the possibilities of being arrested." This demonstrates a sophisticated mitigation of bounded rationality. The "positive feedback" from corrupt detectives is actionable intelligence that allows for a more accurate cost-benefit analysis, transforming a high-risk venture into a calculated, low-risk enterprise. This represents a more advanced application of RCP than studies focusing solely on general offender decision-making (e.g., Loughran et al., 2016).

Furthermore, this relationship represents a profound evolution of SDT (Shaw & McKay, 1942). While foundational SDT argues that crime flourishes where formal social controls are weak, this study reveals a more dynamic reality: the syndicate does not just exploit this weakness, it

actively co-opts and neutralises the state's control apparatus. As Participant QCP stated, "*We view the SAPS as a threat, so we target and infiltrate them*." This aligns with recent scholarship on how criminal networks exploit systemic vulnerabilities (Europol, 2021) but provides the granular, offender-level detail of how. By recruiting senior detectives, the syndicate replaces the community's failed informal controls with a highly efficient, albeit criminal, intelligence hierarchy, fundamentally reshaping the local criminogenic environment.

The methods of infiltration and the resulting MO changes are a direct application of DAT (Sutherland, 1947). The process is deliberate and learned, as Participants IKP2 and IMP described building trust by discussing "sports" and "family problems" to detect and exploit personal interests. This learned relationship facilitates the transmission of sophisticated criminal knowledge directly from **state actors to offenders**, a process Sutherland identified as essential for learning complex criminal behaviour. This leads to tangible, highly evolved MO changes that surpass the technological focus of recent studies (for example, Heitmann & Morales, 2014) and enter the realm of intelligence-led counter-detection: **Advanced Counter-Forensics**: Participants QCP and ICHRP detailed how informants advised them to use "thick white wet mascara" and "shave [their] entire bodies" to prevent DNA evidence. This reflects an insider's knowledge of forensic procedures, moving beyond the general opportunity-reducing measures discussed by Clarke (1995). **Strategic Targeting**: Participants IKP1 and ICP1 explained how informants provided access to cars stored in police warehouses. This is a powerful example of the syndicate exploiting a systemic vulnerability at its core, turning a secure state facility into a source of illicit inventory. **Market Manipulation**: The scheme involving "doctored firearms" to eliminate rivals demonstrates a level of strategic sophistication rarely documented. This aligns with Kerner's (1973) model of a vertical criminal structure where an indirect offender (the kingpin, aided by the police colonel) orchestrates complex operations, but adds the layer of **state-sanctioned** manipulation.

Ultimately, this intelligence-driven operation allows the syndicate to perfectly engineer the conditions for crime, aligning with RAT (Cohen & Felson, 1979). By receiving real-time information on police movements and investigator identities (Participant IMVTP2), the syndicate ensures the convergence of a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the complete absence of a capable guardian, who is now an active accomplice. This progression from opportunistic theft to a highly coordinated, intelligence-led enterprise demonstrates a pinnacle of criminal organisation, where the MO evolves not just through experience, but through the

strategic corruption of the very system designed to stop it. This provides a critical, context-specific understanding of how organised crime adapts and thrives within the unique challenges of the greater Berea area.

6.11.17 Theme 5 (5.3.2.5): Offenders' Receipt of Illicit Offensive Driving Techniques

The findings reveal that offenders' use of illicit offensive driving techniques is not merely impulsive or spontaneous but a highly trained, tactical component of a broader, pre-planned MO designed to systematically engineer victim vulnerability. As detailed by Participants IKP1, IKP2, and IUP, offenders are rigorously trained in specific maneuvers like "handbrake turns of 90 degrees and 180 degrees," rapid lane changes, and precise clutch control to "spin a motor vehicle" and "paralyse the victim with fear." This directly challenges simplistic views of carjacking, reframing it as a skilled, coordinated act rather than a brute-force assault.

This sophisticated skill acquisition is best understood through DAT (Sutherland, 1947). The learning process is hierarchical and deliberate; as Participant ICHRP noted, "big bosses give us many tasks," and as Participant IUP explained, information flows from street-level lookouts to kingpins, who then direct carjackers in the practical application of these "illegal offensive driving methods." This structured transmission of specialised criminal knowledge from kingpins to direct offenders, is a direct manifestation of DAT, where techniques and motivations are learned within an intimate criminal group.

These learned techniques function as the rational tools used to engineer the perfect crime scenario, aligning with RAT (Cohen & Felson, 1979). The various MO, the "Trap," "Ruse," and "Bump" approaches described by Participants IKP1, IMP, and ICP1, are all designed to forcibly create the convergence of a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of a capable guardian. This is a calculated application of RCP, where offenders use their training to maximise benefits (a successful theft) and minimise risks (victim resistance, police intervention). This process exemplifies "bounded rationality," where offenders, though operating under flawed circumstances, use their learned experience to make the most tactical decision in real-time.

Furthermore, the MO demonstrates significant progression and adaptation, integrating technology and social engineering. Participant ICP1 detailed how offenders exploit the "Controller Area Network (CAN) bus" to disable advanced security systems, while Participant

ICP2 described using "jamming devices" to disrupt key fob signals. Participant QCP elaborated on a "Good Samaritan" and "Police Impersonation" MO, which exploits social trust to create vulnerability. This evolution from pure driving skill to a hybrid of physical, technological, and psychological tactics highlights the sophisticated, adaptive nature of the syndicates, a level of complexity not captured in foundational studies. This entire organised operation, which imposes its own criminal order on the street, is a direct response to the socially disorganised environment of the greater Berea area (SDT), where the syndicate's structured tactics replace the community's weakened informal controls.

6.11.18 Theme 3 (5.3.2.3): A Structured, Bottom-Up Information Flow as a Hallmark of Organised Crime: Offenders' Strict Adherence to a Bottom-Up Approach Flow of Unprocessed Information

A predominant theme emerging from the interviews with incarcerated participants is the offenders' strict adherence to a bottom-up approach for the flow of unprocessed information. This structured communication system is presented as a second critical perspective on the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO for carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area. The findings reveal a sophisticated, three-tiered operational hierarchy that mirrors the formal organisation of offenders described in the literature.

As Participant IMVTP2 detailed, the foundation of this system is a network of highly mobile "street-level offenders," who operate under the guise of legitimate roles such as temporary hawkers, car washers, and gardeners. Their primary function is intelligence gathering, or what RAT would describe as identifying and assessing the suitability of targets (Cohen & Felson, 1979). These offenders conduct mobile surveillance, collecting raw information on high-value vehicles, owner routines, and social interactions. This intelligence is then passed up the chain to the syndicate's leadership.

This operational structure provides a clear empirical example of the concepts outlined by foundational criminological theorists. The division of labour, with distinct roles for information gatherers, leaders ("kingpins"), and the physical perpetrators ("collectors"), aligns perfectly with Von Lampe's (2009) description of a formal organisation of offenders, which features a structured collection of rules and a hierarchical division of tasks. The kingpins, who "keep their hands clean," are the indirect perpetrators in the model proposed by Van der Wilt (2009), orchestrating crimes from a distance while insulated from the immediate act.

Furthermore, the communication within this network is a direct manifestation of DAT. Participant IMVTP2's account of kingpins using a "constructed language only understood by us (offenders)" is a classic example of Sutherland's (1947) principle that criminal behaviour, including the specific techniques and rationalisations, is learned through interaction within intimate groups. This coded language facilitates trust and operational security, reinforcing the group's identity and cohesion.

The entire system can also be interpreted through RCP. The bottom-up flow of information is a highly rational strategy designed to manage risk and maximise reward (Cornish & Clarke, 1985, 1986). By gathering intelligence before deploying "collectors," the syndicate minimises the chances of failure and arrest. The use of disguised vehicles, as mentioned by the participant, is another rational choice to reduce detection. This structured approach allows the kingpins to make calculated decisions based on reliable, pre-processed information, thereby increasing the probability of a successful criminal enterprise.

However, the analysis reveals a nuanced complexity. The author notes "blurred boundaries," as the flow of information is not exclusively bottom-up. Kingpins also initiate contact, creating a dynamic nexus between the leadership and the street-level operatives. This two-way communication, while maintaining operational separation, highlights the adaptability and sophistication of the syndicate. It demonstrates that the organised nature of the MO is not static but a responsive system, a key finding in understanding the progression of these criminal networks. In conclusion, this structured information flow is not merely a tactic but a core organisational principle that signifies the advanced, rational, and learned nature of the criminal operations under investigation.

6.11.19 Theme 1 (5.7.1): Peer Pressure and a Desire to be Part of Organised Groups of Offenders

A primary catalyst for entry into carjacking and MVT is peer pressure combined with a desire for status within an organised group. As Participant IKP1, a kingpin, explained, "peer pressure" was the "chief reason" he joined other offenders, but it was the "desire to be amongst professional offenders" that fueled his ambition. This narrative reveals a clear career progression, starting as a "lookout" and learning "through observation" before advancing to a "lead driver" and a supervisory role. This provides a direct, empirical account of the criminal

socialisation process described in the literature, where juveniles are inducted into crime and learn MOs from more experienced peers (Light et al., 1993).

This progression is perfectly explained by DAT. IKP1's journey is a textbook example of learning criminal behaviour through intimate personal groups. He did not simply join a gang; he was "trained" and learned the necessary skills and rationalisations through direct observation and interaction, embodying Sutherland's (1947) principle that criminal behaviour is learned. His "promotion through various ranks" demonstrates the structured transmission of knowledge and the hierarchical nature of these criminal associations.

This choice to join and advance within the group is also a rational decision, as framed by RCP. The group provided tangible benefits that were likely unavailable elsewhere, most notably the ability to "financially maintain myself and my family." The pursuit of status and promotion represents a rational career path within the illicit economy, where increased skill and responsibility lead to greater rewards. This entire process is contextualised by SDT, as the appeal of these organised groups is magnified in environments where legitimate social structures and economic opportunities are weak. In such a context, the criminal syndicate offers a powerful alternative source of identity, structure, and financial security, making the "desire to be part of organised groups" a rational response to social disorganisation.

6.11.20 Theme 2 (5.7.2): Professional MVT Activities

The findings reveal a clear career progression within professional MVT, where offenders evolve from low-level employees into independent, entrepreneurial operators. This journey is driven by economic ambition and facilitated by a criminal apprenticeship. Participant IKP2, for instance, described being "brought up in abject poverty" and rationally choosing to work for "professional motor vehicle thieves" as a driver, learning the trade before deciding he "could earn more income through working for myself." Similarly, Participant IKP1 explained how working for an established syndicate provided access to "bigger clients," which motivated them to "improve our previous skills and also acquire new abilities" to meet this demand, ultimately outperforming their former employers. This provides a powerful, micro-level validation of foundational literature on professional crime (Clarke, 1991; Kerner, 1973), illustrating the vertical structure of criminal organisations and the pathway from direct offender to orchestrator. This progression is a textbook application of RCP. The participants' decisions are framed by a clear, economic logic. The initial choice to enter crime is a rational response to "abject poverty."

The pivotal decision to become independent is a classic entrepreneurial calculation, where the perceived benefits of higher profit and autonomy outweigh the risks and security of being an employee. Their conscious effort to "improve our previous skills" is a strategic investment in their "human capital" to increase future returns, demonstrating a sophisticated, forward-thinking approach to their criminal enterprise.

The said learning process is best explained by DAT. The participants did not invent these methods; they learned them through intimate association with more experienced criminals. Their roles as drivers and operatives for established syndicates served as a "criminal apprenticeship," where they absorbed the specific techniques, business models, and rationalizations necessary for success (Sutherland, 1947). This entire process is contextualised by SDT, as the "abject poverty" that initiates their journey is a structural feature of a disorganised community lacking legitimate economic opportunities, making the lucrative, albeit illegal, profession of car theft a rational and visible alternative. The progression from employee to entrepreneur is therefore not just a personal story but a logical adaptation to the socio-economic environment, culminating in the creation of a more efficient and profitable criminal enterprise.

6.11.21 Theme 3 (5.7.3): Financing "Street-Life"

A central motivation driving offenders in the greater Berea area is the need to finance a specific, extravagant "street-life." As Participants ICHRP and IMP articulated, they commit carjackings and MVTs to fund a lifestyle of conspicuous consumption,"parties, alcohol, drugs, gambling, women, holidays, expensive clothes", that is, both "addictive and very expensive." This provides a powerful, contemporary validation for foundational research that links crime to "street culture," where offending is driven by a desire for status and the "wasteful consumption" that serves as a performative act of "contempt for the community's legitimate needs" (Bourgois, 1995; Katz, 1988). The participants' accounts bridge the gap between theory and reality, revealing that this is not just about survival but about sustaining a larger-than-life identity.

This motivation is best understood through the lens of RCP. The decision to engage in high-risk crimes like carjacking is presented as a calculated economic decision. Participant ICHRP explicitly identifies carjacking and MVT as the "most suitable source of income" to support their lifestyle, while Participant IMP calls them a "stable source of funds." This demonstrates a clear cost-benefit analysis where the immense financial reward required to maintain their

status outweighs the severe risks, including death. The crime is a rational means to a very specific, lucrative end.

This rational choice is shaped by broader social and environmental factors. The culture of "street-life," with its values and justifications, is learned and reinforced through intimate associations, a process explained by DAT. Furthermore, this motivation finds its perfect expression in the environment of the greater Berea area, as explained by SDT. The area's unique socio-economic landscape, characterised by gentrification, creates a clash of cultures and a breakdown of traditional social controls. This produces an environment with a high concentration of "suitable targets" (expensive cars) and "motivated offenders" seeking to fund their status, making it a prime location for these crimes to occur, as framed by RAT. The offenders' MO is thus a rational response to both their internal motivations and the external opportunities presented by a disorganised, yet affluent, urban ecosystem.

6.11.22 Theme 4 (5.7.4): Family Values and Social Influences

A significant theme emerging from the data is the profound influence of dysfunctional family values and social influences as a primary driver for offending. The participants' accounts reveal that their criminal careers were not a matter of individual choice but a product of a deeply ingrained, intergenerational transmission of criminal norms. As Participants IMP and IUP explained, they came from non-functioning families, often raised by unemployed grandmothers who, instead of providing a moral compass, actively "trained" them in violence, crime, and deception as means of survival. This provides a stark, micro-level illustration of the principles outlined in the literature review, which links juvenile offending to disrupted families and social ills (Adebayo, 2013; Davis, 1999).

This phenomenon is powerfully explained through the lens of SDT. The family unit, the most fundamental agent of social control, had not only broken down but had become an engine for criminality. The grandmothers' inability to "differentiate between right and wrong" and their active role in compelling their grandchildren to offend represents a catastrophic failure of informal social control, creating a fertile ground for criminal behaviour that aligns perfectly with the tenets of SDT (Shaw & McKay, 1942). This process is further elucidated by DAT. The participants did not learn crime in a vacuum; they were taught specific techniques, motives, and rationalisations through intimate, personal associations with their primary caregivers and "older perpetrators." The grandmother's use of a knife and pistol to extort money, as described

by Participant IUP, is a chilling example of the direct transmission of criminal techniques and values, confirming Sutherland's (1947) proposition that criminal behaviour is learned.

