

University of Wales Trinity Saint David
BSc Professional Policing
Dissertation BMPL6008

Re- Offending: An Analysis of Human Behaviour and Underlying Patterns of Re- Offending

**Can psychological and social factors contribute to the pattern of human behaviours,
with a direct correlation to re-offending?**

Name: Chelsea Pelosi
Student Number: 2015581
Date: 06/05/2024
Word Count: 8,769

Contents

	Acknowledgments	3
	Declarations	4
1.	INTRODUCTION	5
1.1	Research Aim	6
1.2	Research Objectives	6
1.3	Research Question	7
2.	LITERATURE REVIEW	8
2.1	Re-Offending	8
2.2	Rehabilitation	9
2.3	Youth Crime	11
2.4	ACES	13
2.5	Human Behaviour & Sociological Influences	14
3.	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	17
3.1	Research Onion	17
3.2	Research Philosophy	18
3.3	Research Approach	19
3.4	Methodological Choice	19
3.5	Research Strategy	20
3.6	Time Horizon	20
3.7	Techniques for Data Collection, Processes and Analysis	21
4.	FINDINGS	23
4.1	Description of results and data analysis	23
5.	CONCLUSION	33
5.1	Research Conclusion	33
5.2	Further Research	34
6.	BIBLIOGRAPHY	35
7.	APPENDICES	40
7.1	Appendix A- Research Questions	40
7.2	Appendix B- Question 12 Responses	43
7.3	Appendix C- Question 14 Responses	45

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the following people for their help and support during this research and my studies in general.

Firstly, my Fiancé for providing support throughout my studies, during which time we've experienced two pregnancies, two homes, renovations, new jobs and a growing family. Your understanding of my priorities during stressful moments and deadlines has allowed me to achieve my goals.

I would also like to thank my mother-in-law for being the first call for support in providing childcare with no questions asked and with no notice, allowing me to dedicate additional time to the completion of this research.

Finally, to my two beautiful children who have made me resolute in my ambition to complete my degree, to further improve our prospects and life experiences.

Declarations

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

STATEMENT 1

This dissertation is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of BSc Professional Policing.

STATEMENT 2

This dissertation is the result of my own independent work/investigation, except where otherwise stated.

Other sources are acknowledged in the reference section.

STATEMENT 3

I hereby give consent for my dissertation, if accepted, to be available for photocopying and for interlibrary loan, and for the title and summary to be made available to outside organisations.

STATEMENT 4

I hereby give consent for my dissertation, if accepted, to be available on the university's IT system to those who have consent to use the system.

Chelsea Pelosi

Signed: C.Pelosi

Date: 06/05/2024

1. INTRODUCTION

Crime rates within England and Wales are currently at their highest levels with a total of 6.6 million crimes being recorded between September 2022 and September 2023. This has been a fluctuating trend in historic crime rates with reaching a historical peak in the 12 months between September 2003 to September 2004 prior to gradually decreasing year on year, with historically low crime rates identified in the 12 months between September 2013 to September 2014 with a total of 4.0 million crimes being recorded (HM Government, 2018).

Increased crime rates are understood to be relative to the levels of deprivation within societal communities. This is supported within research by (Kawachi, et al., 1999) whereby community variations are analysed with an identification of fluctuations in crime rates in correlation with measurable characteristics such as income inequality. Statistics provided by (Trust for London, 2023) an increase in crime rates in excess of 52% within communities with the bottom 10% of household incomes. Furthermore, the societal impact of deprivation is visible with violent crimes being amongst the most prevalent crimes within deprived areas in comparison with upper class areas whereby crimes such as burglary and robbery are most common (Newburn, 2016).

Re-offending within England and Wales continues to be an ongoing issue in today's society with the latest statistics provided by the Ministry of Justice (2023) identifying 1 in 4 prisoners in 2021 went on to re-offend after release, this being a 2.3 increase from the previous year, 2020. Ultimately, it can be implied the process of re-offending can be associated to a repetitive pattern in human behaviour with correlation to potential underlying psychological and sociological factors.

The issue re-offending is prevalent with from the outset of youth offending with 31.1% of youth offenders re-offending as adults (Ministry of Justice , 2023). Furthermore, the impact of youth experiences must be considered and its correlation to human behaviours and patterns with data analysed by Smith and Hopkins (2013) identifying the prevalence of repetitive factors in reoffenders such as experiencing abuse and observing violence in childhood.

The identification of correlations between re-offending and human behaviour is critical in aiding the justice system in developing correct processes and rehabilitation procedures to avoid re-offending. Zweeket *et al.* (2019) surveyed a demographic sample of youth offenders, with research findings outlining 20% of youth offenders as having no support network eight years

after release. Whilst there remain rehabilitation programmes available to offenders, the lack of support systems in conjunction with the common prevalence of underlying issues stemming from youth experiences undoubtedly causes concern. It can be argued the concoction of negative youth experiences, lack of support network and increased risk of crime occurring in deprived areas ultimately plays a critical role in the forming of human behaviours of offenders. Furthermore, developing an understanding of the relationship between these elements creates potential to apply suitable rehabilitation processes in order to break the patterns of re-offending.

This research will seek to identify the effectiveness of current rehabilitation processes in relation to underlying human behaviours and patterns of re-offending. Utilising a combination of research methodologies, the research shall seek to develop a detailed understanding of the effects psychological and sociological factors play in the occurrence of offending and re-offending. Furthermore, the research will seek to identify potential for improvements in the rehabilitation and mitigation of both offending and reoffending, prioritising the addressing of underlying attributes such as negative childhood experiences and the impact thereof.

1.1 Research Aim

The aim of this research is to develop an understanding of the psychological attributes associated with reoffending. It will provide an analysis of the summary of evidence on reducing reoffending published by Ministry of Justice (2013), focusising on the factors which influence offending and most importantly reoffending. The research seeks to identify any underlying constants associated with reoffending, significantly associated with human behaviours, experiences and trauma such as someone who has had Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Futhermore, recent studies will be assessed to understand why youths offend and adults reoffend.

1.2 Research Objectives

1. To review current reoffending statistics to identify the severity of the issue with reoffending.
2. To research and identify if reoffending can be correlated with psychological factors such as trauma or can it be attributed to sociological factors.
3. To analyse the potential origin of reoffending at youth age, researching the processes and support systems implemented to migigate potential reoffending.

1.3 Research Question

The primary question for the research is can psychological and social factors contribute to the pattern of human behaviours, with a direct correlation to re-offending?

The research will focus on psychological factors such as Adverse Childhood Experiences, trauma and social factors such as geographical factors, exposure to poverty and the prevalence of support networks.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Extensive research was undertaken of literature from a wide range of credible sources into the presence of offending and re-offending within modern day society. Literature was further researched to understand the fundamentals of rehabilitation processes currently employed within the justice system, seeking to identify a correlation between the presence of ACES in reoffenders. This understanding is desired to identify how rehabilitation processes are applied to accommodate the multitude of sociological and psychological elements attributing to reoffending.

2.1 Re-Offending

Research Provided by Prison Reform Trust (2023) identifies the importance of prisons with statistics showing an 80% increase of population in prisons within the previous 30 years. Furthermore, the research forecasts the population of prisons is expected to dramatically increase to a further of 7,400 offenders by 2024. This forecast is supported with statistics outlined by the Ministry of Justice (2023), within which identifies recent statistics of the October to December 2021 offender cohort have a re-offending rate of 25.4%, an increase from 22.1% from the same time frame in 2020. Meanwhile, Juvenile offenders had an overall reoffending rate of 35.5%, an increase of 3.3% from the same time frame in 2020.

Whilst the statistics above identify crime rates are on the rise throughout the UK, anomalies in human behaviour and patterns caused by Covid-19 can be attributed to have an impact on crime rates. The Coronavirus Pandemic played an integral role in crime rates during 2021, with statistics showing an overall increase of 54% in fraud and computer misuse offences and a 15% decrease in theft offences compared to the year ending December 2019 (Taylor, 2022). The identification of these rates as an anomaly of statistics in recent history is supported by Griffiths & Norris (2020) whereby a review of crime rates identifies a 50% reduction in England and Wales between 1995 and 2005, with statistics stabilising in the period thereafter.

A further analysis of crime rate statistics identifies whilst general crime rates reduced drastically between 1995 and 2005 and have since stabilised, youth crime statistics have continued to reduce on average by 54% since 2010 (Howard League for Penal Reform, 2015). This continued reduction in youth crime implies the reasoning for a stabilisation of general crime rates in lieu of a continued reduction cannot be attributed to first time offenders, with analysis signifying a mere 16% of offences are committed by first time offenders (Ministry of Justice, 2022). As a direct resultant of this analysis, it can be outlined an astounding 84% of offences are carried out by individuals with an existing criminal record, otherwise known as reoffending.

Alternatively, a true understanding on the prevalence of reoffending within current criminal cohorts is outlined within research by the Ministry of Justice whereby the proven reoffending rate for April to June 2020 offender cohort was 29% (Ministry of Justice, 2022). In summary, this analysis means of proven offenders in the months between April and June 2020, just under one third had preceding offences. Furthermore, the research also identifies adults released from prison within the same period had a proven reoffending rate of 39%.

