

## CHAPTER 3

### CAUSATIVE FACTORS OF CRIME AND RECIDIVISM

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter various causative risk factors associated with criminal conduct were identified. Farrington states that risk factors are prior factors that can increase the risk offending (Maguire *et al.*, 1997:382). Risk factors can furthermore be viewed as conditions that can be associated with a higher likelihood of negative outcomes, among others, problem behaviour, dropping out of school and delinquency (Carr & Vandiver, 2001:409).

Risk prediction is based on personal characteristics and circumstances that act as predictors of future criminal conduct (McGuire, 1995:48). Zamble and Quinicy (1997:2) found that risk predictors utilized to predict criminal behaviour is similar to those utilized to predict recidivism among convicted offenders. Risk factors can therefore be viewed as predictors of behaviour, which in turn can be associated with criminal causation.

Risk predictors associated with recidivism can be divided into two categories, namely stable and dynamic factors. Stable factors are risk factors that are insensitive to rehabilitation programmes, for instance gender, age, race and family history. Dynamic factors, on

the other hand, are those that can - be influenced - by, and is sensitive to rehabilitation programmes - for example, alcohol and drug abuse (Quist & Matshazi, 2000:183). It should be noted that even though rehabilitation programmes can have an impact on stable factors, it could not change the event or aspect associated with the stable factor. For the purpose of the research study both stable and dynamic risk factors are deemed as important criminal risk predictors. The interaction between stable and dynamic risk factors, as with all risk factors, make it difficult to determine if a risk factor is an indicator (symptom) or probable cause of offending (Maguire *et al.*, 1997:383). In order to get a holistic perception of recidivism it is of importance to explore both stable and dynamic risk factors more in-depth.

The exploration of the causation of crime subsequently also leads to the "nature" versus "nurture" debate. The concept "nature", accentuates the importance to view humans as biological beings with unique biological limits and predispositions that ultimately will determine their biological inheritance. These genetic or hereditary factors determine the range of emotional and behavioural responses that a person is capable of as well as strengths and weaknesses that will influence behavioural actions and outcomes (Nye, 1992:51; Baldwin & Baldwin, 1981:5). "Nurture", on the other hand highlights the influence that the environment has on a human's behaviour. In this respect Skinner stated that an individual's personality is determined by past (life course) and

present events or experiences within the environment (Nye, 1992:51).

It is widely debated if environmental or genetic factors determine a person's personality and behaviour patterns (Hunter & Dantzker, 2002:45.). A three part series named "*The concept of heredity in Western thought*" follows the "nature" versus "nurture" debate from biblical to modern times (Mankind Quarterly, 1995). In this series the conclusion was reached that environmental and hereditary factors are two different categories of causal factors that intertwine and interact in the formulation of the human personality.

Genetic factors determine the potential and limits of human behaviour while environmental circumstances and events influences the individual's development, personality and behaviour within these genetic boundaries. It is emphasized that the two factors, namely *genetic* and *environmental*, are equally important because they interact and do not oppose each other (Mankind Quaterly, 1995:353). An example of this interactive relationship is that genetic and hereditary factors give humans the potential to learn while the environment provides the opportunity to utilize this potential.

In relation to offending Farrington, as quoted in Maguire *et al.*, (1997:394), is of the opinion that "...criminal behaviour results

from the interaction between an individual (with a certain degree of underlying anti-social tendency) and the environment (which provides criminal opportunities)". It can therefore be stated that both genetic and environmental aspects play a role in the criminal behavioural process. For the purpose of this research study the importance and role of both genetic (hereditary) and environmental factors is recognised in the shaping of personality and behaviour.

In order to explore criminal causation, risk factors will be divided into three categories, namely individual, family and community based factors. These factors will be explored in order to identify risk predictors that can be linked with the causation of crime and recidivism.

### **3.2 INDIVIDUAL RISK FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH CRIMINAL CAUSATION**

When individual criminal risk factors are explored it is necessary to start even before conception, i.e. with the genetic make up of the prospective parents, and the role that these factors play in relation to criminal causation. From a genetic perspective, the discussion will focus on physical and biological factors, intelligence, personality and temperament as well as mental and physiological disorders.

