

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSIONS, AN INTER-DISCIPLINARY ACTION PLAN FOR THE PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT OF RECIDIVISM AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will present the conclusions of the study. The conclusions are inclusive of an inter-disciplinary action plan for the prevention and management of recidivism. The action plan is based on the data gathered from interviews with experts in the field of crime prevention and management as integrated with findings from literature. The profile of the South African recidivist that was compiled during the quantitative phase of the study was utilised to guide the interviews with experts. Finally, recommendations will be made on the outcomes of the study.

The researcher will first indicate how the goal and objectives of the study have been achieved as well as discuss the research questions that guided the research process of this study.

8.2 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim and objectives of this study were as follows:

8.2.1 Aim

The aim of the study was to formulate a classification system for the South African recidivist in order to compile an inter-

disciplinary action plan for the prevention and management of recidivism.

The aim was achieved, through the realisation of the following objectives.

8.2.2 Objectives

The respective objectives will be discussed by indicating how they were achieved in this study.

Objective 1 - To conceptualise and define recidivism within the South African context

This objective was reached, as reflected in Chapter 2, by means of an intensive literature study of national and international sources as well as interviews with experts. The researcher's visit to the United States of America aided in the accumulation of information. The information acquired from the mentioned sources was assimilated and utilised to conceptualise and define recidivism within a South African context.

Objective 2 - To develop a classification system whereby an offender can be classified as a recidivist

The conceptualisation of recidivism from both a literature and expert perspective paved the way to a classification system whereby an offender could formally be classified as a recidivist (compare Chapter 2 point 2.3).

Objective 3 - To compile a profile of the South African recidivist

In order to compile a profile of the South African recidivist constructs that are characteristic of the lifestyle of the recidivist were identified from literature. In partnership with Perspective Training College, the identified constructs were utilised for the development of the PFIR eco-metric scale. This scale was used for the quantitative phase of this research with the aim to develop a profile of the recidivist.

Objective 4 - To develop an inter-disciplinary action plan for the prevention and management of recidivism

This objective was achieved during the qualitative phase of the study (see Chapter 7). Interviews with experts were conducted based on the profile of the recidivist. Findings from these interviews were used to compile an inter-disciplinary action plan for the prevention and management of recidivism. The action plan will be presented in this chapter as part of the conclusions of the study.

It can be concluded that the aim and objectives for this study were achieved.

8.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions served as framework for this study and guided the research process:

- What are the constructs relevant for the development of a classification system for recidivism?

- What is the typical profile of the South African recidivist?
- What components should an inter-disciplinary action plan for the prevention and management of recidivism comprise of?
- Which role players should be included in an inter-disciplinary action plan for the prevention and management of recidivism?

The achieved objectives of the study indicated that the research process was directed by these research questions.

8.4 KEY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY

The conclusions presented in this section are based on the key findings of both the quantitative and qualitative phases of this research study as integrated with the literature.

8.4.1 Recidivism as crime management tool

Findings from this research study confirmed that recidivism is a phenomenon that contributes to the high crime rate in South Africa. It can therefore be concluded that interventions aimed at addressing the phenomenon of recidivist will be beneficial in reducing the current high crime rate.

From the conclusions it is apparent that the first step in this intervention process should be for government and all training institutions as well as organisations involved in crime prevention and management to adopt a uniform conceptual framework and

classification system for recidivism. Secondly, statistical records that are based on a uniform conceptual framework should be kept in order to determine the nature and extend of recidivism in South Africa. Thirdly, intervention strategies should be developed and implemented to address recidivism and lastly, these strategies should be evaluated to determine the success thereof.

8.4.2 Role players and partnerships

Findings indicated that due to the multi-dimensional nature of recidivism as phenomenon it could only be addressed from a multi-professional and inter-disciplinary approach. Social workers, criminologists, psychologists, educationalists and religious care workers, amongst others, were identified as role players for intervention strategies to address recidivism. The importance of participation of governmental, non-governmental and community-based organisations in addressing recidivism was highlighted in this study.

It can be concluded that partnerships on multi-dimensional and organisational level should be formed in order to effectively implement intervention strategies to address recidivism in South Africa.

8.4.3 Prevention strategies for recidivism

Findings from this study emphasised the importance of early intervention in community based socialisation structures, namely families, schools and religious institutions. These interventions should be directed at the restoration of social fabric and moral

regeneration. Infrastructures that give alternatives for delinquent and risk associated behaviour should be created.