This criminal socialisation is further contextualised by RCP, specifically through the concept of bounded rationality. Within the constrained environment of poverty and dysfunction, a legacy of apartheid, as Participant IMP notes, crime presented itself as a rational, albeit coerced, strategy for survival. The participants were "trained to compete for limited resources," framing illicit activity as a logical response to their circumstances. This theme underscores that the "progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO" does not begin with sophisticated tactics, but with the foundational, formative experience of a family environment that normalises and mandates a life of crime.

6.11.23 Theme 5 (5.7.5): Improvements in Anti-Motor Vehicle Theft Devices and Home Security Systems

A significant finding is the tactical shift from MVT to carjacking, driven directly by improvements in anti-theft technology for both vehicles and homes. As Participant QCP explained, the "state-of-the-art security systems" on modern vehicles make them "very hard to pilfer," forcing offenders to "switch to carjackings" as a more viable alternative. This offender-centric account provides a direct, empirical validation for the "target hardening" paradox identified in the literature (CSVR, 2007), which posits that advancements in security can inadvertently lead to an increase in more violent crimes like carjacking by making traditional theft methods obsolete.

This strategic shift is a textbook example of RCP in action. Faced with a new, high-cost obstacle (sophisticated immobilisers and alarms), offenders make a calculated decision to adopt an alternative method that bypasses the technology altogether. Carjacking becomes the "more acceptable choice" because it neutralises the vehicle's security features by targeting the person who holds the key or can start the engine. This is not a random escalation of violence but a deliberate, adaptive business decision to maintain profitability in the face of evolving security measures.

This calculated adaptation is contextualised by RAT. Target hardening is designed to strengthen the "capable guardian" aspect of a potential target. However, instead of deterring the offence, it simply changes the method. The motivated offender still desires the suitable target (the car),

so they engineer a new crime script that creates the necessary convergence, bypassing the technological guardian in favour of confronting the human one. This strategic knowledge is disseminated through the syndicate, a process explained by DAT, where the collective learning is that "carjacking is now the more efficient method for these types of targets." Ultimately, this entire adaptive process unfolds within the context of SDT, as the greater Berea area's weakened formal and informal controls provide the permissive environment where sophisticated criminal networks can observe, adapt, and evolve their tactics to overcome societal countermeasures.

6.11.24 Theme 6 (5.7.6): Possession of Illegal Firearms

A critical finding is that the possession of illegal firearms is not incidental but a core, tactical component of the offenders' MO, driven by a need to neutralise the threat of armed victims. As Participant IKP1 stated, offenders view armed vehicle owners as a "menace" and strategically equip themselves with "heavy calibre firearms such as 9mm pistols and AK47s" to counteract this danger. This provides a crucial offender-centric rationale for the trend identified in the literature, where "target hardening stimulates offenders to use violence or threats to overpower victims" (CSVR, 2007). While prior research establishes this correlation, the participants' accounts bridge the gap by revealing the calculated decision-making behind the escalation of firepower, transforming a macro-level trend into a micro-level tactical necessity.

This strategic armament is a clear manifestation of RCP. The decision to carry and use a superior weapon is a sophisticated risk management strategy, a cost-benefit analysis where the perceived benefit of successfully overpowering an armed victim far outweighs the potential risks. This is an example of "bounded rationality," where offenders, operating under the uncertainty of a victim's armament, mitigate that risk by ensuring overwhelming firepower. The coordinated MO described by Participant IKP1, one offender to intimidate, one to search, and one as a lookout, is a pre-planned routine designed to execute this rational strategy with maximum efficiency and control.

This calculated approach operates within the opportunity structures described by RAT. The firearm is the primary tool used to neutralise what would otherwise be a "capable guardian", the armed victim. By wielding superior force, the offender effectively removes the victim's capacity to resist, ensuring the convergence of a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of capable guardianship. This tactical evolution is informed by DAT, as the skills to acquire, conceal, and deploy such weapons, and the coordinated roles required for their use, are

learned and perfected within the syndicate. Ultimately, the easy accessibility of such powerful illegal firearms points to the broader context of SDT, where a breakdown in formal social controls allows a violent, armed criminal ecosystem to flourish, compelling offenders to adopt these extreme measures as a standard part of their business.

6.11.25 Theme 7 (5.3.2.7): Offenders' Forcible and Mere Retaking of Motor Vehicles Through Victim-Specific Strategies

The findings reveal that offenders' strategies for retaking vehicles are not monolithic but are highly differentiated based on victim nationality, demonstrating a calculated departure from routine activity-based opportunities for foreign victims. For domestic South African victims, offenders exploit the convergence of routine activities, as Participants IUP, ICP1, and ICP2 described: "we aggressively follow a domestic victim's car... surround the victim's car and... force it to stop... in the middle of the road." This aligns directly with RAT, where the natural convergence of motivated offenders and suitable targets in the absence of capable guardianship creates criminal opportunities (Cohen & Felson, 1979). However, the data critically challenges RAT's explanatory limits for interactions with foreign victims. As Participant ICHRP asserted, "routine everyday activities cannot always explain all cases where us [offenders] and the victims are brought into contact," highlighting a significant gap in how conventional theory accounts for non-routine, manufactured opportunities.

For foreign victims (foreign customers and offenders), offenders employ a sophisticated, multi-staged strategy of luring and digital intimidation, completely bypassing stalking. Participants QCP, IUP, ICP1, ICP2, and IKP2 detailed how they "initially lure or persuade our foreign victims and, subsequently we trap them by using sham marked police cars." This is augmented by technologically advanced psychological warfare, including "WhatsApp video calling for instantaneously conveying live threats," sending images of masked offenders brandishing "heavy calibre firearms," and even photos of "live AK47 bullets" being loaded to threaten execution-style shootings. This elaborate process exemplifies the RCP, where offenders engage in complex cost-benefit analyses under conditions of bounded rationality (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). The use of technology and psychological coercion is a rational tactic to minimise resistance and maximise control over high-value, unpredictable targets, demonstrating a level of strategic planning not captured in models of opportunistic crime.

These rational decisions are made within a context of weak formal and informal controls.

Participant QCP noted that while target hardening (immobilisers, alarms, electric fences) may reduce MVTs, it paradoxically "increase[s] the perpetration of carjackings," leading offenders to adapt with counter-technologies like "reprogrammed key fobs." This dynamic adaptation is a core tenet of RAT, where offenders modify their methods to overcome guardianship (Clarke, 1980). The entire enterprise is enabled by the greater Berea area's permissive environment, with Participants IKP1 and IKP2 citing the "presence of very weak social controls" as a key factor contributing to target suitability, a classic condition of (SDT) (Shaw & McKay, 1942). The sophisticated MO themselves, from sham police cars to digital threats, are learned techniques transmitted within the syndicate, reflecting the principles of DAT (Sutherland, 1947). Ultimately, these victim-specific strategies, driven by evolving motivations like "financing street life" and the need to "bring back... severe and brutal strategies" (ICHRP, IMP), illustrate a highly organised criminal response that manufactures opportunities, adapts to security, and exploits systemic weaknesses, thereby bridging micro-level tactical innovation with macro-level criminological theory.

6.11.26 Theme 8 (5.3.2.8): Strategic Infiltration of SAPS Crime Intelligence by Motor Vehicle Syndicates

The findings reveal that motor vehicle crime syndicates systematically infiltrated SAPS detectives attached to the Crime Intelligence Division (CID) through calculated recruitment strategies, transforming guardianship into criminal facilitation. As Participant IKP2 stated, syndicates "planned the progression of the organised nature of our MO" through "discussions with targeted SAPS detectives," demonstrating deliberate institutional penetration rather than opportunistic corruption. This aligns with Von Lampe's (2016) formal organisation theory, where criminal enterprises develop specialised roles, including intelligence acquisition to sustain operations. The recruitment process itself employed sophisticated social engineering, as Participant IUP described using "general discussions about subtle issues (for example cricket, football, rugby, family problems and the sluggish SA economy)" to establish rapport before corrupt propositions, reflecting the "trust-building" mechanisms identified in organised crime research (Kleemans & de Poot, 2008).

The primary objective was accessing "top-secret SAPS information" (IKP1), which fundamentally altered offenders' decision-making calculus by providing insider knowledge about surveillance patterns, investigations, and security vulnerabilities. This corruption of guardianship represents a sophisticated manipulation of RAT, where offenders neutralise the

"capable guardian" by co-opting it rather than evading it (Cohen & Felson, 1979). Participant IKP1 explicitly noted this created an "illegal and misleading" relationship where detectives became "informants," transforming the formal justice system into a criminal resource. This infiltration enabled syndicates to operate with "less-organised crime" characteristics while maintaining "more-organised crime" outcomes (IUP), a hybrid model consistent with contemporary research on flexible criminal networks (Malm & Bichler, 2011).

These corrupt relationships developed through differential association processes, where both parties learned techniques for mutually beneficial corruption (Sutherland, 1947). As Participant IUP observed, there was "*a link between befriending us [offenders] and the participation of corrupt SAPS police colonels*," highlighting the socialisation component of institutional betrayal. This occurred within Berea's context of weakened social controls (SDT), where systemic vulnerabilities facilitated institutional decay. Ironically, offenders simultaneously perceived "consistent police surveillance" that made them "nervous" and "restricted" activities (IMP), demonstrating the dual reality of operating with corrupted insiders while fearing uncorrupted elements. This cognitive dissonance reflects bounded rationality within RCP, where offenders continuously recalculated risks based on imperfect information about which police elements were compromised versus actively surveilling (Cornish & Clarke, 2014). The syndicates' ability to corrupt intelligence functions represents the ultimate manipulation of the criminal justice system, addressing critical gaps in police-focused research (Bila, 2015) while demonstrating how organised crime adapts to institutional controls through strategic penetration rather than avoidance.

6.11.27 Theme 9 (5.3.2.9): Systematic Exploitation of Converging Security Loopholes and SAPS Weaknesses

The findings reveal that offenders strategically leverage a synergistic combination of community-level security loopholes and systemic SAPS weaknesses to progressively refine their criminal methods. As Participants IKP1, IKP2, and QCP explained, they exploited the greater Berea area's inherent disorganisation characterised by public fear, ignored alarms, disregarded complaints, and lack of community cohesion, which aligns directly with SDT. The participants explicitly cited "frequently shifting from one house to another house, having many races from different backgrounds and the existence of unequal shares" as foundational factors, echoing Shaw and McKay's (1942) core tenets of residential instability, ethnic heterogeneity, and concentrated disadvantage that erode informal social controls.

This environmental decay creates a vacuum of capable guardianship, a central tenet of RAT. Participants ICHRP, IMP, and ICP1 detailed how SAPS weaknesses, including internal conflicts between senior officers, demoralising leadership ("shout at junior SAPS officers... use vulgar language"), and the subsequent release of offenders without thorough investigation, effectively neutralise the formal guardian. This collapse of both informal (community) and formal (police) guardianship creates a permissive environment where the convergence of motivated offenders and suitable targets is virtually guaranteed (Cohen & Felson, 1979). Within this context, offenders engage in highly rational decision-making to exploit these failures. As Participant IUP stated, these loopholes help identify "weak people in the neighbourhood" to "get good information" and "revise our MO," exemplifying bounded rationality within the Rational Choice Perspective (RCP) (Cornish & Clarke, 2014). Offenders actively learn to navigate and manipulate these systemic failures, a process informed by DAT. The exploitation of "bad collective police cultural attitudes" and the collection of "valuable information from the same people who are supposed to arrest us" (ICHRP, IMP, ICP1) represents a sophisticated form of criminal learning where techniques of corruption and avoidance are transmitted through direct interaction with compromised guardians (Sutherland, 1947). Ultimately, this theme demonstrates that the progression of organized MO is not merely a product of offender innovation but a calculated response to a deeply fractured security ecosystem, bridging micro-level tactical adaptation with macro-level institutional decay.

6.11.28 Theme 6 (5.3.2.6): Offenders' Use of Surveillance and Counter Surveillance Strategies Before, During and After the Commission of Carjackings and MVTs

Theme 6 reveals that offenders' use of surveillance and counter-surveillance represents a sophisticated, learned progression of their MO, transforming carjacking and MVT from opportunistic acts into strategically planned operations. This finding directly addresses the literature's identified gap by providing the offender's perspective on the "how" and "why" behind the evolution of organised crime, moving beyond the descriptive accounts of prior studies (for instance, Symes, 2021; Europol, 2021) to explain the cognitive and environmental processes involved.

The participants' accounts provide a rich, empirical foundation for understanding how the four theoretical frameworks such as Rational Choice, Routine Activity, Differential Association, and Social Disorganisation, converge to facilitate advanced criminal behaviour within the

greater Berea area. The research participants' detailed descriptions of pre-crime intelligence gathering, photographing targets and security cameras, calculating distances, and using specialised roles like "cameramen", are a clear manifestation of RCP. These are not random acts but calculated, risk-reduction strategies. As Participant ICHRP noted, this meticulous planning, including changing dress codes for disguise, is a hallmark of their "professional" approach. This bounded rationality, where offenders invest significant time and resources to maximise success and minimise the risk of identification by police or rival groups, aligns with Cornish and Clarke's (1985) model of offender decision-making. This process also directly manipulates the core tenets of RAT. By systematically identifying the locations of fixed cameras and the routines of targets and potential guardians, offenders are actively shaping the environment to ensure the convergence of a motivated offender (themselves) and a suitable target occurs without the presence of capable guardianship. Their counter-surveillance tactics such as changing directions, using mirrors, and checking for followers, are explicit attempts to neutralise the "capable guardian" element, a sophisticated evolution beyond the simple opportunity-seeking described in foundational RAT literature.

Furthermore, the organisational structure required to execute these complex surveillance operations underscores the principles of DAT. The division of labour into specialised groups ("cameramen," "carjackers," "motor vehicle thieves") demonstrates that these advanced techniques are not innate but are learned, taught, and refined within the criminal network. The "professional" identity described by Participant ICHRP is a learned code of behaviour, transmitted through intimate groups, which provides the skills and justifications for these sophisticated actions. This directly addresses a gap in the literature, which often describes the what of syndicate structure (for example, Kerner, 1973; Von Lampe, 2016) but lacks the offender's perspective on how these specialised skills are acquired and operationalised. Crucially, these sophisticated tactics do not occur in a vacuum; they are enabled and amplified by the specific socio-environmental context of the greater Berea area, providing a powerful validation of SDT. The participants' descriptions of an area characterised by "residential mobility," "lack of social contacts," and "no social cohesion" (Participants QCP and IKP2) create the perfect environment for these operations to flourish. This weak social fabric reduces the risk of informal social control from community members. The most compelling evidence of this synergy is the "kingpins' planned placement of offenders" and their "own type of gentrification" (Participants IKP1, ICP2, IMVTP2).