Regarding individual risk factors the focus will be on the socialization process of a child into adulthood as well as the cognitive processes involved. Finally, the role of alcohol and drug abuse in relation to crime will be emphasised.

### **3.2.1 Genetic and hereditary factors in relation to criminal causation**

Before the relationship between genetics and crime can be explored it is firstly important to understand the role of genetic and hereditary factors in human development.

Genes act as the blueprint or map which determine all aspects of human development. The protein building activities of genes enable the physical as well as psychological development of a human being. Hereditary factors is an indicator of the genetic differences between individuals which determine for example, physical traits (looks, height, race), personality (introvert versus extrovert) and life outcomes (predisposition towards alcoholism and crime. As an example Herrnstein postulates that criminal or anti-social behaviour of parents acts as one of the primary risk factors for criminal behaviour in children (Wilson & Petersilia, 1995:55). Even though it seems as if this could more readily be explained from an environmental than genetic perspective, studies found that there is a genetic link between criminal parents and delinquent children (Maguire *et al.*, 1997:390). A study of children of offending parents who were raised in foster care by non-offending foster

parents attests to this link. The conclusion of the study was that adopted children resemble their natural parents in their offending more than they resemble their adoptive parents who raised them (compare Conklin, 2001:137; Maguire, *et al.*, 1997:390 and Wilson & Petersilia, 1995:55). It can therefore be stated that children of offending parents will have a genetic, hereditary predisposition through the genetic transmission of criminogenic characteristics towards criminal behaviour. Wilson and Petersilia (1995:87) concur and further propose that the link between genetic influence and recidivism is of importance and needs to be explored further.

Regarding predisposition, it needs to be emphasised that even though genetics can instil a predisposition towards certain behavioural traits, environmental influences will act as trigger of these predispositions. The environmental influences will also determine the severity of the predispositioned reaction (Jones & Jones, 2000:25). It is therefore of importance that the interactive relationship between "nature" and "nurture" should be kept in mind when individual risk indicators of crime are discussed.

For the purpose of the study the following criminal risk factors that could be associated with genetics, namely physical and biological factors, IQ, personality and temperament as well as mental and physiological disorders, will be discussed.

### 3.2.2 Physical and biological factors as risk factors associated with criminal causation

During his research Sheldon, as quoted in Hunter and Dantzker (2002:50), identified three basic body types (somatotypes) namely endomorphs, mesomorphs and ectomorphs. These body types are characterized by the physical and emotional character traits as depicted in the following table.

Table 3: Somatotypes according to Sheldon

Somatotype	Physical characteristics	Emotional characteristics
Endomorph	Heavy person with short arms and legs, soft and roly-poly	Relaxed, extroverted and relatively non-criminal
Mesomorph	Athletic and muscular	Aggressive and likely to commit violent crimes and crimes requesting strength and speed
Ectomorph	Thin, fragile looking	Introvert and overly sensitive

(Sources: Hunter & Dantzker, 2002:50 and Conklin, 2001:134)

From Table 3 it is clear that criminal behaviour is associated more with a mesomorph somatotype. In this regard, based on Sheldon's somatotypes, Glueck and Glueck, as quoted by Hunter & Dantzker (2002:50), concurred that delinquent boys were mainly mesomorph.

Kretschmer in Bartollas (1997:104) in turn identified two body types, namely cyclothyme and schizothyme where schizothyme are strong and muscular whilst cyclothyme are soft-skinned and lacked muscle. The schizothymes tended to be inclined to delinquent

behaviour in contrast with the cyclothymes who tend to desist from crime.

Sheldon and Kretschmer had two things in common. First, both concurred that persons with a strong muscular build are more prone to criminal conduct. Secondly, in both instances their research was severely criticized due to the research methodology followed in the studies (Hunter & Dantzker, 2002:50 and Bartollas, 1997:104).

In conclusion the researcher is of the opinion that the influence of body type in relation to criminality is not only limited to physical attributes but include the offender's cognitions and perceptions regarding their body type. Stratts (2002) concurs, stating that if a person has the genetic predisposition to be able to push people around and this is combined with other pro-criminal socialisation and cognitions, it could give way to criminality.