The process of offending and more specifically reoffending is often linked to the crime pattern theory. The crime pattern theory identifies a repetitive inter-connectivity between criminals, their geological and sociological attributes and the crimes committed (Wortley & Townsley, 2017). The plausibility of the crime pattern theory is supported in research by Wortley & Mazerolle (2011), whereby it is summarised to identify a small demographic of the population commit the majority of proven crimes, whilst the majority of victims originate from the same geographical and sociological backgrounds. Furthermore, the crime pattern theory also relates to the typologies of crimes committed by reoffenders, seeking to identify an underlying pattern within these typologies. Similarly, on analysis of crime typologies of reoffenders, the crime pattern theory is supported with statistics identifying reoffenders often reoffend within the same crime profiles (Labrie, et al., 2007).

2.2 Rehabilitation

The punishment for offending in the UK was introduced as early as 1816, with the opening of the first prison being accomplished at Millbank in London, with the prison having capabilities to hold a total of 860 prisoners at the time of opening (Howard League for Penal Reform, 2016). Prisoners were kept in solitude for eighteen months with no interaction with other prisoners, only the chapel service and prison officers. Due to the concern of solitude made in the 1830 penal reform, the first national state prison was introduced in 1877 (Ogborn, 1995). These prisons were maintained by the Home Office, where the quality of prisons was challenged and changed in order to manage the penal framework. During 1945 the average prison population in England and Wales was 10,500, by 2021 the prisons within England and Wales had reached the average population of 80,000 (Guiney & Yeomans, 2023).

On the inception of prisons within the UK, their intended use was to utilise it's construction to enable isolation, thus leading to reflection with an aim to undertake successful rehabilitation and reintegration into society (Brodie, et al., 2002). However, rehabilitation processes have since developed from original ideologies in an attempt to understand and resolve behaviours of deviant offenders and reoffenders. In lieu of previous methodologies entailing primarily isolation processes, modern day rehabilitation within prisons include education, employment, counselling and wellness programmes (Blakey, 2017).

Education rehabilitation within prisons consists of a framework for offenders whereby processes are outlined to encourage critical thinking, similar to processes adopted within adult education. It is intended that the encouragement of critical thinking in an educational environment will enable offenders to diverge critical thinking skills into critical reflection in order to support rehabilitation (Behan, 2014). The benefits of this methodology of rehabilitation are widely acknowledged, with offenders being provided with opportunities to develop skills, with the potential to use these skills as an asset to support reintegration into society. These skills prove to be useful during reintegration processes, with noted experiences of individuals gaining employment and developing themselves as assets to local communities (Coates, 2016).

In conjunction with rehabilitation methodologies discussed above, the prison system now prioritises the wellbeing of offenders to be used as a tool within rehabilitation processes. As a direct resultant of policy driven initiatives, prisons are now required to ensure the environment, structural issues within individuals' sociological networks, physical living conditions and health and wellbeing attributes are assessed and nurtured by the staff within prisons (Woodall & Freeman, 2020). This comes in stark contrast to historical rehabilitation processes as expressed in research by Brodie *et al.* (2002), whereby offender wellbeing was not considered an in lieu, isolation was expected to be utilised without compromise with minimal consideration of prisoner wellbeing.

Whilst the improved processes discussed herein improve offender wellbeing and, in some instances, aids with the decreased probability of future reoffending, there remains intricacies within the process to ensure reoffending is mitigated. Research issued by Arbour *et al.* (2023) discusses the importance of utilising the correct rehabilitation processes dependent on individual circumstances. Within this research, the rehabilitation issues caused by strain on the modern day justice system is identified with the increased prevalence of community sentences due to an argued strain on the prison system. Alternatively, reaffirmation in the strengths of modern-day rehabilitation processes within incarceration facilities is discussed, with findings providing explanation into the benefits of incarceration and associated rehabilitation programmes. Ultimately, whilst the rehabilitation methodologies discussed above present a variety of opportunity and strengths, the strain on the prison system is its ultimate downfall whereby successful rehabilitation and active positive reintegration has become superseded by the requirement to manage risk and social control due to the lack of resources (Behan, 2014).

2.3 Youth Crime

In England and Wales, the age of criminal responsibility is 10 years old, this means that children aged 10 to 17 can be held accountable for their actions in the criminal justice system (HM Government, 2016). This is supported by Section 50 of the Children and Young Person Act 1963 (HM Government, 1963).

Historically, the age for criminal responsibility was deemed to be suitably benchmarked at 8 years old by Section 50 of the Children and Young Person Act 1933 (HM Government, 1963). Following a review, a committee recommended increasing the age of criminal responsibility to 12 years old which was declined and in lie raised to 10 years old and detailed within section 16 of the Children and Young Persons Act 1963 (Delmage, 2013). The age of criminal responsibility has been subjected to dispute in recent history whereby the notorious case of the James Bulger abduction and murder by John Venables and Robert Thompson arose. Research identifies the incident relating to the above case occurred only 6 months after the offenders reached the age of criminal responsibility but as a result, enabled the children to be prosecuted within the Criminal Justice System. This benchmark is subject to significant debate particularly given due consideration of the age of criminal responsibility across a large portion of mainland Europe is benchmarked to be 14 years of age (Macguire, 2018).

The support for maintaining the age of criminal responsibility was subjected to strengthening cause and political will as a resultant of the James Bulger case whereby the Crime and Disorder act 1998 was published detailing an abolishment of all remaining protection of juveniles covered by Doli Incapax. Previously, a number of crimes had been preserved with protection for juveniles under 16 on the presumption that juveniles under 16 are incapable of knowingly committing an offence. However, the publication of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 removed this level of protection, enabling juveniles over the age of 10 to be prosecuted within the Criminal Justice system regardless of the crime committed (Delmage, 2013).

Externally, the UK Government remains under significant pressure to increase the age of criminal responsibility to 14 years old in line with a host of lead countries, as discussed within the proposals by the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (Delmage, 2013). Despite these external pressures, the UK government maintains its approach deeming children aged 10 and above are capable of differentiating between stereotypical bad behaviour and significant wrongdoing and in turn has expressed its determination for maintaining the current criminal responsibility age benchmark of 10 years old.

An analysis of crime trends between March 2022 and March 2023 identifies children between the ages of 10 and 17 make up 34,300 of proven offences within England and Wales. The

severity of crimes ranges from miscellaneous crimes to sexual offences and Robbery, the latter of which has been subject to a 31% year on year increase (Youth Justice Board, 2024). Perhaps in direct correlation and caused concern for the statistics of youth crime, research by Roberts and Hough (2005) identified the perceived negative public opinion of young offenders. Within this research, an analysis identified a lack of confidence in the youth courts despite processing through the criminal justice system in the same way an adult would be processed. Notably, the general consensus across all analysed datum identified actual sentences are lesser than sentences which would be favoured by the public. For example, the undertaken survey proposed a scenario to the public whereby theoretical committed crimes were detailed for a 16-year-old offender. Within this theoretical proposal included a case of assault by a 16-year-old with 2 previous convictions, in turn members of the public were asked which sentences would be satisfactory in the deemed fairness of the public. The survey identified 53% of the demographic stated a desire to charge with a period of detention in a young offenders institute followed by a period of community supervision, however, an analysis of ONS data identified the offender is most likely to receive a period of community service. These findings are further supported within research by Allen (2012), whereby the public's attitude towards youth offenders is identified to desire an increase in detention sentences for repeat offenders (Allen, et al., 2012).

The findings of research discussed above and the public's desire for an increase in sentences for youth offenders is concurrent with an increase in proven reoffending rates, with the year on year reoffending rates by children rising by 0.9% to a total of 32.2% in the latest release of reoffending statistics (Youth Justice Board, 2024). Furthermore, the increase in youth reoffending rates is directly concurrent with the Youth Justice Board's publication of its strategic plan for 2021- 2024, whereby its primary approach is detailed to be 'child first', with the omission of an 'offender second' element which had previously been detailed within strategic plans (Youth Justice Board, 2020).

Ultimately, there remains both arguments for and against the prioritisation of a child first approach which can be reviewed in correlation with the delicacy of the age of criminal responsibility forementioned within this chapter, particularly given the prevalence of offending peaks between the ages of 14 and 19 years old, with an analysis of prior trends identifying 40% of these offenders are likely to continue offending in to developed adulthood between the ages of 20 and 29 (Piquero, et al., 2007).

2.4 ACES

The prefrontal cortex of an individual's brain reaches full development and maturity by the age of 25. During adolescence, the limbic system, which includes the prefrontal cortex, undergoes continual changes and advancements, influencing aspects such as emotional intensity, decision-making abilities, self-regulation, and daring behaviours (Araín, et al., 2013).

The theory of brain development aforementioned in research above correlates with research undertaken by Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (2023), whereby it was identified that Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) can profoundly affect the development of a child's brain due to the presence of toxic stress. This can result in conditions such as depression, challenges in forming relationships, and heightened risk of chronic diseases.

Adverse Childhood Experiences refer to traumatic events occurring during childhood or adolescence, which can significantly impact both physical and mental health as well as behavior. These experiences encompass a wide range of stressors or traumas, including physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, witnessing domestic violence, or exposure to substance abuse (NHS Foundation Trust, 2024).

Findings from a survey conducted by the Youth Endowment Fund unveiled that 47% of children had either been victims of violence or witnessed violent incidents within the past year (Youth Endowment Fund, 2023). This underscores the persistent challenge of child vulnerability in contemporary law enforcement. A child's vulnerability, particularly one who has experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) such as abuse, neglect, or violence, can have enduring impacts throughout their lifetime, leading to additional challenges in areas such as health, education, and overall life experiences. These challenges and impacts can culminate in individuals who have experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) being more likely to be at risk for being charged with violent offenses, serving time in youth facilities, and potentially becoming habitual offenders (The Association of Directors of Public Health, 2021).