It can be concluded that prevention strategies should be aimed at agents of socialisation within communities with the aim of curbing delinquent influences and risk factors that could be associated with the formation of pro-criminal behavioural patterns.

8.4.4 Intervention strategies for recidivism

As stated previously in this chapter (point 8.4.2) intervention strategies for recidivism should be formulated from an inter-disciplinary perspective. Findings indicated that intervention strategies should be need directed and client centred and should address factors that are characteristic of a recidivistic behavioural pattern. Findings also emphasised the importance that these strategies should be based on scientific research.

In conclusion it can be stated that intervention strategies for recidivism should, from an inter-disciplinary perspective, be scientifically validated and be based on the profile of the South African recidivist.

8.4.5 Reintegration strategy for recidivism

The lack of reintegration strategies as well as infrastructures to facilitate reintegration of released recidivists was highlighted in this study. The aim of re-integration infrastructures should not

only be limited to provide in basic physical needs but should also focus on personal and skills related development.

It can be concluded that re-integration strategies should play an important role in the pre-release preparation of the recidivist. It is furthermore important that facilities such as Community Corrections Residential Centres (CCRC's) be erected in communities to facilitate the recidivist's re-integration into society.

8.4.6 Continuous research on recidivism

Findings from this study indicated that little research was done on recidivism from a South African perspective.

It can therefore be concluded that a need for further scientifically validated research on recidivism exists in South Africa.

Based on the key findings and conclusions derived from this study, an inter-disciplinary action plan for the prevention and management of recidivism was developed.

8.5 AN INTER-DISCIPLINARY ACTION PLAN FOR THE PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT OF RECIDIVISM

The primary aim of the action plan for the prevention and management of recidivism is to break the cycle that recidivistic behavioural patterns are rooted in.

The conclusions from this study guided the researcher to the following principles on which the proposed action plan for the prevention and management of recidivism was based, namely:

- The strategy for the prevention of recidivism is largely based on moral regeneration and the restoration of social responsibility within communities;
- Inadequacies in communities should be addressed and infrastructures should be developed to facilitate and promote the holistic development of an individual;
- The aim of the penal system should be to restore, develop and contribute to the rehabilitation of the offender and not only to act punitively;
- Effective need directed and client centred intervention programmes should be available within correctional settings in order to address factors associated with the causation of recidivistic behaviour as well as to address risk factors for re-offending;
- Pre-release preparation forms an integral part of the intervention strategies and should be included in all interventions. This is inclusive of therapeutic and development programmes as well as programmes aimed at preparing the recidivist for the employment sector; and
- Continuous research and evaluation should be conducted in order to develop inter-disciplinary prevention and management strategies for recidivism.

The action plan for the prevention and management of recidivism can be depicted as follows:

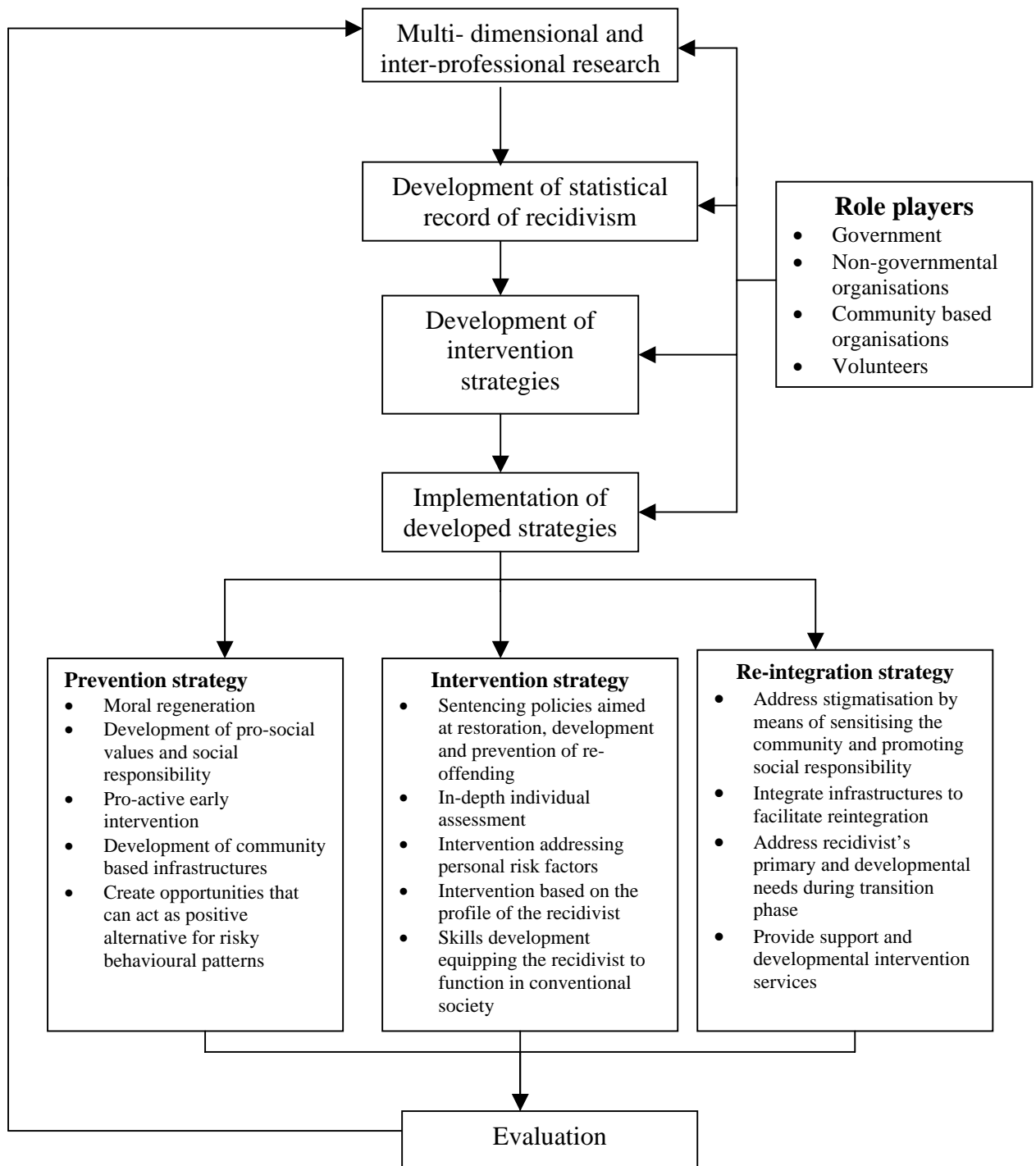


Figure 17: An inter-disciplinary action plan for the prevention and management of recidivism.

As indicated in Figure 17 the inter-disciplinary action plan commences with inter-disciplinary research on recidivism as

phenomenon. In order to comprehend the extend of recidivism in South Africa it is necessary to develop a statistical record base. Based on the research and statistical record, multi-disciplinary intervention strategies should be developed and implemented in order to prevent and manage recidivism.

The proposed inter-disciplinary action plan is based on three strategies, namely (1) prevention, (2) therapeutic and developmental intervention and (3) successful reintegration of the recidivist into society. Lastly, the action plan should continuously be evaluated in order to assess the effectiveness thereof. The action plan is based on a circular process ensuring regeneration and interventions based on current research. Governmental, non-governmental and community based organisations as well as volunteers are key role players in the inter-disciplinary action plan for recidivism.

8.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

The primary recommendation of this study is that the inter-disciplinary action plan, as proposed in this study, should be implemented. In order to implement the proposed action plan it is necessary that governmental organisations, specifically the criminal justice cluster and the Department of Social Development should become willing and motivated partners in this process. This can be accomplished by including the proposed action plan in governmental crime prevention and management strategies. Partnerships should furthermore not be limited to the governmental sector. Non-governmental and community based organisations as well as

volunteers should also be taken on board and recognised as important role players to ensure the successful implementation of the proposed action plan on recidivism.

In summary the following recommendations were made in conclusion of the quantitative phase of the study (see Chapter 6, point 6.4):

- An assessment scale should be developed to assist with the risk prediction of re-offending;
- Therapeutic intervention strategies and programmes should be developed based on the profile of the recidivist; and
- Further research should be conducted on a national basis in order to develop a profile that could be generalised to all South African offenders.

Final recommendations for this study are as follow:

- The social work profession should actively engage as role players in the proposed action plan to prevent and manage recidivism and by doing so enhance forensic social work.
- The role of recidivism as contributing factor towards the crime rate should be acknowledged by Government and other role players and strategies to kerb recidivism should be included in governmental crime prevention and management strategies;
- A universal concept of recidivism should be used as point of departure for all agencies and organisations involved in crime prevention and management;
- A centralised statistical database on recidivism should be developed in South Africa; and

University of Pretoria etd - Schoeman, M I (2002)

- Recidivism should be further researched nationally in order to effectively design and utilise crime prevention and management strategies in South Africa.