From a genetic and biological perspective research also indicated that delinquency could be associated with low levels of physiological arousal (Maguire *et al.*, 1997:385). Low physiological arousal in turn can be ascribed to low alpha brain waves and low autonomic reactivity. A low heart rate was also indicated to be linked to violent offending and was found in research to be an important predictor of offending (Maguire *et al.*, 1997:385). Even though this information is not directly of importance for this



study it confirms the relationship between genetic risk predictors and criminal causation.

From a biological perspective the deficits in the executive functions of the brain can also be associated with criminal causation. These functions, which are situated in the frontal lobe of the brain, are amongst others the sustaining of attention and concentration, abstract reasoning and concept formation, anticipation and planning, self monitoring of behaviour and the inhibition of inappropriate or impulsive behaviour. A deficit in this area can be linked to low intelligence and offending (Maguire *et al.*, 1997:387). The link between intelligence and criminal behaviour is of importance for this study and will subsequently be explored more in dept.

### **3.2.3 Intelligence as risk indicator of criminal causation**

Farrington states that low intelligence is an important predictor of offending (Maguire *et al.*, 1997:385). Wilson and Petersilia (1995:49) concur and are of the opinion that after sex and age, IQ is the most firmly established genetic trait within an offender population.

Even though there is a dispute if IQ is inherited, most modern researchers concur that intelligence is solely genetic in origin (Barkan, 1997:143 and Conklin, 1995:140). This implies that genetically established intellectual ability cannot be improved on

but through enabling environmental influences, intellectual ability can be optimally developed. Research also indicated that the IQ scores of adopted children are closer to their biological than foster parents (Siegel & Senna, 2000:100). These findings emphasize the genetic origin of intellectual abilities.

In relation to intelligence as risk indicator for criminal behaviour studies indicated that a large fraction of offenders' IQ's was at the low end of the intelligence scale (compare, Hunter & Dantzker, 2002:48; Bartollas, 1997:106-107 and Conklin, 1995:140). Farrington emphasised that a low non-verbal intelligence was found to be a characteristic of the juvenile recidivist (Maguire *et al.*, 1997:385). In contrast, a high intelligence appears to protect individuals from offending events if other criminal risk factors are present (Wilson & Petersilia, 1995:52-23).

Exploring the influence of IQ on crime Conklin (1995:142) postulates that the interaction between intelligence and delinquency has a limited impact on academic aptitude or school performance. It was found that a low intelligence has an influence on access to desirable roles or positions, negative labelling, socialisation and isolation as well as delinquent peer-group association. It can be further stated that the link between low intelligence and offending are not caused by less intelligent offender's having a greater probability of being caught (Maguire *et al.*, 1997:386). Farrington in turn is of the opinion that the link

between intelligence and offending is situated in the ability to manipulate abstract concepts (Maguire *et al.*, 1997:386). The inability to manipulate abstract concepts can be associated with a poor ability to foresee consequences of criminal behaviour as well as experience empathy towards the victims of crime. The researcher is of the opinion that this biological deficit impacts on all levels of the offender's functioning, impairing decision making and problem solving abilities. As with intellectual ability personality and temperament are based on a person's genetic make-up.

#### **3.2.4 Personality and temperament as criminal risk predictor**

Personality can be defined as a unique relatively stable and consistent behaviour pattern, inclusive of emotions and thoughts that distinguishes one person from another (compare Hunter & Dabtzker, 2002:77; Siegel & Senna, 2000:110 and Louw, Van Ede & Louw, 1998:202). Temperament refers to the inherent characteristic way in which an individual reacts to life demands and challenges on an emotional level (Siegel & Senna, 2000:110 and Louw *et al.*, 1998:209). Certain aspects of personality are inherited while others develop as a result of environmental experiences. It can therefore be stated that personality develops during life course and is based on a certain set of genetic predispositions (Aitken, 1998:118 and Louw *et al.*, 1998:202).