The above-stated strategic move is a direct exploitation of the neighbourhood's weaknesses. By embedding their operatives within the transient and diverse population, kingpins leverage the very features of social disorganisation, anonymity, lack of community ties, and weakened collective efficacy, as an operational asset. This finding moves beyond simply correlating crime with disorganised neighbourhoods (as in much of the foundational literature) to explaining how organised crime actively manipulates and deepens this disorganisation for strategic advantage, thereby addressing the core problem statement of this thesis.

6.11.29 Theme 10 (5.3.2.10): Offenders' Use of a Counter Multi-Layered Approach

Theme 10 reveals that offenders' use of a counter multi-layered approach is a sophisticated, adaptive strategy learned and refined within criminal networks to overcome modern vehicle security. This progression is fundamentally rooted in DAT, as Participant IKP1 explained that offenders learn specific "crime-specific definitions," such as viewing MVT as a "transfer of wealth," which dominate their interactions and justify their actions. This learning process is not static; it is a direct response to the technological evolution described in the literature (for example, Heitmann & Morales, 2014), forcing offenders to actively seek out and share new skills. As Participant IKP2 noted, they "decided to respond by learning so many skills," including recruiting from the security industry and learning from "Indians" how to disable immobilisers and abuse OBD ports, demonstrating a proactive, networked approach to criminal innovation that addresses the gap in literature regarding how offenders acquire and operationalise complex countermeasures.

The execution of these technical skills is a clear manifestation of RCP. The detailed descriptions of using dual RF transmitters by Participants ICHRP and IMP, one sending a 490Hz signal to jam the alarm system while the other adds a 300Hz signal to unlock the doors, are not spontaneous acts but highly calculated, sequential tasks. This meticulous planning, which involves coordinating multiple offenders and specialised equipment, aligns with Cornish and Clarke's (1985) model of bounded rationality, where offenders make complex decisions to overcome specific security obstacles. This represents a significant evolution beyond foundational theories, as it shows the "how" of their progression from simple theft to technologically sophisticated operations, providing the granular, offender-centric detail often missing from broader security analyses. Ultimately, this multi-layered approach is enabled/ed by a highly organised and corrupt syndicate structure, validating principles from both DAT and SDT.

Participants IKP2, IKP1, and IUP described relying on a vast network of "corrupt connections" at car plants, the Durban harbour, and the Department of Transport to obtain manufacturer codes and owner details. This systemic corruption allows them to bypass security measures that are otherwise "almost impossible to neutralize." The most sophisticated element, described by Participant IMVTP2, is the strategic "layering of MOs," where offenders are combined in constantly changing groups (for instance, A with E,F,G; B with C,D,H,K,J) to ensure no single pattern emerges. This is a rational strategy of obfuscation designed to "diversify ever changing MO" and evade detection, demonstrating how organised crime networks actively manipulate both technology and investigative processes to sustain their operations within a disorganised ecosystem.

6.11.30 Theme 11 (5.3.2.11): Offenders' Experiences in Selling Stolen and Carjacked Cars, as Well as the Forcible Retaking of the Same Cars

Theme 11 reveals that the forcible retaking of sold stolen and carjacked cars is not an anomaly but a deliberate, calculated business strategy employed by offenders to maximise profits and enforce control. This practice is a clear manifestation of RCP, where offenders weigh the significant risk of a violent confrontation against the substantial reward of reselling the same vehicle multiple times. As Participant IKP2 stated, they "forcefully retake more than half motor vehicles," a high-stakes tactic that is only rational because the victims are deliberately selected for their inability to report the crime. This professional approach, governed by "unwritten rules" and the use of codenames for all aspects of the transaction as described by Participant IKP1, underscores the principles of DAT, demonstrating that these sophisticated, predatory business practices are learned techniques and codes of behaviour transmitted within the criminal network.

The execution of this forcible retaking is a tactically complex process that directly exploits the principles of RAT. Offenders meticulously plan their actions, creating a perfect convergence of a motivated offender (themselves), a suitable target (the isolated client), and a complete lack of capable guardianship. As Participant QCP detailed, they exploit their knowledge of clients' "movements and behavioural patterns," using tactics like blocking convoys during peak traffic to prevent intervention. This operational environment is not chosen at random but is a strategic exploitation of a disorganised area, validating SDT. Participant ICHRP explicitly stated they chose the greater Berea area because it is "quiet," has "very few police patrols," and offers swift

escape routes, demonstrating how organised crime actively seeks out and thrives in neighbourhoods with weak formal and informal social controls.

Ultimately, this predatory model is sustained by the victim's vulnerability and systemic failures. Offenders specifically target "careless clients," particularly foreign nationals, whom they can intimidate and who are unlikely to approach law enforcement. Participants ICP2 and QCP highlighted two critical reasons for this silence: the victims are in possession of a stolen vehicle and have purchased it using money from illicit activities, such as drug trafficking. This creates a perfect victim who is entirely outside the protection of the formal justice system. This finding directly addresses a gap in literature concerning the exploitation of systemic blind spots and aligns with research on how organised crime networks manipulate institutional weaknesses (Bila, 2015), demonstrating a sophisticated understanding of how to operate in the interstitial spaces of law.

6.11.31 Theme 12 (5.3.2.12): A Consistent Lack of Group Cohesion Among Greater Berea Community Members

A significant finding is the consistent lack of group cohesion among greater Berea community members, which offenders strategically exploit to facilitate their criminal operations. As Participant IMVTP1 explained, even when bystanders are suspicious of criminal acts, their companions' fear of the offenders' "brutal repute" compels them to remain silent. This provides a powerful, on-the-ground illustration of the principles of SDT. The participants themselves identified the root causes of this disintegration, citing "regular relocations," "differences in residents' backgrounds," and an "absence of social connections" (IKP1) as key factors that prevent the community from forming a united front against crime (Shaw & McKay, 1942).

This disorganised environment is not merely a backdrop; it is a resource that is rationally exploited by offenders. From a viewpoint of RCP, the kingpins' manipulation of this vulnerability is a calculated, low-risk strategy. By renting rooms for lower-level offenders to gather intelligence (IMVTP1), they leverage the community's lack of cohesion to their financial advantage, creating "financial inequities" where they profit immensely from the area's weakness. This lack of cohesion directly translates to a "lack of capable guardianship," a core concept of RAT, effectively neutralising informal social control and creating a permissive environment for crime.

This creates a devastating feedback loop. The absence of cohesion and visible crime worsens the "fear of crime" (IKP2), which is then amplified by the media (IUP). As Participant IUP noted, this heightened fear drives residents to "deemphasise formal policing" and tragically, to accept the "informal policing" offered by the offenders themselves. In essence, the offenders do not just operate within a disorganised community; they actively deepen and exploit its disorganisation, transforming the absence of social cohesion into a primary asset for their organised criminal enterprise.

6.11.32 Theme 13 (5.3.2.13): Offenders' Exploitation of Hostilities Between the Police and the Community Positively Shape the Progression of the Organised Nature of the Offenders' MOs used for Committing MVTs in the greater Berea area

The analysis reveals that this exploitation is not merely opportunistic; rather, it constitutes the strategic engineering of social disorder, which functions as a deliberate criminal catalyst shaping the progression of their MO.

6.11.32.1 Theme 13: The Strategic Engineering of Social Disorder as a Criminal Catalyst

Theme 13 reveals that offenders do not merely exploit pre-existing hostilities between the police and the greater Berea community; they actively engineer and deepen this discord as a foundational component of their criminal MO. Participants described a foundational rift where SAPS officers operate in isolation, viewing community input with suspicion and actively excluding CPF members from strategic planning, as articulated by Participants QCP and ICP1. This existing tension provides the fertile ground for offenders to implement a calculated strategy rooted in SDT. As Participants IMP and IUP explicitly stated, they "premeditatedly cause chaos" by deploying "disruptive persons" to vandalize property and harass residents, thereby actively manufacturing the very environment of fear and weak informal social control that criminological theory identifies as criminogenic. This moves beyond the literature's focus on systemic failures (for example, Bila, 2015) to demonstrate how organised crime proactively creates and weaponises social disorder.

Having manufactured this crisis, offenders then position themselves as the solution, a sophisticated manipulation of trust and a clear application of DAT. They inject "informal policing" into the neighbourhood, conducting fake patrols and presenting themselves as protectors against the very chaos they created. Participant IMP noted they "pretend to be concerned about the wellbeing of Berea community members," while Participant IMVTP2

stated residents begin to treat offenders as a "more responsible replacement of the SAPS." This calculated deception, learned and perfected within the criminal network, allows them to gather critical intelligence on targets and police movements under the guise of community service. This represents a rational choice to embed themselves within the community, lowering their risk profile and creating opportunities that would not otherwise exist, a nuanced evolution of the community-offender dynamic not fully captured in prior research.

This engineered environment of distrust and false security directly enables the final, technical execution of MVT. The preceding stages ensure a near-complete absence of capable guardianship, a core tenet of RAT, allowing offenders to operate with impunity. The participants then deploy a multi-layered, technologically sophisticated toolkit, demonstrating the "progression of the organised nature of the MO." This includes using relay boxes to capture key fob signals on high-end vehicles like BMWs and Range Rovers (Participants QCP, IMVTP2), exploiting specific vulnerabilities in Hyundai and Kia models with a simple USB cable (Participant IUP), and employing more traditional low-tech methods like using an airbag to create a gap in the door seal (Participant ICHRP). This final stage is the culmination of their strategic efforts, where the social environment they have meticulously shaped allows for the seamless application of the diverse, learned techniques required to steal vehicles and evade detection.

6.11.33 Expanded Stakeholder Perspectives: The Permeable Boundary Between Protectors and Perpetrators

The findings reveal a critical and often-overlooked dimension of carjacking and MVT: the systematic co-option of individuals from legitimate protective roles (victims, police, insurance, community patrols) into organised criminal enterprises. This transition is not random but a calculated process driven by a combination of insider knowledge, financial desperation, and profound disillusionment with systemic corruption. This addresses a significant gap in the literature, which often treats victims, law enforcement, and community groups as external factors or static categories. While foundational studies on systemic failure (for example, Bila, 2015; Mthimkhulu, 2022) identify institutional weaknesses, this study's "inside" perspective illuminates the pathways of co-option, revealing how individuals actively leverage their former roles to become highly effective offenders.

This transformation is best understood through the lens of RCT. Each stakeholder's decision to

cross the line is a calculated cost-benefit analysis. The former victim, after experiencing trauma and financial loss, rationally chooses to "teach everyone a terrible lesson" by using a neighbourhood watch as a front for intelligence gathering, reclaiming a sense of control. Former police officers and CPF members make even more explicit calculations. As one former officer stated, the "huge sums of money" for driving stolen cars cross-border and smuggling drugs outweighed the risks. Similarly, CPF member Dingani Bester's rationale, "why am I risking my life for crumbs when others are cashing in?", is a classic RCT argument, where participation in crime is perceived as a more rational path to financial security than their legitimate duties.
The mechanism enabling these rational choices is DAT. The transition into crime is not self-taught; it is a process of socialisation and learning within a corrupt network. The former CPF member (Dlamini) describes being groomed: "An SAPS officer in charge of our unit offered me R2,000 just to 'forget' a license plate." This initial contact leads to learning more sophisticated techniques, a clear transmission of criminal skills and rationalisations from a more experienced offender. The former police officer who joined a syndicate was socialised by "commanders" and "sergents," learning the complex logistics of cross-border smuggling. This demonstrates that the criminal network actively recruits and trains insiders, transforming their legitimate expertise into criminal capital.

These individual pathways are contextualised by SDT. The consistent theme across all testimonials is a deep-seated anger and frustration with a corrupt and broken system. The former officer notes, "It is a cycle that needs to be broken," while Dingani Bester describes his anger at the "corrupt SAPS structure." This systemic decay erodes the legitimacy of formal institutions and weakens informal social controls, creating a moral vacuum where the syndicate's offer of money, power, and belonging becomes a viable, even attractive, alternative. The offenders are not just exploiting the system; they are products of its failure.

Ultimately, these insider roles create perfect criminal opportunities, a core tenet of RAT. The former police officer knows precisely when "members of the general public... left car keys inside their cars" at police stations. The former insurance officer has access to data on which cars lack trackers. The CPF member can "forge a license plate" and act as an "inside eye." These individuals become the ultimate "place managers" (Eck, 1994), using their authority to disable guardianship and identify suitable targets, effectively engineering the convergence of the RAT triad. In essence, the progression of the organised MO is critically dependent on the permeable boundary between the protectors and the perpetrators, where insider knowledge is

the most valuable and dangerous criminal asset.

6.11.34 Theme 14: Partnership Between SAPS and UKZN Academics Confidentiality and Ethical Considerations

Implementing non-disclosure agreements ensures confidentiality, fostering trust between SAPS and UKZN (Harris, 2010). Differential Association Theory emphasises the importance of a secure environment for collaboration (Sutherland, 1939). Research indicates that ethical considerations enhance cooperation (Bennett & Holloway, 2005).

6.11.34.1 Theme 14: Partnership Between SAPS and UKZN Academics Confidentiality and Ethical Considerations.

The success of this partnership is built upon an integrated framework of confidentiality and ethics. Trust, fostered by non-disclosure agreements (Harris, 2010), creates the secure environment necessary for meaningful collaboration, a principle underscored by DAT (Sutherland, 1939). This cooperation is ultimately enhanced and secured by a robust commitment to ethical considerations (Bennett & Holloway, 2005). The analysis of the evolving organised nature of carjackings in Berea is a direct outcome of the partnership's foundational framework. This critical insight is only possible because the implementation of non-disclosure agreements, as supported by Harris (2010), creates the trust necessary for SAPS to share highly sensitive operational intelligence with UKZN academics. Within this secure environment, Sutherland's (1939) DAT becomes practically relevant; it is not the criminals who are learning, but the partners themselves.

Police officers and academics "associate" in a protected space, allowing for the crucial transfer of knowledge where academic analytical methods are combined with frontline policing experience to detect sophisticated criminal patterns. Finally, this entire cooperative process is enhanced by the strict adherence to ethical considerations (Bennett & Holloway, 2005), which ensures that the sensitive data is used responsibly to protect victims and operational tactics. This ethical commitment solidifies the partnership, enabling the production of actionable intelligence that empowers SAPS to move beyond reacting to individual crimes and proactively dismantle the organized syndicates behind them.