A study by Ministry of Justice (2012), utilizing data from the Surveying Prisoner Crime Reduction (SPCR) survey, found that a significant portion of prisoners had challenging childhood backgrounds. Among them, 29% reported experiencing maltreatment, and 41% perceived brutality within their homes. The research indicated that prisoners who had endured mistreatment and witnessed abuse and violence during childhood were more likely to reoffend and be reconvicted within the year following their release.

2.5 Human Behaviour & Sociological Influences

Human behavior is a complex and multifaceted concept with a diversity seen throughout global cultures. Despite this diversity, ultimately human behaviour can be defined as an individual's function of personality, values and temperament applied to mental, physical, emotional and social activities (Bednarik, 2016). These applications of human behaviour are acknowledged to be influenced by a range of factors including psychological factors, sociological influences, economic factors and biological determinants (Bandhu, et al., 2024).

Psychology and its relation to human behaviour can be divulged into sub-specialties with varied relevance and impact dependant on the research topic and in the instance of crime, psychology is particularly relevant to the application of human behaviour. Research identifies criminality can be linked to psychology by 4 theories: attachment theory, personality theory, psychopathy and moral development (Sammons & Putwain, 2019) .

Bowlby (1951) identifies psychological attributes which can impact an individual's processes leading to offending can be attributed to maternal attachment issues or lack thereof. This disruption to maternal attachment leads to a lack of ability to form meaningful relationships with others, in turn leading to crime, with a survey identifying up to 39% of criminals reporting disruption to their maternal attachment in early life. Alternatively, Eysenck (1964) proposes true psychology and its link to crime can be attributed to personality traits whereby individuals with immature and impulsive traits are more likely to have involvement in crime. Meanwhile, psychopathy maintains a relation to crime due to the nature of the disorder defined to create unemotional character, deceitfulness and a tendency toward impulsiveness, irresponsibility and potential anti-social behaviour (Cooke, et al., 2006). The forementioned traits and issues associated with psychopathy leads to over 50% of serious offences being committed by individuals with psychopathic traits (Cooke, et al., 2006). Research by Sammons & Putwain (2019) argues all four theories associating criminology with psychology can be associated and are intertwined by their nature, whereby attachment issues may impact moral development and the formation of personalities whilst individuals with psychopathic traits may create a lack of attachment with support networks).

Traditionally individuals identify themselves utilising categories such as race, gender, sexual orientation, nationality and age in lieu of socioeconomic status, however, research identifies an overlap is present between traditional categorisations and socioeconomic statuses. Furthermore, the status which an individual is categorised within is likely to have a direct impact on beliefs, political views, social networks and ultimately human behaviour (Manstead, 2018) . Whilst socioeconomic status and identification is an indicator of likely human behaviour, four theories are particularly applicable to sociological influences and their relation

to crime: Social Strain Theory, Subcultural Theory, Differential Association and Labelling Theory (Lumen, 2024).

The social strain theory was introduced by Merton (1957), whereby he identified the stresses applied due to the goals of wealth attainment, commonly referred to as the American dream, were significant and ultimately created pressures to achieve unattainable goals. In turn, Merton proposed individuals bridged the gap of supposedly unreachable goals imposed by society with the use of crime in order to obtain wealth and increase societal status. These findings continue to modern society with the introduced supplementary complexity of cultural values, further supporting the social strain theory with the variety and crossovers in current cultural values and socioeconomic status driving further strain and potential for criminal behaviour (Hagan & Daige, 2018).

The sub cultural theory, formerly known as the status frustration theory, was introduced by Albert Cohen and refers to the ability to achieve a high societal status is directly correlated with the socio-economic class from which individuals originate (Cohen, 1955). Similarly, the social strain theory discussed within this paper, subcultural theory is deemed to relate to a failure in emulating upper class values and aspirations due to a lack of means available to lower classes. As a result, research proposes lower class individuals form social groups, also known as subcultures, and undertake patterns of unsociable behaviour and reject common social values as a means of attempting to increase social status (Nickerson, 2024).

Further research by Nickerson (2024) proposes in lieu of criminal behaviour being caused by psychological impacts, it is caused by learned behaviour within intimate social groups, this theory is referred to as differential association. Research argues the cause of criminal behaviour is as a direct resultant of individuals having a higher level of exposure to an approval of law violations within social circles with less individuals providing negative views on law violations. This theory is supported within research by Farrington *et al.*, (2006), whereby research followed individuals from a deprived area for 42 years in an attempt to identify delinquency development. The research identified 40% of the individuals with parental guardians whom attained a criminal prosecution also progressed to offend, in comparison with a crime rate of 13% for individuals who's parental gaurdians did not have criminal convictions (Farrington, et al., 2006).

The labelling theory and its relation to crime is an outcome of research undertaken by Becker (1963), within which it is proposed deviance and crime is a reaction to external judgments and labels applied by society. Ultimately, societal views on individuals with criminal charges immediately apply labels to the individuals identifying as criminals or deviants with research identifying a continued exposure to labelling can lead to an individual self-identifying as a

criminal or deviant. The impact of self identification as a criminal or deviant creates negative subsequent behaviour, leading to further involvement in crime (Bernburg, et al., 2006).

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The literature review undertaken within this paper reviewed the severity of current re-offending within the UK, examining a multitude of potential aspects which are argued for and against being a source which give rise to the underlying patterns of human behaviour and its correlation to offending and re-offending patterns.

The incentive for this research is attributed to the identification of similarities in existing criminology theories deemed to underline the cause of crime. Despite this self-proclaimed identification of causes, there remains a lack of correlations within existing research between existing theories claiming understanding of human behaviour and the identification of negative impacts derived from trauma such as ACES. The review of existing literature identifies the presence of theories deemed to understand human behaviour and its relation to crime, yet despite this, there remains a failure to apply human behaviour understanding to rehabilitation processes and as a result, increased re-offending rates are evidenced.

This chapter will identify the proposed methodologies applied to the research, providing rationale in the selection of research methodologies. Furthermore, additional considerations applied prior to undertaking research are identified including the identification of the research strengths, potential flaws which may arise whilst giving acknowledgment to ethical requirements of the research.

3.1 Research Onion

Saunders *et al.* (2007) introduced the research principles analogy of the research onion, whereby the research process is summarised in milestone sections. Ultimately, the research onion principle provides a framework for research in which the methodology can be applied to support the selection, application and verification of research methodologies. As a result, this research will apply the research onion principles to provide justification of chosen research methodologies, ensuring the selected research methodology is relevant to the research aims and conclusions can be derived accordingly.

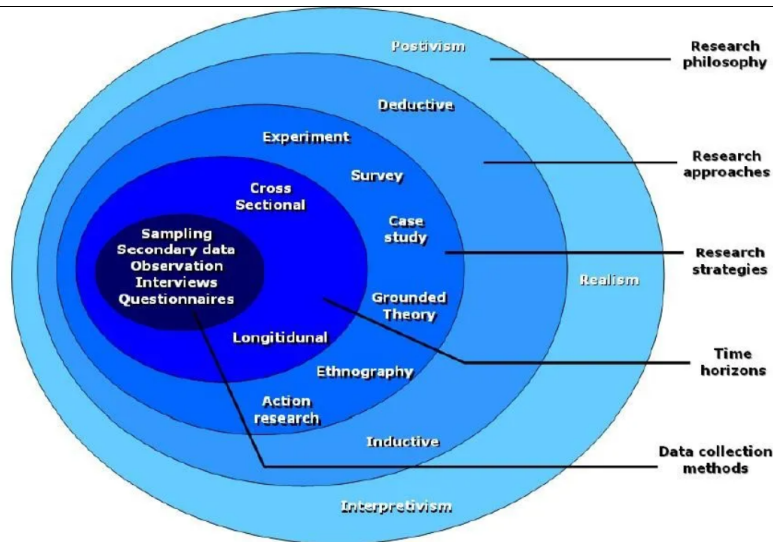


Figure 1- Research Onion (Thesismind, 2019)

3.2 Research Philosophy

The outermost layer of the research onion forms the first principles for the undertaking of research and comprises of the research philosophy. Research philosophies are generally categorised into two points of view, Ontology which is primarily focused on the nature on current knowledge and understanding its origin whilst epistemology refers to the interpretation of current knowledge (Allharahsheh & Pius, 2020). Ontology is commonly acknowledged to accommodate a quantitative approach within research methodologies whilst epistemology is deemed to be a suitable research philosophy for qualitative approaches (ReviseSociology, 2023).

This research primarily applies the epistemology research philosophy whereby it is desired to understand the publics interpretation of re-offending and human behaviour. The application of epistemology research philosophy to this research is supported with research by Saunders *et al.* (2009) stating the application of the philosophy is proven to be beneficial to aid the understanding of social contexts and resultant social interpretations relating to current issues. The research seeks to identify the publics opinion on re-offending and rehabilitation, as a result, consideration of the publics potential underlying reasoning and justification of feedback must be applied with due awareness for how research may be affected.

3.3 Research Approach

Research approach is acknowledged to be presented in the choice of two options for researchers; inductive and deductive research approaches. An inductive research approach utilises specific observations identified by researchers and develops research accordingly. Alternatively, a deductive research approach utilises existing theories provided within existing research and seeks to expand the theory using research findings (Steeferk, 2023).