As an example, researchers constantly emphasize the importance of bonding between an infant and parents. It is seldom taken into consideration that some children are born more prone to bonding than others (On the "Nature vs. Nurture" Question. 1998). Louw *et al.* (1998:210), through research, determined that 10% of children could be labelled as being difficult. This is based on the child characteristically being prone to poor adjustment to routine and changes in the environment, temper tantrums and constant crying as well as difficulty in responding to comfort. The child's personality trait will inevitably determine the parent's reaction towards that child. If the parents for instance react negatively towards the child, and subsequently the child is being labelled as difficult, the child in turn may develop a negative self-concept. Based on the principles of the labelling theory (compare Chapter 4) this may lead to the internalisation of the label by the child and consequently a behaviour pattern based on the negative label.

The influence of personality and temperament in the causation of crime is discussed as part of the coping and relapse theory in Chapter 4. Kuperminc and Allen (2001:598) found that when faced with challenges in life an individual make use of genetic and heredity personality traits in order to resolve the situation. These genetic predispositions, in correlation with environmental factors and previous experiences, influence the individual's cognitions of their perceived ability to address life's challenges. This in turn will determine the way an individual reacts to the problem at hand.

Inadequate problem solving skills often reflects in the person's inability and ineffective resolving of everyday problems and interpersonal conflict (Kuperminc and Allen, 2001:598).

In order to understand the interaction between personality and crime the researcher studied the various dimensions of personality. Through her studying of various literature sources she came to the conclusion that Eysench and Eysench's research addresses risk factors associated with personality traits the most comprehensively (compare Hill, 2002:137; Bergeron & Valliant, 2001:29,39-40; Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education, 2001:67; Conklin, 1995:143 and Wilson & Petersilia, 1995:53).

Eysench and Eysench's research in Munchie, McLaughlin & Langan (1996:85) explored personality traits that are strongly linked with genetic components. Their research concluded that genetically established personality traits play an important role in anti-social and criminal behaviour (Munchie *et al.*, 1996:85).

Eysench and Eysench in Munchie *et al.* (1996:82) divide personality into three dimensions. The three dimensions are characterized by the following traits:

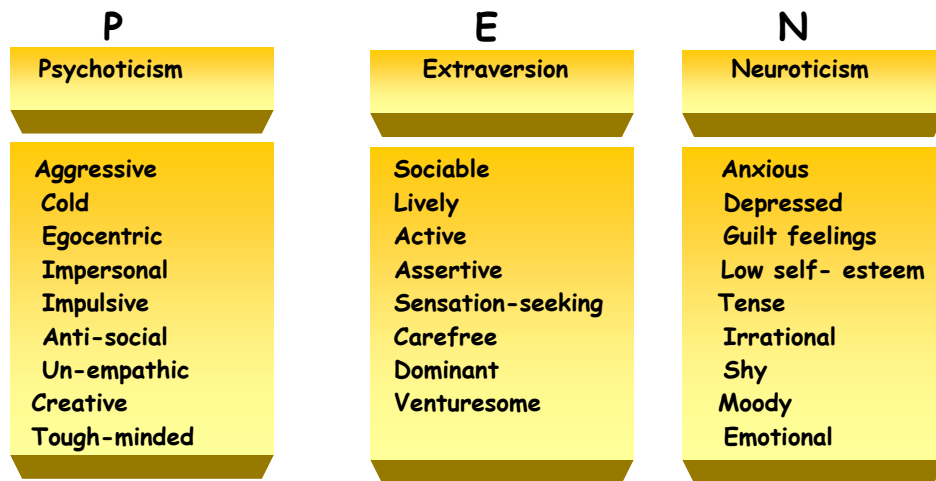


Figure 3: Dimensions of personality according to Eysenck and Eysenck (Source: Munchie *et al.*, 1996:82 as adapted by researcher).

First, these dimensions focus on aggressive and egocentric impulses and the control thereof (psychoticism). Secondly, emphasis is placed on social interaction (extraversion - introversion) and thirdly, on a person's emotional reaction and anxiety (neuroticism) (Munchie *et al.*, 1996:82). Munchie *et al.* (1996:82) compared the research findings of the three mentioned personality dimensions in offenders (prisoners) with a non-offending (not-imprisoned) control group. The findings of two studies indicated that the offenders had a higher psychoticism score and a moderately higher neuroticism score as well as a lower extraversion score than the control groups.