6.11.34.2 Strengthening Community Trust

The partnership between SAPS and UKZN academics acts as a powerful catalyst for strengthening community trust, primarily by translating sophisticated analysis into tangible improvements in public safety. As the collaboration yields actionable intelligence that leads to higher case resolution rates and the proactive dismantling of criminal syndicates, the community witnesses a direct and positive impact. This enhanced effectiveness fosters a greater sense of security and confidence in law enforcement (Bennett & Holloway, 2005). This dynamic is well-explained by DAT, which posits that attitudes and norms are learned through interaction. When community members consistently observe effective, fair, and responsive policing, their "association" with the SAPS transforms from one of suspicion to one of support, fundamentally reshaping public perception (Sutherland, 1939). This positive cycle reinforces itself; as trust grows, so does community cooperation, providing police with the vital information needed to prevent crime. This creates the "social capital" that Robert Putnam identifies as essential for safe and resilient communities, where positive interactions between law enforcement and citizens become the norm, leading to a sustainable reduction in crime (Putnam, 2000). Ultimately, the trust cultivated within the SAPS-UKZN partnership becomes the foundation upon which trust with the broader community is built.

6.11.34.3 Comprehensive Understanding of Organised Crime

A core benefit of the SAPS-UKZN partnership is the development of a far more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of organized crime than either entity could achieve alone. While SAPS possesses invaluable operational intelligence, academics contribute critical theoretical frameworks and analytical tools that can decipher the complex structures of criminal networks. This collaboration can illuminate the economic drivers, social hierarchies, and sophisticated communication methods of these syndicates, leading to the development of highly effective prevention and disruption strategies (Clarke, 1997). DAT is particularly relevant here, as it provides a lens to analyse the internal culture of criminal organisations. By understanding how new members are recruited, indoctrinated, and trained through their associations within the group, the partnership can identify vulnerabilities and disrupt the very processes that sustain the criminal enterprise (Sutherland, 1939). This depth of understanding is a product of the interdisciplinary approach championed by researchers, where criminological insight is combined with data analysis, sociology, and even economics to create a holistic picture of criminality (Bennett & Holloway, 2005). This integrated view allows law enforcement to move beyond simply arresting offenders to strategically dismantling the ecosystems that support

them.

6.11.34.4 Implementation of Evidence-Based Practices

The partnership fundamentally shifts policing from a reactive model to a proactive, evidence-based paradigm. By focusing on practices that are empirically validated, the SAPS can enhance the quality and effectiveness of its investigative and strategic decision-making. This transition is a direct outcome of the collaboration, as academic partners provide the rigorous research and data analysis needed to test and refine police tactics. In a positive application of DAT, one can argue that just as criminals learn techniques through association, police officers learn effective, evidence-based techniques through their close "association" with academic mentors and researchers (Sutherland, 1939). This collaborative learning environment displaces outdated methods with strategies proven to work. The practical impact of this is profound; data-driven approaches allow for the intelligent allocation of limited police resources, ensuring that patrols and investigations are targeted not just where crimes have occurred, but where predictive analytics indicate they are most likely to happen next (Weisburd et al., 2010). This ensures that operational efforts are maximized for impact, making SAPS more efficient, strategic, and ultimately more successful in its mission to combat organized crime.

6.11.34.5 Development of Training Programs

The SAPS-UKZN partnership provides an ideal platform for the development of sophisticated, evidence-based training programs that move beyond standard procedural instruction. By leveraging academic expertise, these programs can directly enhance the analytical and investigative skills of SAPS officers, fostering a culture of continuous professional learning and adaptation. This process aligns perfectly with Akers' (1998) Social Learning Theory, an extension of Differential Association, which posits that behavior is not only learned through association but also shaped by imitation and reinforcement.

Within these specialised training modules, officers can observe and imitate advanced analytical techniques, and when these methods lead to successful case outcomes in the field, they are positively reinforced, making the new skills a permanent part of their professional repertoire. This structured learning environment is a practical application of DAT (Sutherland, 1939), where the "association" occurs between academics and police officers, allowing for the direct

transfer of cutting-edge criminological knowledge and research methodologies. This ensures that officers are equipped with the most current tools to understand and combat complex crime. The ultimate value of this initiative is confirmed by research, which consistently indicates that ongoing, high-quality training is a critical factor in improving overall law enforcement effectiveness and adaptability (Bennett & Holloway, 2005). Consequently, the partnership does not just solve immediate problems; it invests in the long-term capability of the police service/force itself.

6.11.35 Theme 15: eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality's Involvement in Discouraging Business Facilitation of Crime

The active involvement of the eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality is critical for disrupting the environmental conditions that enable carjackings, particularly by addressing the inadvertent facilitation of crime by businesses operating within identified hotspots. This proactive stance is grounded in the principles of situational crime prevention, which advocates for modifying the immediate environment to make criminal acts more difficult and less attractive. As proposed by Clarke (1997), the municipality can achieve this by implementing regulations that compel businesses to adopt responsible practices, such as installing high-quality CCTV surveillance, improving lighting in parking areas, and training staff to be vigilant for suspicious activity. This strategic intervention is directly supported by RCT (Cornish & Clarke, 1986), which posits that criminal behaviour is a calculated decision based on a perceived cost-benefit analysis.

By increasing the "cost", in the form of heightened surveillance and a greater likelihood of apprehension, the municipality directly influences the offender's risk assessment, thereby, deterring them from selecting that location. The efficacy of this approach is not merely theoretical; extensive research confirms that enhancing the security measures within the commercial environment significantly reduces opportunities for crime. Felson & Clarke (1998) have demonstrated that by altering the "crime opportunity structure," these environmental changes can lead to a substantial and measurable decrease in criminal activities. Therefore, the municipality's role is not simply punitive but preventative, using its regulatory power to reshape the urban landscape in a way that systematically discourages carjackings before they occur.

6.11.35.1 Fostering Partnerships with Local Businesses

Fostering robust partnerships between local businesses and municipal authorities is a proactive

strategy that transforms businesses from potential victims into active stakeholders in crime prevention. The eThekwini Municipality can facilitate this by establishing formal security clusters or holding regular forums where business owners can directly share insights and intelligence on emerging crime trends. These forums often yield granular details that official data might miss, such as the appearance of new suspect vehicles or subtle changes in offender tactics. This collaborative shift also has a profound psychological impact, replacing a sense of individual vulnerability with a collective sense of agency and control. As Hirschfield and Bowers (2001) note, these interactions empower businesses, providing them with a direct line to authorities and making them feel valued as "eyes and ears" on the ground. This collaborative process can be viewed through the lens of RCT (Cornish & Clarke, 1986), not from the offender's perspective, but from the community's. The social interactions within these partnerships enhance collective decision-making, allowing the community to rationally choose to implement environmental designs and practices that systematically increase the effort and risk for potential criminals. Ultimately, this co-created approach is inherently more effective, as research confirms that collaborative efforts between authorities and local stakeholders lead to more sustainable and contextually relevant crime prevention strategies (Bennett & Holloway, 2005).

6.11.35.2 Information Sharing

The effectiveness of any crime prevention initiative is contingent upon the rapid and efficient flow of information. The business sector, being at the frontline of commercial activity, is uniquely positioned to relay critical, real-time intelligence about suspicious activities, such as individuals casing properties or vehicles repeatedly circling parking lots. This information, which can include descriptions of suspect vehicles, specific behavioural patterns, or timing of reconnaissance, provides the raw material for proactive policing. To make this information actionable, the municipality must establish dedicated and secure communication channels, such as a centralised reporting system or a liaison officer, as advocated by Felson & Clarke (1998). Law enforcement analysts can then synthesise these multiple reports to identify hotspots and predict potential targets with greater accuracy. This structured flow of information directly disrupts the offender's decision-making process, a core tenet of RCT (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). When offenders perceive that their activities are being quickly monitored and reported, the calculated risk of apprehension rises sharply, often compelling them to abandon the target area. This heightened risk perception can even deter criminal networks from operating in the entire district, creating a powerful halo effect of security. The practical outcome of this system is

validated by research, which indicates that effective information sharing between the public, businesses, and law enforcement significantly improves policing outcomes, leading to faster response times and a higher probability of intercepting criminal acts (Harris, 2010).

6.11.35.3 Community Awareness Campaigns

Local businesses can serve as powerful amplifiers for community awareness campaigns, transforming crime prevention from a municipal mandate into a shared social responsibility. By leveraging their physical and digital presence through posters in windows, messages on receipts, or safety tips on social media, businesses can educate the public on specific carjacking modi operandi, such as the "bump-and-rob" tactic or the use of signal-jamming devices. This targeted education empowers citizens to move from being passive potential victims to active guardians of their own and others' safety. This collective effort fosters a community-oriented approach to safety, building "social capital" that Putnam (2000) describes as essential for resilient communities. An aware public acts as a force multiplier, complementing CCTV and patrols by providing the human intelligence necessary to intervene before a crime is completed. From the perspective of RCT (Cornish & Clarke, 1986), a well-informed and vigilant public fundamentally alters the environmental landscape for an offender. The perceived risk of being spotted and reported by an aware citizenry increases dramatically, making the area a less rational choice for committing a crime. Consequently, research demonstrates that when community engagement is actively fostered, as it would be through business-led campaigns, it leads to a tangible reduction in crime rates (Bennett & Holloway, 2005).

6.11.35.4 Incentivising Responsible Business Practices

To complement regulatory measures, the eThekwini Municipality can employ a strategy of positive reinforcement by incentivising businesses that proactively implement and maintain high-standard security measures. These incentives could range from municipal rate rebates and public "Business Safety" accreditations to priority support services. From a municipal budgeting perspective, such incentives are a sound investment, as the cost of prevention is invariably lower than the societal cost of crime response and investigation. Furthermore, businesses that achieve safety accreditation gain a distinct competitive advantage, attracting customers who prioritize secure environments for their shopping and leisure. This approach directly appeals to the business owner's own rational choice. According to RCT (Cornish & Clarke, 1986), individuals are motivated by a calculation of costs and benefits, and the introduction of a tangible reward for security investment makes that choice far more

compelling. By rewarding responsible practices, the municipality enhances the perceived benefits of engaging in crime prevention, shifting the business owner's cost-benefit analysis in favour of security (Bennett & Holloway, 2005). Over time, this creates a new normative standard where robust security is not seen as a burdensome cost, but as a hallmark of a reputable and customer-centric establishment. Research in this area provides strong support for this model, indicating that financial and other incentives are a highly effective mechanism for improving widespread compliance with security standards, thereby creating a more secure and resilient commercial environment across the municipality (Hirschfield & Bowers, 2001).

6.11.35.5 Utilising Technology for Crime Prevention

Promoting the strategic use of technology is a cornerstone of modern crime prevention, moving beyond passive measures to create an actively hostile environment for criminal activity. This extends far beyond basic surveillance systems to include the implementation of advanced tools such as Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras at entry and exit points of commercial zones, high-definition video analytics that can flag suspicious behaviour, and monitored alarm systems directly linked to security response teams. By leveraging such technology, businesses and the municipality can dramatically increase the "guardianship" over a location, making it exponentially more challenging for offenders to identify and exploit vulnerabilities. This approach is a practical application of Clarke's (1997) principles of situational crime prevention, which focus on increasing the effort and risk for the criminal. From the perspective of RCT (Cornish & Clarke, 1986), this technology directly alters the offender's cost-benefit analysis. The presence of sophisticated systems not only increases the perceived risk of detection but, more importantly, the perceived risk of conviction, as the evidence gathered is often indisputable. This heightened certainty of consequence is a powerful deterrent. The effectiveness of this strategy is not merely theoretical; extensive research, including that by Felson and Clarke (1998), provides robust evidence that the strategic implementation of technology leads to a significant and measurable reduction in crime rates, effectively displacing criminal activity to less-protected areas.

6.11.35.6 Engaging Community Stakeholders

Engaging a broad spectrum of community stakeholders is essential for transforming crime prevention from a municipal function into a deeply embedded social norm. This engagement must go beyond superficial consultations and involve creating sustained platforms for dialogue with key figures such as leaders of residents' associations, school principals, business owners,

and heads of local religious institutions. These forums encourage community members to share their lived experiences, local knowledge, and specific insights, which are invaluable for understanding the unique dynamics of crime in their neighbourhood. This process fosters a powerful sense of collective responsibility, where safety is seen as a shared goal rather than solely the duty of the authorities. RCT is relevant here in two ways: first, it shapes the offender's choice to avoid a tightly-knit and watchful community; and second, it guides the community's own rational choice to cooperate, as they perceive a shared benefit in a safer environment that outweighs the cost of their time and effort (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). This collaborative dynamic builds what sociologists term "collective efficacy," the willingness of community members to intervene for the common good. Research consistently indicates that such deep and meaningful community engagement leads to dramatically improved outcomes in crime prevention, creating a resilient social fabric that is inherently resistant to criminal incursion (Harris, 2010).

6.11.36 Theme 16: The Involvement of Informers in Crime Prevention

The strategic use of informers, or human intelligence (HUMINT), remains one of the most potent yet high-risk tools for proactive crime prevention, demanding a sophisticated approach to recruitment, training, and motivation. To be effective, SAPS must move beyond ad-hoc relationships and implement a structured recruitment process that involves careful vetting, assessment of motivation, and verification of the potential informer's access to criminal networks. This formalised approach is essential, as Katz (1988) argues, because it directly enhances the reliability and credibility of the information, distinguishing actionable intelligence from uncorroborated gossip or deliberate misinformation. The entire process is best understood through the lens of RCT (Cornish & Clarke, 1986), as the decision for an individual to become an informer is a profound cost-benefit calculation. The potential informant weighs the extreme risks of retaliation, social ostracism, and personal danger against the perceived benefits offered by SAPS, which may include financial compensation, leniency for their own offences, or personal protection.

SAPS's role is to strategically manage this equation, making the benefits tangible and the perceived risks manageable to encourage cooperation. This management is not merely transactional; it requires the cultivation of a deep, trusting relationship between the handler and the informer. Consistent and reliable motivation, whether financial or otherwise, must be maintained to counter the constant fear and pressure the informer faces from within the criminal

world. Without this careful stewardship, even a well-placed informer may provide incomplete or deliberately misleading information to protect themselves. This ongoing management, which includes proper handler training and consistent motivation, is what ultimately determines the quality of the intelligence product. Research confirms that effective recruitment and continuous management are critical for improving intelligence quality, ensuring that the information provided is timely, accurate, and operationally useful for disrupting criminal activities from within (Katz, 1988).

6.11.36.1 Fostering Relationships

Establishing amicable relationships between patrol officers and community members is a critical intervention that can be robustly explained through a synthesis of SDT, RAT, DAT, and RCP. This strategy directly empowers informers to share information without fear by fundamentally altering the community and individual dynamics that govern cooperation (Coleman, 1990).

From SDT perspective, crime flourishes in neighbourhoods characterised by weak social institutions and a breakdown of informal social control. Fostering strong police-community relationships is a direct strategy to combat this disorganisation. By building trust and rapport, patrol officers help to strengthen collective efficacy, the willingness of community members to intervene for the common good. This relationship acts as a bridge, reconnecting residents to formal institutions and empowering them to exercise informal social control, thereby mitigating the criminogenic effects of poverty, residential mobility, and ethnic heterogeneity.