Utilising an understanding of research approaches this research applies a deductive research approach whereby it seeks to further explore existing theories relating to criminology and human behaviour, aiming to identify the modern public perception on offenders and identify any relation to existing theories. However, the research also introduces an inductive research approach whereby it seeks to identify a relation between current rehabilitation processes and the public's support of rehabilitation processes whilst considering underlying elements causing offending and re-offending, seeking to verify if current rehabilitation processes are suitable or in lieu are a subsidiary of pressure caused by sociological influences.

3.4 Methodological Choice

The methodological choice for this study is qualitative research methodology through the provision of questionnaires provided to the public to understand their interpretation and experiences of current reoffending issues. The research also applies a quantitative analysis of result, seeking to review prison staff's interpretation and experiences and undertake a quantitative analysis to identify the prevalence of repetitive patterns and common themes across the results.

Although qualitative and quantitative research methodologies have traditionally been applied independently to meet the specific requirements of a research project, there is now notable support for adopting a mixed approach that combines both methodologies. This integration has become increasingly prevalent within modern research (Bryman, 2006).

Quantitative research methodologies utilise the analysis of numerical data to provide findings and create theories whilst qualitative research seeks to identify context and interpretation of research to identify and expand theories (Yilmaz, 2013). Given the sociological issues and complexities relating to reoffending and understanding human behaviour, it was decided that whilst quantitative research by means of reviewing questionnaires to identify patterns and common themes within answers provided, this quantitative research was inconclusive for analysis of human behaviour. The inclusion of qualitative research via the inclusion of questions which seek to identify the experiences of the public alongside quantitative methodologies provides an opportunity for scrutinization of reoffending and the deemed success of current rehabilitation processes within prisons.

Research by House (2018) provides additional support for the adoption of a mixed research methodology, indicating that quantitative research typically follows a qualitative pre decision. This underlines that for this research, the suitability of rehabilitation processes is only applicable as a result of correspondence and discussion regarding reoffending.

3.5 Research Strategy

Researchers are presented with a range of strategies for the undertaking of research including; Case Studies, ethnography, narrative inquiry, phenomenology, grounded theory and discourse analysis (Tomaszewski, et al., 2020). A phenomenology research strategy is to be used for this research as the approach focuses on the experiences of individuals which may have different viewpoints, seeking to identify experiences and interpretation (Flood, 2010).

The application of a phenomenological research approach is to be achieved with the distribution of open-ended questionnaires, whereby respondents will be provided with a combination of closed and open-ended questions to seek an understanding of experiences, reasoning and interpretations. To enable clear and transparent analysis of reoffending and rehabilitation answers will be quantified as positive and negative answers. Summarising and quantifying interview findings will allow clear analysis of whether reoffending is an acknowledged issue and whether rehabilitation processes are felt to be effective based on participant comments.

This approach to quantifying qualitative research is endorsed with research by Chi (1997) who conducted a study on the challenges of analysing verbal explanations and observations. The study presents suggestions for analysing verbal explanations and observations through verbal analyses which entails summarizing and statistically analysing findings which can be applied to this research. This research will distribute questionnaires using the online platform Microsoft Forms due to the utilization of online platforms for research improving speed, demographic reach, ease and flexibility for both researcher and respondents whereby research can be completed at any time, in any location and by anyone with access to the internet (Ball, 2019).

3.6 Time Horizon

The research onion introduced by Ball (2019) provided two alternative proposals for the application of time horizon to research; longitudinal and cross sectional. Research undertaken utilising a longitudinal time horizon refers to a study undertaken over a pre-determined period of time, reviewing progressions over a time period and developing theories to support analysis.

Alternatively, a cross sectional study refers to research undertaken at a set time period (Tengli, 2020).

This research is subject to time constraints applied due to the academic nature of research. As a result, this research will collect data over a period of 3 weeks during which time the questionnaire will be available to the public. On conclusion of the 3-week period, an analysis and concluding period will be undertaken to identify findings, during which time the questionnaire will be removed from the public domain.

3.7 Techniques for Data Collection, Processes and Analysis

This research collecting data through questionnaires using the online platform Microsoft Forms, with questions using a combination of open ended and closed questions. The use of a combination of open-ended questions and closed questions allows participants the potential to offer new data and findings applicable to the research due to the nature of open-ended questioning (Galleta, 2013). The use of an online platform for the research questionnaire improves speed, demographic reach, ease and flexibility for both researcher and respondents whereby research can be completed at any time, in any location and by anyone with access to the internet (Ball, 2019).

The research will be analysed utilising a combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis, whereby open-ended answers will be analysed to identify experiences and interpretations whilst closed questions will be reviewed and summarised numerically to identify trends. This process applies the recommendations of Chi (1997) who recommends summarizing and statistically analysing findings, alternatively known as thematic analysis.

3.7.1 Sampling

Modern research is often presented with limitations when seeking participants, with research often being unable to collate data from all of the target demographic, as a result sampling methods are applied; referred to as probability or non-probability sampling (McCombes, 2019). This research seeks to identify opinions from the general public and as a result will apply probability sampling, using random selection in an attempt to derive an accurate general consensus.

3.7.2 Reliability and Validity

To ensure validity of current research, the researcher must evidence consistency and stability within the research whilst providing clear explanation of the research methodologies applied and analysis process (McLeod, 2023). Reliability is verified with a research's ability to allow comparisons of results against comparable metrics whilst validity can be estimated by undertaking a comparison of results against existing data or theories (Middleton, 2019).

The analysis of this research will apply these principles and ensure reliability with a comparison across respondents to find common themes whilst comparing findings against existing psychological and sociological criminology theories, seeking to identify links to existing theories and potential flaws in existing processes as a result.

3.7.3 Limitations

Regardless of attempts by researchers, limitations are present within all research and must be duly acknowledged prior to informing research conclusions. Research is commonly subjected to limitations such as sample size limitations, time limitations, selection bias, confounding variables, measurement error and ethical limitations (Hassan, 2024).

This research may be subject to sample size limitations as, despite publication of the questionnaire to the public domain, there remains a risk of a low number of responses and as a result, poor sample size. Research by Faber & Fonseca (2014) argues small sample sizes undermined the validity of a study. The research is also subject to potential time limitations due to the nature of academic research and associated deadlines. This may impact the research with the requirement to withdraw the questionnaire from the public domain within a three-week time period, presenting a risk of being unable to collect sufficient data to draw conclusions (Hassan, 2024).

4. FINDINGS

This chapter will identify the findings of data collated within the research questions, with data meticulously analysed to identify underlying patterns in an attempt to derive the public's current insights on the patterns of re-offending. The chapter aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of research findings seeking to highlight any correlations within existing research between existing theories claiming understanding of human behaviour discussed within the literature review, the identification of negative impacts derived from trauma such as ACES and the public's perception on current offending and re-offending issues.

The research collected data through questionnaires using the online platform Microsoft Forms, with questions using a combination of open ended and closed questions. The use of a combination of open-ended questions and closed questions allowed participants the potential to offer new data and findings applicable to the research due to the nature of open-ended questioning. The questionnaire consisted of 14 questions and collated a total of 25 responses.

Prior to completing the survey, the first question consisted of a statement identifying all data collated will be confidential and presented with anonymity. Respondents were provided an option whether to give consent for the use of results within this research, with all respondents providing consent. As a result, question 1 will be omitted from the analysis chapter.

4.1 Description of results and data analysis

Question 2 was used to identify the gender of respondents. The purpose of the question was to enable a quantitative analysis of respondents with an ability to understand the research demographic within this analysis. 19 respondents (76%) identified as female, 5 respondents (20%) identified as male whilst 1 respondent (4%) preferred not to state their gender.

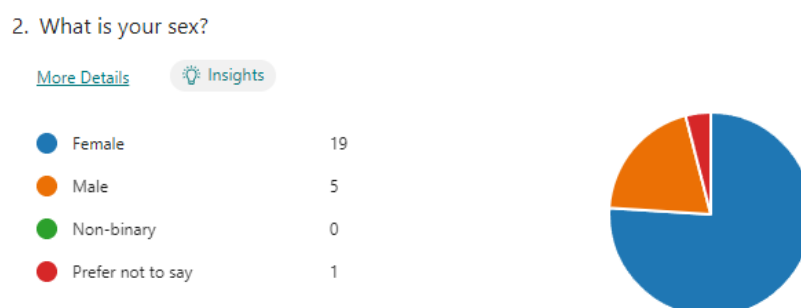


Figure 2- Question 2 responses

Question 3 was used to identify the age of respondents, with options provided allowing respondents to identify the age group within which they reside. The purpose of the question was to enable a quantitative analysis of respondents with an ability to understand the research demographic within this analysis. The most common age group for the respondents was age

45 – 54 (30%), with ages 55 – 64 and 18 – 24 being the next most common age groups with 17% of respondents residing between these ages.

3. Which is your age group?

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

17 or younger

1

18-24

5

25-34

3

35-44

2

45-54

7

55-64

5

65 or older

2

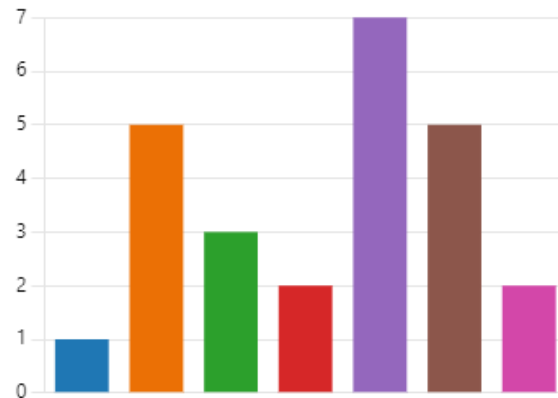


Figure 3- Question 3 responses

The aim of question 4 is to identify the public's current perception on the prevalence of offending and re-offending in the community, seeking to determine if it is deemed a current issue and if so, is youth crime or adult offenders more prevalent. All respondents stated they believed offending and re-offending is an issue in the local community, with 22 respondents (88%) stating they believed both youth and adult offenders is a current issue. 2 respondents stated they believed youth crime has increased prevalence, whilst 1 respondent believed adult offenders was of the highest prevalence.