In the studies of personality and recidivism, the recidivists' psychoticism and neuroticism score were insignificantly higher

than non-recidivists but the extraversion score was indicated to be significantly higher. In another study, interestingly, it was found that imprisoned offenders with a higher extraversion score were more likely to offend against prison rules than those with a lower extraversion score (Munchie *et al.*, 1996:86). It can therefore be concluded that offenders in general tend to be psychoticismic and neuroticismic. These characteristics can be associated with self-centeredness, emotional instability and general isolation from society. The researcher is of the opinion that the higher extraversion score as found in Munchie's study of recidivists could be linked to impulsivity and daring behaviour.

In conclusion, research that was based on Eysench and Eysench theory, as quoted in Munchie *et al.* (1996:93) indicated that a combination of personality traits associated with psychoticismic, extraversion, and neuroticismic dimensions, act as predisposing factors in both juvenile and adult crime and anti-social behaviour. Bergeron & Valliant (2001:39) concur, adding that these personality characteristics place an individual at risk for criminality and recidivism.

Two personality characteristics that were indicated previously as having a strong link with criminal behaviour are impulsivity and an inability to experience empathy (compare Hill, 2002:135, Hunter & Dantzker, 2002:81, Siegel & Senna, 2000:182 and Maguire *et al.*, 1997:386). The link between empathy and criminal offending will

be discussed in Chapter 4. In relation to impulsivity Farrington is of the opinion that it can also be linked to mental and physiological disorders, such as, hyper-impulsivity-attention disorder (Maguire *et al.*, 1997:384).

### **3.2.5 Mental and Physiological disorders as criminal risk factor**

A disorder can be broadly defined as behaviour that has distinct genetic and environmental contributions associated with specifiable biological, psychological and social processes. This subsequently acts as a predictor for antisocial and wider social and mental health problems, causing significant distress for the individual and other persons (compare Hill, 2002:134 and Overbeek, Vollebergh, Meeus, Engels & Luijpers, 2001:421). Hunter & Dantzker (2002:81) is of the opinion that mental disorders can range from mild emotional distress to outright insanity. When these disorders result in crime it is usually due to the mentally disturbed person's inability to cope with an adverse environmental situation. A situation may become explosive and extremely dangerous if this inability to cope is combined with violent emotions as well as access to a weapon. When these disorders interfere with a person's ability to function as well as being harmful to the person or others, intervention may be needed (Hunter & Dantzker, 2002:81).



As in the case with the other genetic risk factors most mental disorders is the result of the interaction between an individual's hereditary makeup and the physical and psychological environment (Hill, 2002:138; Aiken, 1998:126). Zeidner and Endler (1996:605) postulates that a person's personality patterns, including coping skills and adaptive flexibility, will determine whether this person will be able to master or succumb to the psychosocial environment.

Physiological disorders have a biological (genetic) and psychological influence on human behaviour as well as a labelling impact (Hunter & Dantzker, 2002:81). Psychological disorders are inclusive of muscular diseases, neurological disorders (multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy), epilepsy, Tourette's syndrome, autism, downs syndrome and attention deficit hyperactivity (ADHD). These disorders often result in truancy and juvenile delinquency due to frustration with failure in school, labelling, impulsivity and misinterpretation of behaviour (Hunter & Dantzker, 2002:81).

Wright, Caspi, Moffit and Silva (2001:321) state that nearly all-serious and persistent criminals start out life as being impulsive and antisocial children. In order to understand the interaction between mental and physiological disorders and crime the researcher will focus on conduct disorder and attention deficit hyperactive disorder. Research indicated that there is a relationship or co-morbidity between conduct disorder and ADHD (Hill, 2002:135). Co-morbidity is a medical term referring to the

co-occurrence of two or more distinctive disease entities. In this instance it refers to the phenomena where conduct disorder is often associated with ADHD and vice versa. There is uncertainty if conduct disorder and ADHD refers to two separate entities and if it is a case where the same behaviour is ascribed to more than one disorder. A further argument is that co-morbidity may be a reflection of the severity of the disorder whereby a combination of conduct disorder and ADHD evidently will give way to more severe symptoms. Behaviour associated with the combination of these two disorders is parental psychopathy and conflict, peer group problems, school difficulties and psychosocial adversity (Hill, 2002:135).