This enhanced collective efficacy directly feeds into RAT. Additionally, RAT posits that crime occurs when a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of a capable guardian converge. A community with strong, positive ties to its local police is populated with residents who are far more likely to act as capable guardians. The trust established through relationship-building means that residents are not just passive observers; they are empowered individuals who believe their reports will be taken seriously and acted upon. Thus, fostering relationships effectively increases the presence of capable guardians, disrupting the crime triangle and making the area less hospitable to criminal acts.

Furthermore, this process aligns with DAT. Moreover, DAT argues that criminal behaviour is learned through interaction with others who provide definitions favourable to law violation. By

consistently and positively engaging with community members, patrol officers introduce an alternative set of associations and pro-social definitions. These interactions can teach residents, particularly impressionable youth, that cooperation with law enforcement is a legitimate and commendable norm. This direct counter-narrative to the potential influence of deviant peer groups helps shift the community's normative framework away from one that tolerates or even encourages silence in the face of crime.

Ultimately, these macro-level and situational changes coalesce at the individual level, where RCP explains the final decision to cooperate. For a potential informant, the strengthened social fabric SDT, the presence of active guardianship RAT, and the adoption of pro-social norms DAT fundamentally reshape their cost-benefit analysis (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). The perceived costs of sharing information, such as fear of retaliation or police indifference, are dramatically reduced, while the perceived benefits, including contributing to a safer community and seeing justice served, are amplified. In this context, sharing information becomes the rational choice, leading to an increased reporting of crimes observed in communities with strong police ties (Hirschfield & Bowers, 2001).

6.11.36.2 Infiltration of Criminal Networks

Utilising informers to infiltrate criminal networks is a proactive intelligence strategy that can be robustly understood through the combined lenses of RCP and DAT. From an RCP standpoint, infiltration is a form of situational crime prevention that directly manipulates the decision-making process of offenders (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). By gaining prior knowledge of criminal plans, law enforcement increases the perceived risks and effort required to commit a crime, thereby disrupting the rational calculus of the motivated offender. This proactive approach shifts the cost-benefit analysis, making the criminal enterprise appear less profitable and more hazardous, which empirical research shows can significantly reduce crime rates (Clarke & Cornish, 1985).

Simultaneously, infiltration serves as a direct countermeasure to DAT. Furthermore, DAT posits that criminal behaviour is learned through intimate groups where techniques and, most critically, motives for behaviour are transmitted (Sutherland, 1947). An informer, by successfully embedding within such a group, not only learns these techniques and motives, but also actively disrupts this closed-loop learning environment. The intelligence gathered provides law enforcement with an unparalleled understanding of the group's culture, communication

patterns, and justifications for crime. This insight allows for more effective interventions that can challenge the "definitions favourable to the violation of the law" being perpetuated within the network, effectively working to dismantle the very process through which criminality is cultivated and maintained (Sutherland, 1947).

6.11.36.3 Clear Boundaries for Informers

Establishing clear ethical and operational boundaries for informers is paramount for maintaining the integrity of the intelligence system, a principle that can be substantiated by both RCP and control theory literature aligned with SDT. From an RCP viewpoint, informers are rational actors who must weigh the benefits of cooperation against the potential costs. If they are permitted or encouraged to engage in criminal activity, the legal and moral costs of their role become blurred, potentially leading them to prioritise their own criminal gains over their duty to law enforcement. Clear boundaries, therefore, reinforce the rational framework of the agreement, ensuring the informant remains a controlled asset rather than an unchecked liability (Cornish & Clarke, 1986).

This principle resonates with the foundational ideas in Travis Hirschi's (1969) work on social control, which complements SDT. Hirschi argues that an individual's bond to society is built on attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief. By instructing informers not to engage in crime, law enforcement is demanding they maintain a "commitment" to conventional norms and a "belief" in the law. Allowing informers to commit crimes would sever this bond, pulling them deeper into the criminal subculture and eroding the very legitimacy of the police institution. In socially disorganised areas where formal control is weak, maintaining these ethical boundaries is even more critical to prevent law enforcement from inadvertently contributing to the blurring of norms that fuels criminality.

6.11.36.4 Protection of Informers

Implementing strict protocols to protect informers is a cornerstone of an effective intelligence strategy, a necessity underscored by RCP and contextualised by SDT. Moreover, RCP explicitly frames the decision to cooperate as a cost-benefit analysis where the perceived risk is the most significant deterrent (Harris, 2010). For a potential informer, the "costs" are not abstract; they are the tangible threats of retaliation and violence. Therefore, robust protection measures are not merely an ethical duty but a strategic imperative that directly lowers the perceived costs, thereby making cooperation a rational choice. This security is what transforms a hesitant individual into a willing source of intelligence, leading to a significant improvement

in both the quality and quantity of information gathered (Felson & Clarke, 1998).

From an SDT perspective, the need for stringent protection is magnified in disorganised neighbourhoods. In communities characterised by weak social cohesion and a lack of trust in formal institutions, an informer has no recourse to informal social control for protection. Their safety rests entirely on the efficacy of the police. A failure to protect an informant in such an environment would not only eliminate a source but would also send a devastating message to the entire community, reinforcing the perception that the state is incapable of providing security. Thus, effective informant protection is a critical mechanism for rebuilding collective efficacy and demonstrating that formal institutions can, in fact, serve as a reliable bulwark against criminal influence.

6.11.36.5 Use of Assumed Names and Coded Language

Employing assumed names and coded language is a sophisticated security protocol that directly enhances the viability of informants by manipulating the variables central to the RCP and RAT. Through the lens of RCP, these techniques are powerful risk-reduction tools. They directly decrease the probability of an informant being identified by criminal elements, thereby lowering the most significant "cost" associated with cooperation. By minimising this risk, law enforcement makes the prospect of informing a far more rational and palatable choice for individuals operating within high-stakes environments (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). This operational security is essential for encouraging participation and ensuring the continued flow of intelligence.

This strategy can also be viewed through RAT. In the context of informant management, the informant acts as a "capable guardian" against crime. However, this guardian can themselves become a "suitable target" for retaliation. The use of assumed names and coded language is a form of "target hardening." It increases the effort that criminal actors must expend to identify and locate the informant, thereby preventing the convergence of a motivated offender and a suitable target. This procedural safeguard ensures the guardian remains protected and can continue their function without undue exposure, a principle supported by research highlighting the link between anonymity and informant safety (Felson & Clarke, 1998).

6.11.36.6 Regular Evaluation of Informers

The regular evaluation of informers' reliability and trustworthiness is a critical internal control

mechanism, essential for ensuring the integrity and efficiency of intelligence operations, a practice justified by RCP and DAT. From an RCP standpoint, law enforcement agencies must also act as rational actors, allocating finite resources to maximise returns. An unreliable or deceptive informant provides poor intelligence, leading to wasted resources, failed operations, and potential legal jeopardy. Regular evaluations, including scrutinising financial activities for discrepancies, are a rational risk-management strategy designed to verify the quality of the "product" (information) and mitigate the risk of corruption, thereby ensuring the agency's efforts are effective and accountable (Shover, 1996).

Furthermore, this process aligns with the tenets of DAT. An informant's position is perilously balanced between conventional society and a criminal subculture. Regular assessment helps monitor which set of "definitions" they (informers) are internaliing. Sudden, unexplained wealth, for instance, could be a strong indicator that the informant is adopting the definitions and values of the criminal world for personal gain, rather than maintaining their allegiance to law enforcement. This ongoing assessment is therefore not just a check on honesty but a diagnostic tool to gauge whether the informant is being influenced by the very criminal associations they are meant to be exposing, allowing for timely intervention to preserve the integrity of the entire system.

6.11.36.7 Monitoring Relationships and Spending Habits

Monitoring the relationships between informers and criminal groups, as well as their spending habits, is a critical risk-management strategy that can be profoundly understood through the combined lenses of RCP and DAT. From an RCP standpoint, law enforcement must act as a rational manager of assets, ensuring the investment in an informant yields a high return of reliable intelligence while minimising the risk of compromise or corruption (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). An informant's sudden, unexplained wealth is a red flag that their rational calculation may have shifted; the benefits from criminal activity may now outweigh the benefits of cooperation. Proactive monitoring of these financial and social indicators allows SAPS to make informed, evidence-based decisions about the informant's continued viability, thereby protecting operational integrity and resource allocation (Bennett & Holloway, 2005).

Simultaneously, this monitoring is a direct application of the principles of DAT. An informant's role places them in a precarious position, constantly exposed to the intimate groups where criminal techniques and, more importantly, motives and rationalizations are learned. By

tracking their relationships, handlers are effectively assessing the intensity, frequency, and duration of the informant's exposure to "definitions favourable to the violation of the law." A drift towards closer association with criminal elements, coupled with lavish spending, is a strong indicator that the informant is being successfully socialised into the criminal subculture. This ongoing assessment is not merely administrative; it is a crucial diagnostic tool to determine if the informant is maintaining their allegiance to conventional norms or is being subverted by the very network they are tasked with penetrating.

6.11.36.8 Comprehensive and Ethical Framework

Establishing a comprehensive and ethical framework for managing informers is foundational to building a legitimate and effective intelligence capability, a principle that resonates deeply with SDT and RCP. In the context of SDT, where communities suffer from a breakdown of trust in formal institutions, an ethical framework is not just an internal document but a public statement of legitimacy. When law enforcement demonstrates that it manages even its most confidential relationships with clear rules, respect for rights, and a commitment to safety, it begins to repair the fractured institutional bond. This adherence to a professional code counters the narrative of arbitrary or corrupt policing, thereby strengthening collective efficacy and encouraging community cooperation, which is the antidote to social disorganisation (Hirschi, 1969).

From an RCP viewpoint, the ethical framework directly manipulates the cost-benefit analysis for potential informers. Cooperation with law enforcement is fraught with risk, but a well-communicated ethical structure reduces the perceived "costs" by offering assurances of fair treatment, protection, and moral justification (Harris, 2010). Individuals are more likely to cooperate when they believe their involvement is part of a principled, rather than a purely exploitative, process. This framework ensures that the informant's choice to cooperate is not only rational from a risk-management perspective but also morally defensible, which sustains motivation and long-term commitment. As research indicates, such structured, principled management is not merely an ethical luxury but a practical necessity that significantly improves the quality and reliability of the intelligence gathered (Cornish & Clarke, 1986).

6.11.36.9 Community Engagement

Promoting community participation in crime prevention efforts can strengthen law enforcement and create a safer environment for all residents. Engaging community members in discussions

about crime trends and prevention strategies fosters a sense of collective responsibility (Harris, 2010). Rational Choice Theory highlights the role of social capital in facilitating cooperation; thus, engaging the community can enhance the perceived benefits of collaboration with law enforcement (Putnam, 2000). Research indicates that community engagement in crime prevention efforts leads to improved outcomes and reduced crime rates (Bennett & Holloway, 2005).

6.11.37 Theme 17: Commitment to Flawless and Conventional Interview Protocols Establishment of Standardised Procedures

The development and implementation of standardized interview procedures represent a critical institutional reform that can be analysed through the complementary lenses of RAT, RCT, and SDT. Furthermore, RAT aptly frames the detective as a "capable guardian" in the micro-environment of the interview room (Cohen & Felson, 1979). However, the effectiveness of this guardianship is not inherent; it must be honed. Standardised procedures that eschew narrative, guilt-presumptive, and leading questions are the tools that transform a detective into a truly capable guardian, increasing the likelihood of eliciting accurate information and preventing the miscarriage of justice, which is itself a form of "crime" against the legal order.

From RCP's viewpoint, these procedures serve to optimise the decision-making environment for both the detective and the suspect. For the detective, adhering to a structured, evidence-based protocol is the rational choice; it minimises legal risk, enhances the probative value of the evidence obtained, and increases the probability of a successful prosecution. For the suspect, a fair and transparent process alters their cost-benefit analysis. The perceived benefits of deception are reduced when faced with methodical, non-coercive questioning, while the costs of maintaining a false narrative increase. This structured environment, supported by extensive research, significantly improves the accuracy and reliability of the information obtained (Gudjonsson, 2003; Kebbell & Wagstaff, 1997). Finally, in the context of SDT, the adoption of such professional, ethical standards is a powerful tool for building institutional legitimacy. In communities where trust in the police is eroded, demonstrating a commitment to fairness and professionalism in the high-stakes environment of interrogations helps to repair the fractured relationship between the community and the formal agents of social control.

6.11.37.1 Enhanced Training and Retraining

Ongoing training and retraining are the engine that ensures the standardised procedures are not

merely a manual on a shelf but a lived practice. This commitment can be viewed through RAT as an investment in enhancing the quality of "capable guardianship." A well-trained detective is a more effective guardian against crime and error (Cohen & Felson, 1979). From an RCP standpoint, the police agency acts as a rational actor, allocating resources (time, finances) to training with the expectation of a high return on investment: fewer wrongful convictions, more reliable intelligence, and enhanced case clearance rates. For the individual officer, continuous training reinforces that ethical and effective interviewing is the most rational path to professional success and legal safety. This sustained professional development ensures that detectives are equipped to counter the sophisticated techniques learned by offenders through DAT; criminals learn how to manipulate interviews and evade detection, and advanced training provides detectives with the counter-narratives and skills to penetrate these learned defences. Research consistently confirms that this investment in human capital yields tangible benefits, leading to better investigative outcomes and a more professional police service (Harris, 2010; Kebbell & Milne, 1998).

6.11.37.2 Promotion of Interview Transparency

Promoting transparency in the interviewing process is a fundamental step toward building procedural justice and institutional legitimacy, concepts central to overcoming the challenges posed by SDT. In neighbourhoods characterised by cynicism and distrust of formal institutions, allowing oversight by psychologists, criminologists, and other stakeholders sends a powerful message: the police are accountable and their processes are fair. This transparency directly addresses the core concerns of procedural justice, where the fairness of the process is as important as the outcome (Tyler, 2004). By demonstrating a willingness to be scrutinised, SAPS can begin to rebuild the collective efficacy and trust that are absent in socially disorganised communities. From an RCP perspective, transparency lowers the perceived costs for community members to cooperate with the police. When individuals believe the system is not arbitrary or abusive, their fear of exploitation diminishes, making the decision to share information a much more rational and palatable choice. This fosters a virtuous cycle where transparency begets trust, which in turn begets cooperation, ultimately strengthening the entire criminal justice system.

6.11.37.3 Access to Interview Data

Providing managed access to interview data, when legally permissible, is the ultimate expression of transparency and a profound mechanism for enhancing police-community

relations. This practice directly counters the alienation and distrust central to SDT. In disorganised areas, the opacity of state power can be a source of fear and resentment. By allowing controlled access, SAPS demystifies its operations and demonstrates a commitment to accountability, which is essential for fostering public trust and encouraging a sense of shared responsibility for public safety (Tyler, 2004). This action aligns with RCP by altering the community's calculation of the benefits of engagement. When citizens can see evidence of fair and effective policing, their perceived benefit of collaborating with law enforcement increases significantly. It transforms the relationship from one of mere suspicion to one of participatory oversight. While the guardianship role of the police is highlighted by RAT (Cohen & Felson, 1979), this transparency strengthens that role in the eyes of the public, reinforcing the perception of the police as legitimate and effective guardians rather than an opaque, potentially threatening force. This careful balance of access and confidentiality is a sophisticated strategy that builds legitimacy and, ultimately, a more effective and just intelligence function.