4. Do you believe offending and re-offending is an issue within the local community

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

No

0

Yes, adult offenders

1

Yes, youth offenders

2

Yes, both

22



Figure 4- Question 4 responses

Question 5 provided the following statement for the respondents to review prior to answering the question; 'Offenders are more likely to reoffend due to self-awareness of the communities negative perception to prior criminal behaviour'. Following review, respondents were asked if they agree or disagree with the statement.

The majority of respondents (42%) provided a 'not sure' answer, whilst 36% agreed with the statement and 24% disagreed with the statement. Whilst the responses demonstrated the majority of respondents did not present a clear opinion on the statement, responses provided a fairly even response suggesting a broad opinion on the statement.

5. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?:

"Offenders are more likely to re-offend due to self-awareness of the communities negative perception to prior criminal behaviour"

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

● Yes	9
● No	6
● Not sure	10



Figure 5- Question 5 responses

Further analysis identifies that whilst 42% of respondents answered 'not sure' for question 5, 100% of these respondents answered 'yes, both' to question 4. This analysis identifies that whilst these respondents acknowledged the prevalence of both youth and adult offending and re-offending within the community, the labelling theory was not acknowledged or agreed with.

5. Do you agree or disagree with the following statement?:

"Offenders are more likely to re-offend due to self-awareness of the communities negative perception to prior criminal behaviour"

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)



[Update](#)

42% of people answered **Not sure** for this question, and the majority answered **"Yes, both"** for Question 4. ***

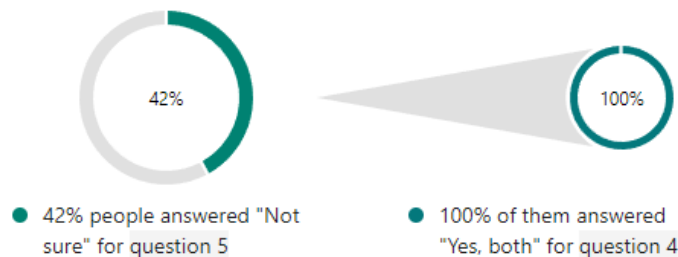


Figure 6- Question 5 & 4 response correlations

Question 6 also provided a statement for the respondents to review prior to answering the question; 'Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are stressful or traumatic incidents in childhood, such as abuse, neglect, household dysfunction, and can have long-term impacts on a person's health and welfare' (Boullier and Blair, 2017). The provision of this statement ensures respondents have a basic level of understanding on the definition of Adverse Childhood Experiences, regardless of prior knowledge or training.

Following the statement, respondents were asked 'do you believe offending and anti-social behaviour can be attributed to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)?'. The responses demonstrated a significant common belief in the public's perception, with 24 (96%) of respondents believing offending and anti-social behaviour can be attributed to ACEs and no respondents disagreeing. Furthermore, an analysis of gathered data supports the provision of the definition of Adverse Childhood Experiences, with only 1 respondent providing a 'not sure' response.

6. "Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are stressful, traumatic incidents in childhood such as abuse, neglect, household dysfunction and can have long-term impacts on a person's health and welfare (Boullier and Blair, 2017)"

Do you believe offending and anti-social behaviour can be attributed to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)?

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

Yes	24
No	0
Not sure	1



Figure 7- Question 6 responses

Question 7 sought to derive the public's opinion on the current allocation of sentences to youth offenders with an aim to identify if current rehabilitation processes are deemed to be satisfactory, or if an increased lenience is desired to improve focus on rehabilitation. Out of 25 respondents, 17 (68%) stated youth offenders should be granted increased lenience when sentences are allocated, with an increased focus on rehabilitation in lieu. Alternatively, 3 respondents (12%) stated allocated sentences should not be granted with higher lenience whilst 5 respondents (20%) stated they were unsure.

7. Do you believe youth offenders should be allocated sentences with higher lenience in comparison to adult offenders, with an increased focus on rehabilitation?

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

Yes	17
No	3
Not sure	5



Figure 8- Question 7 responses

Question 8 was constructed in an attempt to identify an acknowledgment of existing criminology theories such as the Merton's (1957) social strain theory and Cohen's (1955) Sub Cultural Theory. Furthermore, the question attempted to seek insight for any demonstration that the public acknowledge issues such as Adverse Childhood Experiences, with a particular

acknowledgement to how these experiences can impact human behaviour and crime, similarly to the existing theories forementioned.

The responses presented an acknowledged similarity between the impacts of existing theories and psychological factors such as ACES, with all respondents stating an agreement, albeit in differing levels, that sociological factors such as social community and psychological factors such as childhood experiences are significant contributors to the transition of children into adult offenders. 12 respondents (48%) strongly agreed, 11 respondents (44%) agreed, 2 respondents (8%) somewhat agreed whilst no respondents disagreed.

8. Do you agree that sociological factors such as social community and psychological factors such as childhood experiences are significant contributors to the transition of children into adult offenders?

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

Strongly agree	12
Agree	11
Somewhat agree	2
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0



Figure 9- Question 8 responses

The purpose of questions 9 was to understand the publics perception of current rehabilitation processes, seeking to identify if current re-offending issues are deemed to be attributable to prisoner attitudes and lack of commitment to rehabilitation. Only 3 respondents (12%) believed prisoners dedicate themselves to rehabilitation processes, with 7 (28%) believing prisoners do not dedicate themselves to rehabilitation processes. Notably, the majority of respondents stated they were not sure, with 60% of respondents providing this answer.

9. Do you believe prisoners genuinely dedicate themselves to rehabilitation programmes whilst in prison?

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

yes	3
Not sure	15
No	7



Figure 10- Question 9 responses

Question 10 sought to enable a further understand the public's perception of current rehabilitation processes, attempting to identify if the public believe current rehabilitation processes are suitable. Only 2 (8%) respondents believed current rehabilitation processes are effective in catering for issues such as ACEs, whilst 10 (40%) respondents believed current processes are not effective. In correlation with responses to question 9, 52% of respondents stated they were not sure, meaning the majority of responses signified they were not sure.

10. Do you believe current rehabilitation processes are effective in catering for issues such as ACEs?

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

Yes	2
No	10
Not sure	13



[Update](#)

Figure 11- Question 10 responses

Further analysis identifies that 84% of respondents which answered “not sure” to question 10 also answered “not sure” to question 9, This signifies a lack of understanding in current rehabilitation processes.

50% of people answered **Not sure** for this question, and the majority answered **“Not sure”** for Question 9.

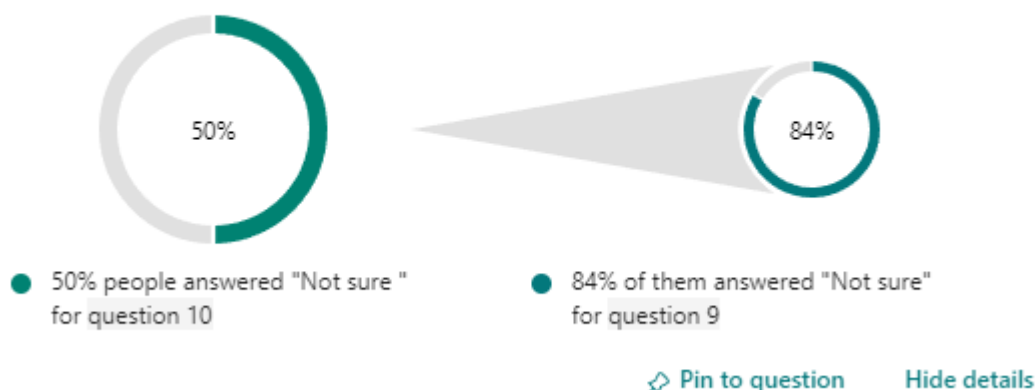


Figure 12- Question 9 & 10 response correlations

Question 11 and 12 comprised the first of open-ended questioning detailed within the research methodology, with the question seeking to further expand on the public's perception on the effectiveness of current rehabilitation in light of issues such as ACEs. The following questions will first undertake a quantitative analysis, seeking to identify context and interpretation of research to identify and expand theories (Yilmaz 2013). The analysis will also apply a qualitative analysis of responses as supported in research by House (2018) who recommends the adoption of a mixed research methodology.

In response to question 11, fifteen respondents (60%) believed that providing emotional support is more important than focusing solely on traditional rehabilitation processes such as education and work. One respondent stated they did not believe emotional support is of a higher importance whilst nine respondents stated they were unsure.

11. Do you think emphasising emotional support is more important than focusing solely on interventior programmes such as education and work?

[More Details](#)

[Insights](#)

● Yes	15
● No	1
● Not sure	9



Figure 13- Question 11 responses

Question 12 was provided to derive further elaboration on respondents' answers to question 11 in an attempt to undertake qualitative analysis to identify context and the publics interpretation (Yilmaz, 2013). Whilst 25 responses were collated for the questionnaire, only 18 responses were collated to the question, meaning 7 participants did not provide elaboration. A further 2 responses provided insufficient comment for discussion and as a result were not included in the qualitative analysis.