ADHD is viewed from a medical perspective as a syndrome characterized by symptoms such as distractibility, a short attention span, poor concentration, daydreaming, restlessness, hyperactivity and impulsiveness (Du Plessis & Strydom, 1999:11). According to Conklin (2001:141) ADHD is characterized by inattention or failure to listen and to compare tasks, impulsivity or acting without thinking and hyperactivity associated with restlessness and excessive motor activity. Diagnosis of the disorder is based on situational or behavioural analysis, often leading to confusion and sometimes misdiagnosis due to changing behaviour.

Children displaying behaviour associated with this syndrome are often labelled as being naughty, temperamental and emotional. Due to their restlessness and limited concentration they experience problems with adapting in school as well as learning difficulties. Their low frustration toleration and self-centeredness hinder the formulation of social bonds and relationships. This can subsequently result in negative feedback from parents, teachers and peers giving way to a negative self-perception and low self-esteem (compare Conklin, 2001:144; Du Plessis & Strydom, 1999:12-13 and Louw *et al.*, 1989:418-420). Various symptoms associated with ADHD were already highlighted in this study as risk indicators for criminal and anti-social and aggressive behaviour (Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education, 2001:67, 2001:73). Therefore, it can be stated that children with ADHD are predisposed to become involved in criminal behaviour. Du Plessis & Strydom (1999:40) concur quoting research findings indicating that over sixty percent of imprisoned offenders suffers from ADHD.

Research indicated that twenty to forty percent of children with ADHD would develop conduct disorder (Du Plessis & Strydom, 1999:4). Conduct disorder is associated with the repetitive and persistent violation of the basic rights of others as well as societal norms (Hill, 2002:134). Behaviour typical of this disorder includes consistent lying, stealing, truancy and running away and the committing of violent crimes (Du Plessis & Strydom, 1999:4).

Hill (2002: 137- 154) explored risk factors associated with conduct disorder and identified various similarities with these factors and those linked to criminal risk predictors. The researcher found the similarities of risk prediction as well as causative factors between criminal and conduct disorder of importance for this study. It is further of interest to note that research findings indicated that conduct disorder in childhood acts as a predicting factor for anti-social behaviour in adulthood.

As in the case with delinquency, perinatal complications such as birth complications, prematurity, alcohol and drug abuse and maternal smoking were also indicated as causative factors of conduct disorder (Hill, 2002:142, 143). Further findings based on personal characteristics indicated that children with conduct problems tend to give priority to cues for reward over cues for non-reward. This is an indication that these children react better to reward in comparison to punishment and that a decline in reward and an increase in punishment subsequently lead to increasingly maladaptive behaviour (Hill, 2002:139).

It was furthermore found that children with conduct disorder tend to have a lower average intelligence; more especially regarding verbal IQ. It was found that the poor verbal skills reduced their self-control and problem solving capacities resulting in the use of aggression and more action-orientated solutions in

order to compensate for their social inabilities. Studies also found that aggressive children tend to overestimate their social, academic and behavioural capacities. This may be the result of an inadequate ability to process information regarding own abilities, characterized by an inflated but fragile self-appraisal and increased threshold for powerful emotions of distress or anger (Hill, 2002:144).

Lastly, children with conduct disorder tend to have poorer peer relationships and an association with other peers with similar antisocial behaviour. They are also often rejected by non-deviant peers. Adverse family conditions, including inadequate parenting, insecure emotional attachment, marital discord and abuse were also prevalent (Hill, 2002:146-152). Research indicated that children with conduct disorder were labelled from early on by their parents as having a difficult temperament. This perception of the child's temperament is based on parental judgement and could therefore be subjective. Hill (2002:137) postulates that "(P)arental rating of infant temperament can be predicted by measures of parental psychological functioning". Thus possibly being an indication of the parent's inability to deal with their child's needs. In this regard Hill (2002:138) acknowledges the genetic and hereditary influences on temperament but stress that the role of environmental, and in this case parental influences should not be ignored.