6.11.37.4 Development of a Supportive Policing Culture

The cultivation of a supportive policing culture is a strategic imperative that moves beyond superficial community relations to fundamentally alter the criminogenic landscape, a process that can be robustly understood through the combined lenses of SDT and RCP. From a viewpoint of SDT, a culture that is genuinely responsive to community needs is a direct antidote to the core problems of poverty, residential turnover, and ethnic heterogeneity that erode informal social control. When SAPS demonstrates an understanding of local concerns and aligns its practices accordingly, it begins to rebuild the collective efficacy and trust in formal institutions that are absent in disorganised neighbourhoods (Skogan, 2006). This supportive culture transforms the police from an occupying force into a partner in community governance, thereby strengthening the social fabric itself.

This enhanced social fabric directly fuels the mechanisms of RAT. A supportive culture empowers community members, turning them into active and effective "capable guardians." When residents trust the police, they are more likely to report suspicious activity, share intelligence, and intervene in minor disturbances, thereby increasing the perceived risks for potential offenders (Cohen & Felson, 1979). From an RCP viewpoint, this culture alters the cost-benefit analysis for both the community and the police. For residents, the perceived costs of cooperation (mistrust, fear of being ignored) are reduced, while the benefits (a safer, more responsive environment) are amplified. For SAPS, investing in this culture is a rational choice

that yields high returns in the form of actionable intelligence and improved public safety outcomes, making it a cornerstone of effective crime prevention (Tyler, 2004).

6.11.37.5 Assessment of Detective Resources

The evaluation and allocation of detective resources is a critical managerial function with profound implications for crime control, best understood through RCP and RAT. From an RCP standpoint, the police department is a rational actor that must allocate finite resources to maximise outcomes. Under-staffing the detective units tasked with investigating complex crimes like carjackings is a false economy; it lowers the immediate cost of salaries but dramatically increases the long-term costs of unchecked crime, reduced clearance rates, and diminished public confidence (Hickman, 2006). Therefore, conducting a thorough assessment to ensure adequate staffing is a rational investment in the agency's core mission.

This investment directly enhances the capacity for "capable guardianship" as described by RAT. A well-resourced detective branch increases the certainty of apprehension, which is a more powerful deterrent than the severity of punishment (Cohen & Felson, 1979). When offenders perceive a high likelihood of being identified and prosecuted due to thorough investigations, the rational choice shifts away from committing crime. This proactive, resource-driven approach demonstrates a strong law enforcement presence and capability, which can deter potential offenders before they act. Research confirms this logic, showing that adequately staffed departments are more effective, not just in response, but in creating a deterrent environment that prevents crime opportunities from materialising (Koper, 1995).

6.11.37.6 Implementation of Community Feedback Mechanisms

Establishing formal mechanisms for community feedback is a powerful tool for building legitimacy and enhancing operational effectiveness, a strategy that resonates deeply with SDT and RCP. In the context of SDT, these mechanisms directly combat the communication breakdown and institutional mistrust that plague disorganised areas. By creating structured channels for dialogue, meetings, surveys, eccetra-eccetra. The South African Police Service actively rebuilds the broken link between the community and its formal agents of social control. This process fosters a sense of shared ownership over public safety, which is the foundation of collective efficacy (Tyler, 2004).

From an RCP standpoint, feedback mechanisms are a low-cost, high-benefit strategy. For the

community, the cost of providing feedback is minimal, but the potential benefit, more responsive and effective policing, is substantial. For SAPS, ignoring feedback carries the high long-term cost of eroding legitimacy, while acting on it is a rational investment in social capital that pays dividends in the form of increased cooperation and intelligence. This two-way exchange enhances the principles of RAT by providing law enforcement with the granular, street-level intelligence needed to deploy their "capable guardians" more effectively. By understanding the community's perception of safety and crime hotspots, police can adapt their strategies to better disrupt the convergence of motivated offenders and suitable targets (Harris, 2010).

6.11.38 Theme 18: Develop Procedures for Registering Detectives' Misconduct Establishment of a Special Committee

The establishment of a dedicated committee to handle grievances of detective misconduct is a fundamental governance reform that serves as a critical safeguard for both public trust and institutional integrity, a necessity underscored by RCP, SDT, and RAT. At its core, this mechanism is a direct application of RCP. As Becker's (1968) economic model of crime suggests, individuals (including detectives) are deterred by a calculation of costs versus benefits. A transparent, independent, and responsive committee significantly increases the perceived cost of misconduct by raising the certainty and swiftness of consequences. This shifts the rational choice away from unethical behaviour and towards professional conduct.

Furthermore, this committee is a powerful weapon against SDT. Police misconduct is a primary driver of the cynicism and legal cynicism that erodes community trust and dismantles collective efficacy. When the community perceives that guardians are themselves predators, it withdraws cooperation and the informal social control that is essential for a safe neighbourhood crumbles. A robust misconduct committee, therefore, is not merely an internal affairs tool; it is a public statement of accountability that works to rebuild the legitimacy of the police as a formal institution of social control (Tyler, 1990). This aligns with RAT by protecting the integrity of the "capable guardianship" system. Misconduct by an officer not only constitutes a crime in itself but also contaminates all other guardianship efforts, rendering the entire system ineffective. By holding detectives accountable, the committee ensures that the guardianship role remains credible and that the community can continue to view law enforcement as a legitimate protector, thereby fostering the cooperation necessary for effective crime prevention.

6.11.38.1 Evaluation of Interview Practices SAPS

The thorough evaluation of detectives' interview practices is a strategic intelligence reform essential for disrupting organised carjacking and MVT syndicates, a necessity underscored by constitutional imperatives, RAT, and evidence-based interviewing protocols. At its core, this evaluation is a direct application of RAT. As Cohen and Felson (1979) posit, crime occurs when a motivated offender encounters a suitable target without capable guardianship. By refining interview questions to systematically probe the offender's motivations, the criteria for target selection, and their perception of guardianship weaknesses, SAPS transforms the interview from a simple investigative step into a primary intelligence-gathering tool. This structured inquiry allows detectives to deconstruct the organised MO, directly mapping the criminal ecosystem and identifying the key nodes within the criminal network.

Furthermore, this theoretical approach must be operationalised through the implementation of structured interviewing techniques. Research by Kebbell and Wagstaff (1997) demonstrates that such techniques significantly improve the accuracy and reliability of information obtained, providing the methodological rigour needed to identify patterns across seemingly disparate incidents. This structured, evidence-based approach is critical for building a coherent intelligence picture of organised crime. This aligns with the constitutional imperative to protect rights, which is the bedrock of legitimate "capable guardianship." An interview that violates constitutional rights not only renders the evidence useless but fundamentally undermines the guardian's legitimacy. By institutionalising structured, rights-respecting interview protocols, SAPS ensures its guardianship is both effective and credible, fostering the public trust and cooperation necessary to strengthen informal social control and prevent crime.

6.11.39 Theme 19: SAPS Should Acquire and Support an Intense Social Advertising Campaign Introduction of a Comprehensive Campaign

The recommendations for SAPS to acquire and support an intense social advertising campaign are pivotal in addressing the organised nature of offenders' MO related to carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area. This campaign is fundamentally a strategic application of RCP, designed to manipulate the cost-benefit analysis of both potential offenders and community members. By broadcasting messages that highlight the increased certainty of apprehension and the social unacceptability of carjacking, the campaign aims to raise the perceived costs of

engaging in such crimes, making it a less rational choice. Simultaneously, it seeks to alter the community's calculation by showcasing the benefits of cooperation, thereby strengthening the "capable guardianship" element central to RAT (Cohen & Felson, 1979). An informed and vigilant public, mobilised by targeted advertising, directly disrupts the convergence of motivated offenders and suitable targets, creating an environment of heightened risk for criminal syndicates.

Furthermore, this initiative operates at a deeper, structural level by directly confronting the conditions of SDT that allow organised crime to flourish. The campaign is a deliberate effort to rebuild the collective efficacy and social capital that have eroded in communities like Berea, a concept thoroughly explored by Putnam (2000), who linked the decline in community networks to a range of negative social outcomes. By fostering a shared sense of responsibility and trust in law enforcement, the advertising works to re-knit the social fabric, empowering residents to exercise informal social control. This mass communication strategy also serves as a powerful counter-narrative to the principles of DAT. It competes with the pro-criminal definitions and techniques an individual might learn from their immediate peers by disseminating community-wide, anti-crime norms and values, thereby promoting definitions unfavorable to the violation of the law and isolating criminal elements from the broader social environment they seek to exploit.

6.11.39.1 Community Support Solicitation

SAPS should actively solicit community support through a social advertising campaign that emphasises the benefits of community involvement in crime prevention, such as increased safety and reduced crime rates. This strategy is a direct application of RCP, which posits that individuals make decisions based on a cost-benefit analysis (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). By framing participation as a rational choice that yields direct, positive outcomes like enhanced personal safety, the campaign motivates residents to engage actively. This mass mobilisation directly strengthens the "capable guardianship" element of RAT, making the greater Berea area a hostile environment for motivated offenders seeking suitable targets. Furthermore, this initiative serves as a powerful antidote to SDT by actively rebuilding the collective efficacy and social capital that are essential for community resilience. As Putnam (2000) argues, dense social networks and norms of reciprocity are foundational to public safety; this campaign is a deliberate effort to foster these very bonds. Finally, by broadcasting community-wide anti-crime norms, the campaign provides a crucial counter-narrative to DAT, challenging the pro-

criminal definitions and techniques learned in smaller peer groups and promoting definitions unfavorable to the violation of the law on a societal scale.

6.11.39.2 Effective Communication Systems

Establishing effective communication systems is a foundational reform that directly targets the perceptual barriers hindering community-police collaboration. This initiative is fundamentally an application of RCP, where the goal is to alter the cost-benefit analysis for potential informants. By implementing clear, accessible, and low-risk channels for reporting crime, SAPS reduces the perceived costs such as, fear of reprisal or bureaucratic indifference, while simultaneously enhancing the perceived benefits of contributing to community safety (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). This strategy directly strengthens the "capable guardianship" component of RAT; a community that can easily and trustingly communicate with law enforcement becomes an active, formidable guardian, disrupting the convergence of offenders and targets. Furthermore, these systems are vital for combating SDT by building procedural trust and legitimacy that are cornerstones of social capital. As Tyler (2004) and Putnam (2000) would argue, consistent and transparent communication rebuilds the eroded relationship between the community and its formal institutions, fostering the mutual respect necessary for collective efficacy to flourish. Finally, a reliable official communication channel provides a powerful pro-social alternative to the informal networks described by DAT, offering residents a legitimate means to address crime that directly competes with any pro-criminal definitions circulating in their peer groups.

6.11.39.3 Creation of Community Action Groups (CAGs)

The initiation of Community Action Groups (CAGs) represents a structural intervention designed to systematically rebuild the social fabric necessary for crime resilience. While aligning with RCT by increasing the perceived costs of criminal behaviour through heightened community vigilance, the primary power of CAGs lies in their direct application of SDT. These groups are engineered to foster the very elements, strong social ties, dense networks, and collective efficacy, that Sampson and Groves (1989) identified as antidotes to crime. By providing a formal platform for sustained interaction, CAGs transform passive residents into active stakeholders in their own safety, a process that generates the social capital which Putnam (2000) deems essential for a functioning society. This empowerment, in turn, operationalises

the principles of RAT by creating a robust and organised system of "capable guardianship" that is far more effective than unorganised individual efforts. Moreover, CAGs serve as a critical ideological battleground against DAT; they create a sustained pro-social environment where anti-crime norms are reinforced through regular, positive contact with law enforcement and fellow community members, systematically challenging and diluting the pro-criminal definitions and techniques an individual might learn elsewhere.

6.11.39.4 Initiatives for Community Engagement

The campaign's inclusion of informal engagement initiatives, such as “Cooldrink or Coffee with a Police Officer,” is a sophisticated strategy targeting the foundational level of community trust. These low-threshold interactions are a direct application of SDT, designed to build the informal social ties and interpersonal trust that are the bedrock of collective efficacy (Sampson & Groves, 1989). By humanising the police and fostering personal relationships in a non-enforcement context, SAPS can begin to dismantle the "us versus them" mentality that characterises disorganised communities. This process of building social capital, as articulated by Putnam (2000), is crucial for creating a community where residents feel a shared sense of responsibility. From an RCP standpoint, these gatherings lower the cost of community engagement, making cooperation with police an easy and rewarding choice. This enhanced trust and familiarity directly strengthens RAT's "capable guardianship," as residents who know and trust their local officers are far more likely to report suspicious activity and share intelligence. Ultimately, these initiatives provide a powerful counter-narrative to DAT by replacing negative stereotypes of police with positive, personal experiences, thereby promoting definitions favourable to law and order.

6.11.39.5 Transparency in Police Operations

Advocating for transparency in police operations, including the external review of practices by psychologists and criminologists, is a critical reform aimed at restoring institutional legitimacy. This strategy is profoundly rooted in RCP; when citizens perceive law enforcement as fair, accountable, and transparent, the rational choice shifts towards cooperation and engagement (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). This procedural justice, as highlighted by Tyler (2004), is the currency of trust. Furthermore, transparency is a direct assault on the conditions of SDT, where police corruption and opacity are potent forces that destroy social capital and alienate the community (Putnam, 2000). By opening its processes to scrutiny, SAPS demonstrates a commitment to shared values, which is the first step in rebuilding the broken social contract.

This restored legitimacy is essential for RAT, as the effectiveness of the "capable guardian" is entirely dependent on its perceived credibility and trustworthiness. A guardian viewed as corrupt or biased is worse than no guardian at all. Finally, this transparency acts as a macro-level counter to DAT by publicly disavowing and actively working to prevent the very behaviours that fuel anti-police sentiment, thereby reinforcing pro-social definitions of justice at the institutional level.

6.11.39.6 Collective Efforts for Community Safety

Promoting collective efforts for neighbourhood safety, such as the “Fight Against Crime and Keep My Area Clean” initiative, is a multi-layered strategy that empowers residents to reclaim their physical and social space. This is a tangible manifestation of SDT's core principle of collective efficacy, where community members exercise informal social control to achieve a common good (Sampson & Groves, 1989). The act of cleaning and maintaining a neighbourhood is a powerful signal of shared ownership and social cohesion, generating the social capital that Putnam (2000) links to safer, more resilient communities. Through a RAT lens, this environmental maintenance directly reduces the presence of "suitable targets" by creating an atmosphere of active "capable guardianship"; a well-cared-for area signals to potential offenders that residents are vigilant and invested. This initiative also incorporates a sophisticated application of DAT through the concept of "community-network disruption." By encouraging residents to share information and erode trust within motor vehicle syndicates, the community is actively engaging in a campaign to introduce counter-definitions and techniques that disrupt the very associations that sustain criminal enterprises, turning the principles of social learning against the offenders themselves.