Of the 16 respondents which provided sufficient elaboration, 9 provided elaboration with a demonstrated view on the importance of emotional support for offenders to support the rehabilitation processes currently utilized in prisons such as education and employment programmes (Blakey, 2017). A further respondent demonstrated a belief the allocation of

increased one to one support will have positive impacts on rehabilitation, supporting the argument for increased emotional support. These findings present further support to the findings of question 10, whereby only 2 respondents stated a belief in current rehabilitation processes and it's effectiveness in catering for issues such as ACEs.

3 participants provided an impartial response, signifying a desired further understanding and case by case analysis to identify if emotional support should be emphasised in rehabilitation processes. One respondent demonstrated a belief that all support is important within the rehabilitation process, signifying a support in current rehabilitation processes whilst providing an acknowledgment to the need for additional emotional support for issues such as ACEs.

Alternatively, 2 respondents believe issues requiring emotional support such as ACEs could not be used to attribute offending and reoffending, with both respondents believing the issues could be used to excuse offending.



Figure 14- Question 11 & 12 common response themes

Questions 13 and 14 comprised the second of open-ended questioning detailed within the research methodology, with the question seeking to further expand on the public's perception on the impacts of psychological influences, sociological influences and trauma such as ACEs and if any impacts should be considered in the allocation of sentences to offenders.

In response to question 13, ten respondents (42%) believed psychological influences, sociological influences and ACEs should be considered when sentences are allocated to offenders. A further 10 respondents stated they were unsure whilst four respondents believed psychological influences, sociological and influences and ACEs should not be considered.

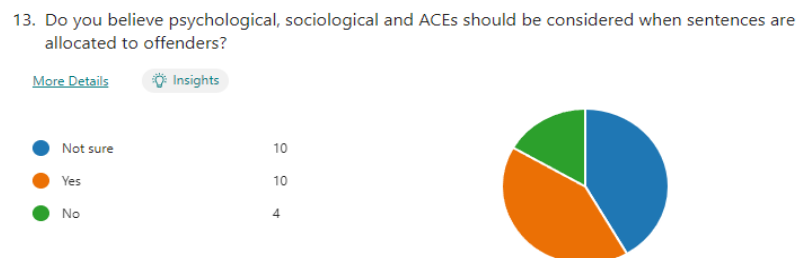


Figure 15- Question 13 responses

Question 14 was provided to derive further elaboration on respondents' answers to question 13 in an attempt to further understand the public's views and justifications. Whilst 25 responses were collated for the questionnaire, only 14 responses were collated to the question, meaning 11 participants did not provide elaboration. One further response provided insufficient comment for discussion and as a result was not included in the qualitative analysis.

Of the 13 respondents which provided sufficient elaboration, 6 demonstrated belief that the issues should be considered and in lieu, suitable support should be prioritised in an attempt to enact impactful rehabilitation with an aim to reduce the risk of reoffending. A further 4 respondents stated that whilst they were not objective to the consideration of underlying influences such as sociological factors and ACEs, the application of consideration should be undertaken with a dependency on the severity of the crime.

Alternatively, three respondents did not agree that psychological issues, sociological issues and ACEs should be considered when sentences are allocated to offenders. These findings of questions 14 and 12 identify a contradiction in the responses with all responses to question 10 stating issues such as childhood experiences are significant contributors to the transition of children into adult offenders. This analysis demonstrates that the public support the principles of research outlined by The Association of Directors of Public Health (2021) which states that individuals subjected to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are likely to be at risk for being charged with offenses. However, despite this support, there remains a lack of support in the application of relevant rehabilitation processes to provide emotional support in an intended process to reduce re-offending and in lieu, conventional rehabilitation processes are supported by some members of the public.

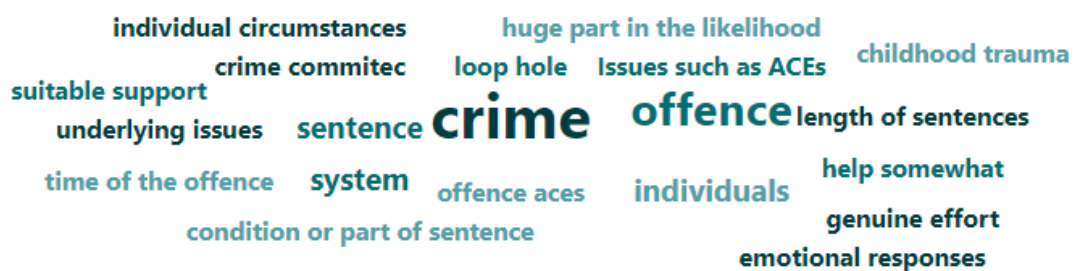


Figure 16- Question 13 & 14 common response themes

5. CONCLUSION

This chapter will derive conclusions from the research undertaken throughout this study, utilising the detailed literature review and field research, with conclusions drawn using cross referencing between existing research and the findings of this research.

5.1 Research Conclusion

The research undertaken within this study identifies existing theories such as Merton's (1957) Social Strain Theory and Becker's (1963) Labelling Theory are widely acknowledged in criminology and politics. It can be argued this acknowledgement of historical theories is continued with the development of rehabilitation processes and have continued to the modern-day justice system (Blakey, 2017). This is evidenced with current rehabilitation processes such as work and education being developed to provide the skills sought to counteract the causes of crime detailed within existing theories by providing offenders with the skills to gain opportunities and break repetitive cycles. Despite this implementation in an attempt to enable rehabilitation, it can be argued the application of these rehabilitation processes as a resultant of historical theories can be deemed as unsuccessful with current offending and re-offending rates increasing (Ministry of Justice , 2023).

The research undertaken within the literature review also identifies a significant development in the research and acknowledgment to the impacts of trauma such as ACEs and its correlation with human behaviour, with information widely available discussing findings of scientific research and studies (Arain, et al., 2013). Despite this, underlying trauma such as ACEs are not as commonly linked to crime in comparison with historical theories.

The insights to the public's opinion derived from the research undertaken evidences the statistics provided by the Ministry of Justice (2023) with the identification of increased offending and re-offending statistics is being experienced by the public, with the public perception also demonstrating a concurrent feeling of increased crime within the community.

Feedback collated from research questions identified a lack of knowledge or agreement with historical criminology theories despite current rehabilitation processes being developed as a resultant of these theories. A lack of knowledge and agreement with historical theories signifies these theories are outdated and further supports the argument for a review of current theories and correlating rehabilitation processes. This is further supported with the demonstrated lack of belief from the public in current rehabilitation processes, with only 8% of respondents believing existing rehabilitation processes are effective in catering for current issues such as ACEs.

An analysis of findings also identified sufficient public knowledge and acknowledgment to the impact of contemporary issues such as ACEs, with 96% of respondents believing offending and anti-social behaviour can be attributed to ACEs. Despite this, there remains an element of contradiction within the findings as despite all respondents acknowledging the impact caused by ACEs, there remained a percentage of participants which believed the issues are used to excuse criminal behaviour and as such, consideration should not be given when allocating sentences.

In conclusion, a derived correlation between all findings identifies current rehabilitation processes is accommodating to historical criminology theories and despite significant advances in the understanding of contemporary issues such as ACEs, the justice system and rehabilitation processes are yet to adapt to accommodate the emerging issues. The review and adaptation of existing processes can potentially aid in the current offending and reoffending issues evidenced within this research. Notably, the emergent understanding of contemporary issues within social research, scientific research and within the general public's consensus presents an opportunity for understood review, a process which has not previously been presented opportunity.

Furthermore, the research identifies that despite an increased understanding of issues such as ACEs by the public, there remains an element of resistance by some members of the public for the adaptation of current processes to accommodate emerging issues. Despite this resistance, a lack of faith in existing justice and rehabilitation processes remains and as such, a lack of confidence is present with a resistance to adaptation also present. This creates a potential risk of dramatisation of Becker's (1963) Labelling Theory due to the increased prevalence of individuals being open about ACEs and alternative trauma which impacts human behaviour (Arain, et al., 2013).

5.2 Further Research

To achieve a deeper understanding of the research and the opinion of the wider public an increased sample size and diversified demographic would support further research in understanding the current issues with offending, re-offending and its correlation with human behaviour. This further understanding could be achieved by increasing the time horizon of the research, allowing an extended period for responses across a wider audience.

Further research can also seek to utilise experiences of staff on the front line of offending and re-offending, with a research paper developed to derive experiences from prison staff. These findings could be used to assess the current issues within prison facilities, the attitudes of offenders within rehabilitation processes and first-hand experiences on the effectiveness of existing rehabilitation processes.