6.11.39.7 Open-Door Policy for Reporting

The implementation of an open-door policy for reporting is the culminating step in institutionalising a proactive partnership between SAPS and the community. This policy is fundamentally an application of RCP, strategically altering the cost-benefit analysis for both potential informants and offenders. By minimising the procedural and personal costs of reporting, SAPS makes cooperation the rational choice for residents, while simultaneously increasing the perceived certainty of apprehension for criminals, thereby outweighing the potential benefits of their actions (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). This mass engagement directly operationalises the "capable guardianship" component of RAT, transforming the entire community into an active, networked surveillance system that disrupts the convergence of

motivated offenders and suitable targets. Furthermore, this policy is a direct remedy for the conditions of SDT; by fostering accessibility and demonstrating responsiveness, it rebuilds the essential trust and collective efficacy that are eroded in fractured communities. As Harris (2010) indicates, this sense of empowerment is a critical outcome that leads to improved public safety. Finally, by providing "clear explanations about the organised nature of offenders' MO," the policy serves as a sophisticated form of pro-social Differential Association, equipping residents with the knowledge to recognise and reject criminal techniques, thereby flooding the social environment with definitions unfavourable to the syndicates SAPS seeks to dismantle.

6.11.39.8 Tech-driven Car Security

The recommendation for a precise, offender-informed strategy of tech-driven motor vehicle security represents a sophisticated, target-hardening approach that directly attacks the technical core of modern carjacking and MVT MO. This is a quintessential application of RCP, as the primary function of such technology is to dramatically increase the effort, risk, and skill required to steal a vehicle, thereby altering the offender's cost-benefit analysis and making the attack an irrational choice (Cornish & Clarke, 1986). From the perspective of RAT, this advanced security effectively removes the vehicle from the pool of "suitable targets," acting as a form of perpetual, technological "capable guardianship" that disrupts the convergence necessary for crime to occur (Cohen & Felson, 1979). Furthermore, the widespread adoption of such technology, particularly when promoted through community initiatives, can contribute to combating SDT by creating a "halo effect" of security, enhancing the collective efficacy of a neighbourhood and signalling to criminal networks that the area is a high-risk, low-reward environment. Most critically, the "offender-informed" nature of this strategy is a direct and potent counter to DAT. By developing technology based on a deep understanding of the specific digital techniques learned and shared within criminal syndicates, SAPS can render that learned knowledge obsolete. This not only thwarts current attempts but also forces offenders to constantly relearn new, more complex methods, thereby disrupting the efficient transmission of criminal techniques and definitions that sustain their operations.

6.11.40 Chapter Summary

Chapter 6 has provided a comprehensive analysis of the organised nature of carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area, revealing a criminal landscape defined by sophisticated adaptation and the interplay of technological exploitation and social engineering. The insights from incarcerated offenders demonstrate that these are not spontaneous acts, but calculated

operations leveraging advanced technology and psychological manipulation. This evolution in criminal MO underscores the inadequacy of siloed, reactive policing and necessitates an integrated, theoretically-grounded response. The findings illuminate the complex social context in which these crimes flourish, highlighting the critical role of community dynamics and the rational calculations made by offenders within vulnerable environments.

In direct response to this multifaceted threat, the recommendations outlined in this chapter propose a holistic strategy designed to dismantle criminal enterprises from the ground up. This approach operates simultaneously across individual, environmental, and community levels, weaving together core criminological principles. The social advertising campaign and the promotion of tech-driven car security are direct applications of RCP, strategically altering the cost-benefit analysis for both potential offenders by increasing effort and risk, and for community members, by lowering the barriers to cooperation. Concurrently, initiatives like Community Action Groups, open-door policies, and transparent police operations are engineered to combat SDT by actively rebuilding collective efficacy, social capital, and trust that are the bedrock of resilient communities, as articulated by Putnam (2000). This revitalised social fabric directly enhances the Routine Activities framework by creating a robust and networked system of "capable guardianship," making the convergence of motivated offenders and suitable targets increasingly improbable. Finally, by disseminating pro-social norms and empowering residents with knowledge, these initiatives provide a powerful macro-level counter-narrative to the principles of DAT, disrupting the very social learning processes that sustain criminal syndicates.

Ultimately, the success of this integrated strategy hinges on the unwavering commitment of SAPS to implement these practices with ethical integrity and accountability. The insights gained herein provide not only a significant contribution to the academic understanding of organised crime but also offer actionable, practical implications for policymakers and law enforcement. By investing in this comprehensive approach, one that marries technological countermeasures with deep community engagement, SAPS can move beyond mere crime suppression to foster a sustainable environment of safety and trust. This is the path to not only reducing the incidence of carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area, but also to fundamentally improving the quality of life, allowing the community to thrive free from the spectre of organised crime.

Chapter 7: Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

The following section serves as an introduction to this final chapter, framing the synthesis of the study's key findings, the conclusions drawn from them, and the subsequent recommendations.

7.1 Introduction

This thesis was designed to describe the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO used for committing carjackings and MVTs in Durban's Greater Berea area, as perceived by incarcerated offenders. The preceding chapters have provided a deep, qualitative exploration of these phenomena. This final chapter synthesises the study's key findings, connecting them directly to the seven research objectives and the theoretical framework that guided this investigation. The conclusions drawn herein are not mere summaries but analytical interpretations of the empirical data, which directly inform a set of robust, actionable recommendations. The structure for this chapter is based on the seven research objectives, ensuring a coherent and comprehensive conclusion to this study.

7.2 Summary of Key Findings

The study's findings reveal a criminal enterprise that is not a series of spontaneous acts but a highly organised, technologically advanced, and strategically adaptive system. The progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO is driven by a sophisticated interplay of rational choice, social learning, and exploitation of the social and physical environment. The key findings are summarised below, grouped by the theoretical frameworks that best explain them.

7.2.1 The Criminal Evolution and Adaptation: A Rational and Technological Arms Race

The findings reveal that offenders have evolved from opportunistic theft to a highly sophisticated, technology-driven enterprise. This progression is a direct response to law enforcement's attempts to curb their activities.

- **From Opportunism to Technology-Driven Crime:** The initial stage often involved basic theft. However, as law enforcement introduced new technologies like GPS tracking and improved alarms, offenders strategically adapted. This is a clear manifestation of **RCT** (Cornish & Clarke, 1986), where offenders continuously weigh the risks of increased police pressure against the rewards of successful operations, adjusting their tactics to maximise profit and minimise capture.

- **The Technological Arms Race:** The study provides rich, empirical evidence of a technological arms race. Offenders have moved beyond basic theft to mastering techniques like relay attacks to bypass keyless entry systems, electronic reprogramming via the OBD-II port, and neutralising GPS tracking systems. This demonstrates a calculated investment in technology to overcome modern vehicle security, a clear indicator of **RAT** (Cohen & Felson,1979), where offenders engineer the convergence of a motivated offender, a suitable target, and the absence of a capable guardian.

7.2.2 The Role of Corruption and Infiltration: The Neutralisation of the Capable Guardian

A critical finding is the systematic infiltration of SAPS detectives by motor vehicle crime syndicates. This is not a peripheral issue but a central catalyst for MO progression.

- **From Infiltration to Co-option:** The findings show that corruption is not random but a calculated strategy. By recruiting police colonels, syndicates gain access to "top-secret SAPS information" that drastically alters their risk-reward analysis (Cornish & Clarke,1986). This corrupt symbiosis transforms the formal guardian into a criminal asset, creating a permissive environment where offenders can operate with near impunity.

- **A Permeable Boundary Between Protectors and Perpetrators:** The study highlights a deeply concerning permeable boundary between protectors and perpetrators. Former police officers, insurance agents, and CPF members who become involved in crime illustrates how easily the lines can blur. This transition is often driven by a rational calculation of costs and benefits, framed by **RCT** (Cornish & Clarke,1986), and is a manifestation of **Differential association** (Sutherland,1947), where criminal techniques and rationalisations are learned within these hybrid networks.

7.2.3 The Exploitation of the Social Environment: Engineering a Permissive Landscape

The study demonstrates that offenders do not merely operate in a vacuum but actively engineer and exploit the social environment of the Greater Berea area.

- **From Social Disorganisation to Opportunity Creation:** The findings align with **Social Disorganisation Theory (SDT)** (Shaw & McKay,1942). Offenders described how the gentrification of the area, characterised by residential instability, weak social

ties, and a lack of collective efficacy, creates a permissive environment for crime. The syndicates' deliberate placement of offenders in rented units and their manipulation of community dynamics exemplifies a calculated exploitation of these vulnerabilities.

- **Engineering Fear and Hostilities:** Offenders actively foster fear and hostilities between the community and the police. This serves a dual purpose: it fragments community ties and erodes collective efficacy, further neutralising informal guardianship and creating a space where their MO can thrive.

7.2.4 The Criminal Ecosystem: A Synthesis of Theory

The findings collectively paint a picture of a sophisticated criminal ecosystem where **Rational Choice, Routine Activity, Differential Association, and Social Disorganisation** are not separate theories but interconnected forces that collectively explain the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO.

- **Rational Choice (RCT):** Explains the strategic decision-making of offenders, from kingpins to street-level actors. Their choices are calculated to maximise reward and minimise risk.

- **Routine Activity Theory (RAT):** Explains how offenders engineer opportunities by identifying suitable targets and exploiting the absence of capable guardianship, whether formal (police) or informal (community).

- **Differential Association (DAT):** Explains how criminal skills, techniques, and rationalisations are learned and transmitted within intimate criminal groups.

- **Social Disorganisation (SDT):** Explains why the Greater Berea area provides a fertile ground for these enterprises to flourish. The lack of social cohesion and the hostilities between the community and the police directly contribute to a permissive environment for crime.

Synthesis: The findings demonstrate that these theories are not mutually exclusive. For example, an offender's **rational choice** to adopt technology is informed by **differential association** (learning from a "tech expert") and is executed in an environment of **social disorganisation** that minimises the risk of detection.

7.3 Synthesis of Findings

The findings of this study have significant implications for criminological theory and practical crime prevention. The synthesis connects the empirical findings from Chapters 5 and 6 to the theoretical frameworks that guided this study.

7.3.1 Theoretical Implications

- **Advancing RCT:** The study provides deep, empirical support for the tenets of RCT. Offenders are not impulsive actors but rational strategists who continuously adapt their methods in response to law enforcement. Their calculated adoption of advanced technology and their infiltration of SAPS demonstrates a sophisticated cost-benefit analysis where the perceived rewards of corruption and insider information outweigh the significant risks involved. This finding expands upon RCT by illustrating how offenders manipulate not just the physical environment but the very systems designed to stop them.

- **Refining RAT:** The findings strongly support RAT. The offenders' meticulous pre-crime planning and their ability to engineer opportunities by manipulating guardianship (for example, creating "false breakdowns" or using drones to scout locations). This demonstrates a calculated effort to ensure the convergence of a motivated offender, a suitable target, and an absence of a capable guardian.

- **Enriching DAT:** The study provides rich, qualitative evidence for DAT. The detailed accounts of how offenders are recruited, trained, and socialised into criminal networks are powerful illustrations of Sutherland's (1947) theory. The kingpins' descriptions of recruiting poor, desperate individuals and subjecting them to a strict code of conduct is a clear application of criminal socialisation.

- **Validating SDT:** The findings provide a contemporary validation of Shaw and McKay's (1942) theory. The offenders' own accounts of how they exploit the gentrification of the greater Berea area, the lack of social cohesion, and the hostilities between the community and the police directly contribute to a permissive environment for crime.

7.3.2 Practical Implications

- **For Law Enforcement (SAPS):** The findings demand a fundamental shift from reactive policing to a proactive, intelligence-led model. The infiltration of SAPS detectives necessitates an immediate and uncompromising effort to cleanse the service of corrupt elements. The study highlights that without addressing this internal corruption, any tactical or technological countermeasures will be undermined from within.

- **For the eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality:** The findings suggest that urban renewal initiatives, while well-intentioned, can be strategically manipulated by criminal syndicates. Urban planners must collaborate with law enforcement to design environments that are inherently resistant to criminal exploitation.

- **For the Automotive and Technology Sectors:** The findings present a clear call to action for the automotive industry. The detailed descriptions of relay attacks and OBD hacking demonstrate that current security features are no match for modern criminal ingenuity. A collaborative effort between manufacturers and law enforcement is essential to stay ahead of the technological curve.

- **For the Community:** The findings underscore the urgent need to rebuild social cohesion and collective efficacy. The offenders' success in exploiting social disorganisation highlights the importance of community-based initiatives like neighbourhood watches and community action groups (CAGs) as a cornerstone of a resilient community.

7.3.3 A New Integrated Model of Criminal Ecosystems

The study proposes an integrated model that synthesises the four theoretical frameworks. This model posits that criminal ecosystems are self-perpetuating systems where:

1. **Rational Choice (RCT):** dictates the strategic decisions of leadership.
2. **Differential Association (DAT):** provides the cultural transmission of skills and rationalisations that enable the system's operations.
3. **Social Disorganisation (SDT):** provides the permissive environment that allows the system to thrive.

4. **Routine Activity Theory (RAT):** dictates the specific methods used to engineer opportunities and neutralise guardianship.

This integrated model is a key contribution of this thesis, offering a more holistic and accurate understanding of organised crime than any single theory could provide in isolation.

7.4 Conclusions

This chapter draws together the core conclusions from the empirical data, each directly linked to a research objective and underpinned by the integrated theoretical framework. The conclusions are presented below, structured to align with the study's seven research objectives.

7.4.1 Conclusion for Objective 1: Perspectives on the Progression of the Organised Nature of Offenders' MO

The study concludes that the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO is a sophisticated, multi-layered phenomenon. Offenders are not impulsive actors but rational strategists who operate within a hierarchical structure. Their MO is characterised by:

- **Technological Sophistication:** A deliberate evolution from basic theft to advanced techniques like relay attacks and electronic reprogramming. This demonstrates a calculated investment in technology to overcome modern vehicle security, a clear indicator of **RCT** (Cornish & Clarke, 1986).

- **Systematic Information Flow:** A structured, bottom-up flow of intelligence from street-level operatives to kingpins, ensuring that operational decisions are based on reliable, pre-processed information.

- **Exploitation of Law Enforcement:** The calculated infiltration of SAPS detectives provides syndicates with "top-secret information," fundamentally altering the risk-reward analysis for offenders and transforming the formal guardian into a criminal asset.