6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Allen, T., Trzcinski, E. & Kubiak, S. P., 2012. Public Attitudes Toward Juveniles Who Commit Crimes: The Relationship Between Assessments of Adolescent Development and Attitudes Toward Severity of Punishment. *Crime & Delinquency*, 58(1), pp. 78-102.
- Allharahsheh, H. H. & Pius, A., 2020. A Review of key paradigms: positivism VS interpretivism. *Global Academic Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 2(3), pp. 39-43.
- Arain, M. et al., 2013. Maturation of the adolescent brain. *Neuropsychiatric Disease and Treatment*, 9(1), pp. 449-461.
- Arbour, W., Lacroix, G. & Machrand, S., 2023. *Prison Rehabilitation Programs and Recidivism: Evidence from Variations in Availability*. 1 ed. Toronto: University of Toronto.
- Ball, H. L., 2019. Conducting Online Surveys. *Journal of Human Lactation*, 35(3), pp. 413-417.
- Bandhu, D. et al., 2024. Theories of motivation: A comprehensive analysis of human behavior drivers. *Acta Psychologica*, 244(1), pp. 104-117.
- Becker, H., 1963. *Overview of Labelling Theories*. [Online]
Available at: www.HewettNorfolkSchool.co.uk/curric/soc/crime/labelling/diakses
[Accessed 30 March 2024].
- Bednarik, R., 2016. *Understanding human behavior: theories, patterns and developments*. 1st ed. Hebei: Nova Biomedical.
- Behan, C., 2014. Learning to Escape: Prison Education, Rehabilitation and the Potential for Transformation. *Journal of Prison Education & Reentry*, 1(1), pp. 20-31.
- Bernburg, J. G., Krohn, M. D. & Rivera, C. J., 2006. Official labeling, criminal embeddedness, and subsequent delinquency: a longitudinal test of labelling theory. *Journal of research in crime and delinquency*, 43(1), pp. 67-88.
- Blakey, R., 2017. *Rehabilitation in Prisons*. 1st ed. London: UK Parliament.
- Bowlby, J., 1951. Maternal care and mental health. *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*, 3(1), pp. 355-533.
- Brodie, A., Croom, J. & O'Davies, J., 2002. *English Prisons: An Architectural History*. 1st ed. London: English Heritage.
- Bryman, A., 2006. *Integrating quantitative and qualitative research: How is it done*. 1 ed. London: Sage Publications.
- Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, 2023. *Fast Facts: Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences*. [Online]
Available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/fastfact.html>
[Accessed 24 February 2024].
- Chi, M., 1997. Quantifying qualitative analyses of verbal data: a practical guide. *The Journal of learning sciences*, 6(3), pp. 271-315.
- Coates, S., 2016. *Unlocking Potential: A review of education in prison*. 1st ed. London: Ministry of Justice.
- Cohen, A. K., 1955. *Delinquent Boys: The Culture of the Gang*. 1st ed. Glencoe: The Free Press.
- Cooke, D. J., Michie, C., Hart, S. D. & Partick, C., 2006. Facets of clinical psychopathy: Towards clear measurement. *Handbook of Psychopathic Personality Disorder*, 5(1), pp. 91-106.

- Delmage, E., 2013. The Minimum Age of Criminal Responsibility: A Medico-Legal Perspective. *Youth Justice*, 13(2), pp. 116-138.
- Eysenck, H. J., 1964. *Crime and Personality*. 1st ed. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin.
- Faber, J. & Fonseca, L. M., 2014. How sample size influences research outcomes. *Dental Press Journal of Orthodontics*, 19(4), pp. 27-29.
- Farrington, D. P. et al., 2006. *Criminal Careers age up to age 50 and life success up to age 48: New findings from the Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development*. 1st ed. London: Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate.
- Flood, A., 2010. Understanding phenomenology. *Nurse Researcher*, 17(2), pp. 7-15.
- Galleta, A., 2013. *Mastering the semi-structured interview and beyond*. [Online] Available at: [https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://r4.vlreader.com/Reader?ean=9780814732953_!!OepYZ6Q!7wlTbeu9YpIL4Q9iAZ43IBRq9XsPXauOOjpXQajlczd3Gfdd_9tevU3sQNYkx7oCDJNk00j7uY9ohzo8sONL8KAYdzNpUw\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/_https://r4.vlreader.com/Reader?ean=9780814732953_!!OepYZ6Q!7wlTbeu9YpIL4Q9iAZ43IBRq9XsPXauOOjpXQajlczd3Gfdd_9tevU3sQNYkx7oCDJNk00j7uY9ohzo8sONL8KAYdzNpUw$) [Accessed 22 March 2024].
- Griffiths, G. & Norris, G., 2020. Explaining the crime drop: contributions to declining crime rates from youth cohorts since 2005. *Crime, Law and Social Change*, pp. 25-53.
- Hagan, F. E. & Daige, L. E., 2018. *Introduction to criminology: Theories, methods and criminal behaviour*. 1st ed. London: s.n.
- Hassan, M., 2024. *Limitations in Research – Types, Examples and Writing Guide*. [Online] Available at: <https://researchmethod.net/limitations-in-research/#:~:text=A%20limitation%20is%20any%20factor%20that%20could%20potentially,conclusions%20drawn%20are%20supported%20by%20the%20available%20evidence.> [Accessed 29 March 2024].
- HM Government, 1963. *Children and Young Persons Act 1963*, London: HM Government.
- HM Government, 2016. *Age of criminal responsibility*. [Online] Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/age-of-criminal-responsibility> [Accessed 10 February 2024].
- HM Government, 2018. *Gov.uk*. [Online] Available at: <https://data.justice.gov.uk/cjs-statistics/cjs-crime> [Accessed 10 11 2023].
- House, J., 2018. Authentic vs elicited data and qualitative vs quantitative research methods in pragmatics: overcoming two non-fruitful dichotomies. *System Journal*, 75(1), pp. 4-12.
- Howard League for Penal Reform, 2015. *Child Arrests in England and Wales 2014*. London: s.n.
- Kawachi, I., Kennedy, B. P. & Wilkinson, R. G., 1999. Crime: social disorganization and relative deprivation. *Social Science & Medicine*, 48(6), pp. 719-731.
- Labrie, R. A. et al., 2007. Criminality and continued DUI offense: criminal typologies and recidivism among repeat offenders. *Behavioural Sciences & The Law*, 25(4), pp. 603-614.
- Lumen, 2024. *Introduction to Sociology*. [Online] Available at: <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/suny-esc-introsociology/chapter/outcome-theories-of-social-deviance/> [Accessed 16 March 2024].
- Macguire, J., 2018. *Old enough to know better? The minimum age of criminal responsibility*, London: Crimeline.

Manstead, A. S. R., 2018. The psychology of social class: How socioeconomic status impacts thought, feelings, and behaviour. *The British Journal of Social Psychology*, 57(2), pp. 267-291.

McCombes, S., 2019. *Sampling Methods | Types, Techniques & Examples*. [Online] Available at: <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/sampling-methods/> [Accessed 23 March 2024].

McLeod, S., 2023. *Reliability In Psychology Research: Definitions & Examples*. [Online] Available at: <https://www.simplypsychology.org/reliability.html> [Accessed 24 March 2024].

Merton, R. K., 1957. *Continuities in the theory of social structure and anomie*. 1st ed. New York: The Free Press.

Middleton, F., 2019. *Reliability vs. Validity in Research | Difference, Types and Examples*. [Online] Available at: <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/reliability-vs-validity/> [Accessed 24 March 2024].

Ministry of Justice , 2023. *Proven reoffending statistics: January to March 2021*, London: HM Government .

Ministry of Justice, 2012. *Prisoners' childhood and family backgrounds Results from the Surveying Prisoner Crime Reduction (SPCR) longitudinal cohort study of prisoners*, London: Ministry of Justice.

Ministry of Justice, 2022. *Offending Histories - Q4 2021*, London: HM Government.

Ministry of Justice, 2022. *Proven reoffending statistics: April to June 2020*, London: HM Government.

Newburn, T., 2016. Social disadvantage, crime, and Punishment. In: O. U. Press, ed. *Social advantage and disadvantage*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 322-340.

NHS Foundation Trust, 2024. *Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and Attachment*. [Online] Available at: <https://mft.nhs.uk/rmch/services/camhs/young-people/adverse-childhood-experiences-aces-and-attachment/> [Accessed 24 February 2024].

Nickerson, C., 2024. *Simply Psychology: Edwin Sutherland's Differential Association Theory*. [Online] Available at: <https://www.simplypsychology.org/differential-association-theory.html> [Accessed 22 March 2024].

Nickerson, C., 2024. *Subcultural Psychology*. [Online] Available at: <https://www.simplypsychology.org/subcultural-theories-crime-deviance.html> [Accessed 22 March 2024].

Piquero, A. R., Farrington, D. P. & Blumstien, A., 2007. *Key Issues in Criminal Career Research: New Analyses of the Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development*. 1st ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

ReviseSociology, 2023. *Positivism and Interpretivism in Social Research*. [Online] Available at: https://revisesociology.com/2015/05/18/positivism-interpretivism-sociology/?utm_content=cmp-true [Accessed 20 March 2024].

Roberts, J. & Hough, M., 2005. Sentencing young offenders: Public opinion in England and Wales. *British Society of Criminology*, 5(3), pp. 202-230.

- Sammons, A. & Putwain, D., 2019. *Psychology and Crime*. 2nd ed. London: Taylor & Francis Group.
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A., 2007. *Research Methods for Business Students*. 6th ed. London: Pearson.
- Saunders, M., Lewis, P. & Thornhill, A., 2009. Understanding research philosophies and approaches. *Research Methods for Business Students*, 4(1), pp. 106-135.
- Smith, I. B. & Hopkins, K., 2013. *The factors associated with proven re-offending following release from prison: findings from Waves 1 to 3 of SPCR*, London: Ministry of Justice.
- Steeferkerk, R., 2023. *Inductive vs. Deductive Research Approach | Steps & Examples*. [Online]
Available at: <https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/inductive-deductive-reasoning/#:~:text=The%20main%20difference%20between%20inductive%20and%20deductive%20reasoning,generalizations.%20Deductive%20reasoning%20works%20the%20other%20way%20around.>
[Accessed 21 March 2024].
- Tengli, M. B., 2020. *RESEARCH ONION: A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH TO DESIGNING RESEARCH METHODOLOGY*. Mumbai: Central Agricultural University.
- The Association of Directors of Public Health, 2021. *Guidance for the Policing Sector*, London: The Wave Trust.
- Thesismind, 2019. *Analysis of Saunders Research Onion*. [Online]
Available at: <https://thesismind.com/analysis-of-saunders-research-onion/>
[Accessed 20 March 2024].
- Tomaszewski, L. E., Zarestky, J. & Gonzalez, E., 2020. Planning Qualitative Research: Design and Decision Making for New Researchers. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 19(1), pp. 36-42.
- Trust for London, 2023. *Crime and income deprivation*. [Online]
Available at: <https://trustforlondon.org.uk/data/crime-and-income-deprivation/#:~:text=Overall%2C%2052%25%20more%20crimes%20were,the%20least%20income%20deprived%2010%25>
[Accessed 11 11 2023].
- Woodall, J. & Freeman, C., 2020. Promoting health and well-being in prisons: an analysis of one year's prison inspection reports. *Critical Public Health*, 30(5), pp. 555-566.
- Wortley, R. & Mazerolle, L., 2011. *Environmental Criminology and Crime Analysis*. New York: Routledge.
- Wortley, R. & Townsley, M., 2017. *Environmental Criminology and Crime Analysis*. New York: Taylor & Francis Group.
- Yilmaz, K., 2013. Comparison of Quantitative and Qualitative research traditions: epistemological, theoretical and methodological differences. *European Journal of Education*, 48(2), pp. 311-313.
- Youth Endowment Fund, 2023. *Children, violence and vulnerability 2023*, London: Youth Endowment Fund.
- Youth Justice Board, 2020. *Strategic Plan 2021-2024*, London: The Youth Justice Board for England & Wales.
- Youth Justice Board, 2024. *Youth Justice Statistics: 2022 to 2023*, London: HM Government

Zwecker, N. A. et al., 2019. Social Support Networks among Delinquent Youth: An 8-Year Follow-up Study. *PubMed Central*, 57(7), pp. 459-480.

7. APPENDICES

7.1 Appendix A- Research Questions

Questions	References relating to questions drawn from research
Q.1 The data collected from this questionnaire will be confidential and presented with anonymity. Please state whether you give consent for your results to be used within my research project.	Questions 1 and 2 were used to gathered consent and the participant's gender.
Q2 What is your sex? (a) Male (b) Female (c) Other (please say) (d) prefer not to say	
Q3 Which is your age group? (a) 17 or younger (b) 18-24 (c) 25-34 (d) 35-44 (e) 45-54 (f) 55-64 (g) 65 or older	
Q.4 Do you believe offending and re-offending is an issue within the local community? a) No (b) Yes, Adult offenders (c) Yes, Youth offenders (d) Yes, both	Crime rates within England and Wales are currently at their highest levels with a total of 6.6 million crimes being recorded between September 2022 and September 2023 (HM Government, 2018)

Q.5 Do you agree or disagree with the following statement? Offenders are more likely to reoffend due to self-awareness of the communities negative perception to prior criminal behaviour	Societal views on individuals with criminal charges immediately apply labels to the individuals identifying as criminals or deviants, with research identifying a continued exposure to labelling can lead to an individual self-identifying as a criminal or deviant leading to involvement in crime (Bernburg, et al., 2006).
Q.6 ‘ Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are stressful or traumatic incidents in childhood, such as abuse, neglect, household dysfunction, and can have long-term impacts on a person’s health and welfare’ (Boullier and Blair, 2017). Do you believe offending and anti social behaviour can be attributed to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)? (a) A high percentage (b) A moderate percentage (c) A low percentage (d) Not sure (e) Prefer not to say	Research indicates that prisoners who have endured mistreatment and witnessed abuse and violence during childhood were more likely to offend and reoffend, with reconvictions occurring within the year following their release (Ministry of Justice, 2012)
Q.7 Do you believe youth offenders should be allocated sentences with higher lenience in comparison to adult offenders, with an increased focus on rehabilitation? (a) Yes (b) Not sure (c) No	Research identifies a lack of confidence in the youth courts despite processing through the criminal justice system in the same way an adult would be processed (Roberts & Hough, 2005)
Q.8. Do you agree that sociological factors such as social community environment and psychological factors such as childhood experiences are significant contributors to the transition of children into adult offenders? (a) Strongly Agree (b) Agree (c) Somewhat Agree (d) Disagree (e) Strongly Disagree	The theory of brain development correlates with research undertaken by (Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, 2023), whereby it was identified that Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) can profoundly affect the development of a child's brain due to the presence of toxic stress.

Q.9 Do you believe prisoners genuinely dedicate themselves to rehabilitation programmes while in prison? (a) Yes (b) No	Research identifies adults released from prison within the same period had a proven reoffending rate of 39% (Ministry of Justice, 2022).
Q.10 Do you believe current rehabilitation process are effective in catering for issues such as ACE's? (a) Yes (b) No (c) Not sure	
Q.11 Do you think emphasising emotional support is more important than focusing solely on intervention programmes such as education and work? (a) Yes (b) No	Rehabilitation processes have developed from original ideologies in an attempt to understand and resolve behaviours of deviant offenders and reoffenders. In lieu of previous methodologies entailing primarily isolation processes, modern day rehabilitation within prisons include education & employment (Blakey, 2017).
Q.12 Please expand more about your answers to Q11, providing more details or elaborating further.	
Q.13 Do you believe psychological, sociological and ACE's should be considered when sentences are allocated to offenders? (d) Yes (e) No (f) Not sure	During adolescence, the limbic system, which includes the prefrontal cortex, undergoes continual changes and advancements, influencing aspects such as emotional intensity, decision-making abilities, self-regulation, and daring behaviours (Arain, et al., 2013).
Q.14 Please expand on answers to Q13, providing justifications or elaborating further	

7.2 Appendix B- Question 12 Responses

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	Not sure
2	anonymous	People who invest time in getting to know the offenders might get a better result from courses
3	anonymous	Depends on the situation
4	anonymous	I believe catering rehabilitation to accommodate the needs of a person rather than treating generally will be more effective
5	anonymous	I think they need more support to address any trauma
6	anonymous	Yes I completely agree that emotional support is paramount as this may be where the root of offending Lies
7	anonymous	Emotional support is very important but I think there are many factors some which I feel are more important. Integration into society and building a sense of belonging and purpose is more important but there are factors that negate work that can be done there. Socioeconomic factors influence the individual and peer groups provide influence on returning to previous offending behaviours.
8	anonymous	I believe that people need to understand why they behave the way they do so they can move forward and make something of themselves. There's no point in training them in a job if they are unable to control their actions.
9	anonymous	Emotional Support is important as most offences are due to anger or a feeling of not belonging or being accepted by family, friends or community.

10	anonymous	Clearly ACEs have a significant effect on people throughout their lives, these emotional issues need tackling by counselling and support, however it cannot be the case that ACEs are used as an excuse for offending.
11	anonymous	Can be an excuse used by social work theory
12	anonymous	I think it's more difficult to get a good emotional support system. Once that has been worked on then other interventions will follow more easily.
13	anonymous	I believe all factors are equally as important.
14	anonymous	I believe offering one to one support to offenders would be beneficial as once the trust is built they would talk about their emotions and feelings which maybe they've never been able to do before
15	anonymous	It's always good to get to the root of the problem which eventually will help them gain better coping skills and have higher levels of well being to deal with difficult situations in life
16	anonymous	Yes, I believe emotional support (a strong support network) is a great foundation to start with and then help individuals with work and education.
17	anonymous	I don't know enough to give a definite answer
18	anonymous	I think everyone would benefit from having an emotional response to their situations, it gives people motivation to look into their situations with more emotion themselves. Also gives a better understanding to themselves from other peoples advice and responses to them. This could then help them focus more on what they want and need as an individual and could help when in educational or work environments.

7.3 Appendix C- Question 14 Responses

ID ↑	Name	Responses
1	anonymous	Not sure
2	anonymous	It all depends on the crime committed and how many crimes already been committed
3	anonymous	Issues such as ACEs may leave individuals with underlying issues they are unable to process without suitable support
4	anonymous	It's not fair they have to suffer for something they have learnt or brought up in
5	anonymous	Yes I do . I believe that the reasons are above play a huge part in the likelihood to commit a crime and there may be a reduction of reoffending If these issues were looked at .
6	anonymous	Psychological and sociological factors does not take away the offence that's been committed by the offender.
7	anonymous	Tackling childhood trauma as a condition or part of sentence may help somewhat but there is no clear or easy fix
8	anonymous	A person's feelings at the time of the offence must be understood if a genuine effort of rehabilitation is expected to work.on
9	anonymous	Depends on individual circumstances see comment
10	anonymous	Career criminals know how to use the system to their advantage. Their emotional responses can be fake
11	anonymous	I think sometimes depending on the offence aces would be considered
12	anonymous	There is no excuse for committing a crime, therefore the length of sentences should not be considered as this would create a loop hole in the system which could be exploited.
13	anonymous	If would depend on the severity of the crime commitec
14	anonymous	Personally I think it depends on the situation they are being sentenced for and the offenders response to their crime. But anyones past should be identified and a decision should be made on each individuals personal healing from whatever has got them there. Some people may want to heal and get better but just don't know how to.