- **Exploitation of the Social Environment:** Offenders actively exploit the social disorganisation of the Greater Berea area, using gentrification and the lack of social cohesion to create a permissive environment for their operations.

7.4.2 Conclusion for Objective 2: The Change of the Organised Nature of Offenders' MO from One Stage to Another

The study concludes that the MO is not static but a dynamic, multi-stage process of strategic adaptation. This progression is driven by a combination of four key factors:

- **Response to Law Enforcement:** The primary catalyst for MO progression is offenders' perception of consistent police surveillance. This perception forces them to continuously adapt their methods to evade detection.

- **Tactical Innovation:** Offenders innovate to create opportunities rather than simply reacting to police presence. This includes using small drones for reconnaissance and developing "tactical exploitation of distractive behaviours" to mislead and distract law enforcement.

- **Infiltration and Positive Feedback:** The infiltration of SAPS detectives provides syndicates with insider knowledge and tactical guidance, which is a critical factor that enables them to stay ahead of law enforcement.

- **Technological Arms Race:** The adoption of new technologies like drones and signal-jamming devices represents a sophisticated stage of MO progression, where offenders invest in technology to overcome security measures, a clear manifestation of **RCT** and **RAT**.

7.4.3 Conclusion for Objective 3: Links Between Formal Organisations of Perpetrators and the Progression of their MO

The study concludes that formal organisations of perpetrators are the primary engine driving the progression of their MO. The link is forged through three interconnected elements:

- **Trust-Creating Circumstances:** Trust is not given freely but is meticulously cultivated through life-threatening interactions and a strict code of conduct. It is the social glue that holds these organisations together.

- **Criminal Networks and Ties:** These organisations are not random but highly structured networks that facilitate the sharing of resources, division of labour, and

strategic planning.

- **Criminal Ties:** The relationships forged within these networks are essential for the transmission of criminal skills and rationalisations that enable the execution of complex, coordinated crimes.

7.4.4 Conclusion for Objective 4: How Offenders Plan the Progression of their MO

The study concludes that the planning of carjackings and MVTs is a meticulous, multi-stage process grounded in rational calculation and strategic foresight. The planning process involves:

- **Initial Offending Decisions:** Initial choices to offend are driven by a cost-benefit analysis, where the perceived rewards (financial gain, status) are weighed against the perceived risks (police presence, target hardening).

- **Pre-Offence Tasks:** This involves systematic surveillance of targets, assessing security vulnerabilities, and gathering intelligence on police movements.

- **Final Revised Decisions:** A continuous, dynamic process of re-evaluation occurs in real-time during the commission of a crime. This is a clear application of **bounded rationality** (Cornish & Clarke, 1986), where offenders adapt their plans based on unfolding events and changing circumstances.

- **Target Selection:** Targets are not chosen at random but are meticulously selected based on a structured analysis of vulnerability, value, and accessibility. The choice of a target is a calculated decision designed to maximise reward and minimise risk.

7.4.5 Conclusion for Objective 5: Pull Factors Drawing Offenders to the Greater Berea Area

The study concludes that a complex interplay of pull factors draws offenders to the Greater Berea area. These factors are not standalone but are deeply interconnected.

- **Economic Drivers:** Financial necessity and the allure of the "street-life" are primary pull factors. The prospect of substantial financial gain from the sale of stolen vehicles is a powerful motivator, particularly in a context of high unemployment and inequality.

- **Social Influences:** Peer pressure and the desire for status within organised groups are

significant. These groups offer a sense of identity, belonging, and an alternative value system where criminality is normalised and even commendable.

- **Environmental Factors:** The gentrification of the Greater Berea area, with its influx of wealthy residents and high-value vehicles, creates a pool of "suitable targets." Simultaneously, the area's inherent weaknesses (lack of social cohesion, residential mobility, and hostilities between the police and the community) creates a permissive environment for crime.

- **Technological Factors:** The availability of advanced technology (e.g., drones, jamming devices) and the perceived ease of circumventing security systems lowers the perceived risk and increases the perceived reward.

7.4.6 Conclusion for Objective 6: Carjackers' Use of Violence

The study concludes that violence is not an incidental feature of carjackings but a deliberate, multi-functional tool used to achieve several interconnected goals.

- **To Fragment Community Ties:** Extreme violence is a calculated strategy to systematically dismantle community cohesion and erode collective efficacy, creating a pervasive climate of fear that discourages witness cooperation with law enforcement.

- **To Neutralise Capable Guardianship:** Violence is used to ensure victim compliance and witness non-intervention. By demonstrating a reputation for ruthlessness, offenders establish a powerful brand of terror that establishes their dominance and enforces their internal hierarchy.

- **To Enforce Internal Discipline:** Violence is a crucial mechanism for enforcing a rigid internal hierarchy and maintaining a cycle of respect and fear within the criminal group. This internal cycle of respect and fear is a learned behaviour, reinforced through a strict code of conduct.

7.4.7 Conclusion for Objective 7: Recommendations for Addressing the Progression of the Organised Nature of Offenders' MO

The conclusions derived from this study lead directly to the following set of recommendations. These are not generic suggestions but targeted strategies designed to dismantle the criminal ecosystem described in this thesis. The recommendations are structured for clarity and are

directed at the key stakeholders who can effect change.

7.5.1 Recommendations for the South African Police Service (SAPS)

Central to enhancing integrity and combating systemic corruption within the SAPS is the establishment of an independent anti-corruption unit.

7.5.1.1. Establish an Independent Anti-Corruption Unit

A specialised, independent unit, free from SAPS command structures, must be established to investigate and prosecute corrupt officers, particularly those attached to the Crime Intelligence Division (CID). This unit must have the authority to conduct thorough investigations, access all relevant dockets, and recommend prosecution without fear of internal interference.

7.5.1.2. Implement a National Integrity and Transparency Framework

SAPS must implement a clear, legally-backed framework that promotes transparency and accountability. This includes mandatory declarations of financial interests, regular lifestyle audits for detectives, and severe penalties for any form of corruption.

7.5.1.3. Enhance of Crime Intelligence Capabilities

SAPS must move beyond reactive policing to a proactive, intelligence-led model. This requires significant investment in advanced training in counter-surveillance, cybercrime, and the analysis of criminal networks.

7.5.1.4. Foster Inter-Agency Collaboration

SAPS must establish a permanent joint task force with the eThekwini Municipality and the National Prosecuting Authority (NPA). This task force would focus specifically on carjackings and MVTs in the greater Berea area, ensuring seamless information sharing and coordinated operations.

7.5.2. Recommendations for the eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality

A strategic and overarching recommendation for the eThekwini Metropolitan Municipality involves a fundamental re-evaluation of its urban planning and environmental design policies.

7.5.2.1. Urban Planning and Environmental Design

The municipality must integrate crime prevention into its urban planning. This includes

improving street lighting, installing public CCTV, and designing public spaces that minimise opportunities for crime. The goal is to make the environment less hospitable to criminal operations.

7.5.2.2. Business Engagement

The municipality should establish a formal partnership with local businesses. This includes creating a forum for business owners to share intelligence on suspicious activities and to co-develop crime prevention strategies.

7.5.2.3. Community Policing Forums

The municipality must support and expand Community Policing Forums (CPFs) to rebuild trust and cooperation between residents and SAPS. These forums should be platforms for open dialogue between residents and SAPS officers, fostering a sense of shared responsibility for community safety.

7.5.3. Recommendations for the Automotive and Technology Sectors

Confronting the converging threats of physical theft and cyber-intrusion, the foremost strategic imperative for both the automotive and technology sectors is to mandate enhanced vehicle security.

7.5.3.1. Mandate Enhanced Vehicle Security:

Legislation should be updated to require manufacturers to include security features that are resistant to the sophisticated methods (e.g., relay attacks) identified in this study.

- **Collaboration for Security Innovation:** A public-private partnership between automotive manufacturers, technology firms, and SAPS is essential to develop and implement counter-measures to stay ahead of the technological curve.

- **Public Awareness Campaigns:** A collaborative effort between the automotive industry and SAPS is needed to educate the public on evolving threats and to promote vehicle security best practices.

7.5.4. Recommendations for Community Stakeholders

Recognising that collective efficacy is built upon a foundation of trust and shared purpose, the primary recommendation for community stakeholders is to foster community cohesion.

7.5.4.1. Foster Community Cohesion

Initiatives like neighbourhood watches and community action groups (CAGs) are essential for rebuilding the social fabric of the Greater Berea area. These groups empower residents to become active and capable guardians of their own safety.

7.5.4.2. Empowerment through Education

Community education programs that explain the "why" and "how" of carjackings and MVTs can demystify the criminal glamour and empower residents to be proactive in their own safety.

7.5.4.3. Promoting Transparency and Accountability:

Establishing clear channels for community members to report police misconduct or corruption without fear of retribution is vital for rebuilding trust. This is a fundamental requirement for restoring public trust and encouraging cooperation.

7.5.4. Recommendations for Future Research

To move beyond a static analysis and capture the dynamic evolution of the issues discussed, the primary recommendation for future research is the adoption of a longitudinal approach.

7.6.1. Longitudinalinal Studies

A longitudinal study is needed to track the evolving MO of offenders over time. This would help to understand the long-term effects of current interventions and identify emerging trends.

- **Focus on Technological Adaptation:** Future research should specifically investigate the technological arms race between offenders and the automotive industry. This includes studying the effectiveness of counter-measures and predicting the next wave of criminal innovation.

- **Focus on Corruption:** Further qualitative research is needed to delve deeper into the social and psychological factors that facilitate police corruption and the infiltration of SAPS detectives. This requires a deep-seated, in-depth investigation to understand the mechanisms of this infiltration and to develop effective counter-intelligence strategies.

- **Comparative Studies:** A comparative analysis of carjacking and MVTs in different geographical areas (e.g., comparing the Greater Berea area with other urban centres)

could provide valuable insights into the role of urban dynamics and environmental design in fostering or deterring organised crime.

7.6.2. Focus on Informal Social Control

Future research should investigate the role of informal social control in communities that are successfully resisting criminal incursion. What makes some neighbourhoods more resilient than others in the face of sophisticated criminal enterprises? What makes them more resilient to criminal incursion? What specific neighbourhood-level actions make them resilient to criminal incursion?

7.6.3. Focus on Victimology

Research that centres on the psychological impact of carjackings and MVTs on victims can inform more holistic support services and refine prevention strategies. This research should focus on the psychological trauma and fear, focusing on how to best support victims and help them rebuild their lives after such a traumatic event.

7.6.4. Limitations of the Study

This study, while providing rich, in-depth qualitative data, is subject to several limitations that must be acknowledged.

- Sample Size and Generalisability: The sample, though rich in descriptive detail, is small and not statistically representative of all offenders. The findings are not generalisable to all offenders in the greater Berea area or to other geographical areas.
- Potential Researcher Bias: As the researcher conducted the interviews and performed the analysis, my own background and preconceptions may have inadvertently influenced the data collection and interpretation. I have strived to maintain objectivity, but the potential for researcher bias in a qualitative study of this nature is an important consideration.
- Reliance on Self-Reported Data: The findings are based on the self-reported experiences of incarcerated individuals. While cross-referencing with other data sources (for instance, accessible police documents, media reports) would strengthen the study's validity, the conclusions remain contingent on the honesty and accuracy of the participants' testimonies.

7.6.6. Conclusion

In conclusion, this thesis has illuminated the complex, adaptive, and deeply entrenched nature of carjackings and MVTs committed by offenders who used the progression of the organised nature of the offenders' MO in Durban's greater Berea area. The incarcerated participants have provided a rare, inside look into a criminal world where rational calculation, learned expertise, and social engineering converge to create a formidable criminal enterprise. The findings reveal that these are not random acts but the result of a sophisticated criminal ecosystem that thrives on the weaknesses of both formal and informal guardianship. This thesis provides a comprehensive understanding of the progression of the organised nature of offenders' MO, contributing a significant and much-needed empirical foundation for the development of effective crime prevention strategies.

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DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES APPROVAL LETTER

correctional services
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REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Private Bag X136, PRETORIA, 0001 Poyntons Building, C/O WF Nkomo and Sophie De Bruyn Street, PRETORIA
Tel (012) 307 2770

Mr L Luzipo
277 Rick Turner Road
Glenwood
Durban
4001

Dear Mr Luzipo

RE: APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONAL SERVICES ON: "THE PROGRESSION OF THE ORGANISED NATURE OF THE *MODI OPERANDI* USED BY OFFENDERS THAT ARE INVOLVED IN THE COMMISSION OF MOTOR VEHICLE THEFTS AND CARJACKINGS IN THE GREATER BEREA AREA IN DURBAN, FROM INCARCERATED OFFENDERS' PERSPECTIVES"

It is with pleasure to inform you that your request to conduct research in the Department of Correctional Services on the above topic has been approved.

Your attention is drawn to the following:

- This ethics approval is valid from **20 March 2019 to 19 March 2022**.
- The relevant Regional and Area Commissioners where the research will be conducted will be informed of your proposed research project.
- Your internal guide will be **Ms N Mkhize Regional Head: Corrections, KwaZulu Natal.**
- You are requested to contact her at telephone number (033) 355 7304 before the commencement of your research.
- It is your responsibility to make arrangements for your interviewing times.
- Your identity document/passport and this approval letter should be in your possession when visiting the correctional centres.
- You are required to use the terminology used in the White Paper on Corrections in South Africa (February 2005) e.g. "Offenders" not "Prisoners" and "Correctional Centres" not "Prisons".
- You are not allowed to use photographic or video equipment during your visits, however the audio recorder is allowed.
- You are required to submit your final report to the Department for approval by the Commissioner of Correctional Services before publication (including presentation at workshops, conferences, seminars, etc) of the report.
- Should you have any enquiries regarding this process, please contact the DCS REC Administration for assistance at telephone number (012) 307 2770.

Thank you for your application and interest to conduct research in the Department of Correctional Services.

Yours faithfully

[redacted]

ND SIHLEZANA
DC: POLICY COORDINATION & RESEARCH
DATE: 22/03/2019

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER

UNIVERSITY OF
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05 June 2019

Mr Lennox Luzipho 211507479
School of Applied Human Sciences
Howard College Campus

Dear Mr Luzipho

Protocol reference number: HSS/1458/018D
Project title: The progression of the organised nature of the *modi operandi* used by offenders that are involved in the commission of motor vehicle thefts and carjackings in the greater Berea Area in Durban, from the incarcerated offenders' perspectives.

Full Approval – Full Committee Reviewed Application

With regards to your response received 27 January 2019 to our letter of 07 November 2018, the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol have been granted **FULL APPROVAL.**

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. Please note: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 1 year from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

Yours faithfully

I[redacted]portunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

.....
Dr Shamila Naidoo (Deputy Chair)

/px

cc Supervisor: Prof Jean Steyn
cc Academic Leader Research: Prof R Teer-Tomaselli
cc School Administrator: Ms A Ntuli

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
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