In conclusion it is clear that children with conduct disorder especially if it is linked to ADHD is predisposed to become involved in criminal behaviour. The similarities between behaviour patterns of children suffering from conduct disorder and ADHD and the recidivist is of importance to the researcher. In this regard, the researcher is referring to the social relationship with peers and emotional ties with parents, and physical and mental factors, including low intelligence, mental illness, low self-control, impulsivity as well as overly positive and unrealistic perceptions of the future (compare Siegel & Senna, 2001:59-60; Miller, 1998:104 Maguire *et al.*, 1997:383; Zamble & Quinncy, 1997:48; Miller, 1998:104 and Jones & Sims, 1997:336).

Research findings established a link between children with both conduct disorder and ADHD, and the risk of being diagnosed with psychopathy as an adult (Hill, 2002:145).

The similarity between conduct disorder and antisocial personality disorder lies in the similarity of symptoms, namely deceitfulness, callous unemotional traits such as lack of guilt or remorse, absence of empathy and shallow and constricted emotions (Hill, 2002:145). Other behaviour patterns associated with antisocial personality disorder is aggressive and rebellious tendencies, impulsive and immature conduct, nonconformity, and adventurous and risk-taking behaviour (Bergeron & Valliant, 2001:29). Research indicated that between fifty to eighty percent of adult offenders could be

diagnosed with antisocial personality disorder (Hill, 2002:145). As in the case with conduct disorder and ADHD clear similarities exist regarding behavioural patterns associated with antisocial personality disorder and recidivism.

In conclusion it seems as if mental and physiological disorders act as a strong risk indicator for criminality and recidivism. In a discussion of the development process of psychopathology Hill (2002:136) emphasizes the complexity of person- environment interaction. The reciprocal interaction and mutual influence between environmental systems, especially in the case of predisposed psychopathology, can either benefit the individual or amplify difficulties and thus determine behavioural patterns. Therefore, an integrated approach whereby mental disorders are viewed as being part of the causation process of crime should be followed.

The link of genetic and hereditary risk factors with criminal causation was clearly established in the discussion of physical and biological factors, intelligence, personality and temperament as well as mental and physiological disorders.

Individual risk factors will subsequently be explored by analysing socialization and alcohol and drug abuse as risk factors associated with the causation of criminal behaviour.

### **3.2.6 Socialization as risk factor for criminal causation**

Socialization can be defined as the sum total of acquired behaviour that enables a person to conform with rules and expectations within the society whereby a person learns to become a good member of society as opposed to being a selfish individual (Barkan, 1997:155). The emphasis is then rather on being a social being who cares for the welfare of others and society as a whole. Siegel & Senna (2000:165) is of the opinion that if a child's socialization process is incomplete or negatively focused, it can result in an adolescent with a poor self-image who is alienated from conventional society and feels little attachment to a law-abiding lifestyle. This point of view is also reflected in the social control theory (compare Chapter 4).

Lykken (1995:8) is of the opinion that socialization comprises of three principal components, namely conscientiousness, pro-sociality and acceptance of adult responsibility. Conscientiousness implies a general disposition to avoid crime. This notion is born out of the fear for punishment as well as the rejection of crime as alternative behaviour, based on rational utilitarian grounds. For most individuals crime avoidance generally becomes automatic due to the habit of conforming to society's rules (Lykken, 1995:8).

Pro-sociality is based on a general disposition towards pro-social behaviour inclusive of an individual's nurturing, affectional and altruistic impulses. This is accomplished by means of the



cultivation of a person's ability to empathise with others and to participate in and enjoy affectionate relationships (Lykken, 1995:8). McGuire (1995:51) hypothesises that offending should be viewed as behaviour originating in adverse socialization rather than resulting from an inability to experience empathy.

Acceptance of adult responsibility emphasizes the acceptance of conventional family and social responsibilities. Behavioural processes are focussed on conserving and promoting these pro-social rules and values (Lykken, 1995:8). By conforming to these rules the individual is part of and can experience self-fulfilment within society.

As stated previously offenders differ from non-offenders in that they have a deficiency in the ability to interpret social situations and are unable to develop adequate interpersonal problem-solving skills. They are also characterised by the inability to experience empathy and appreciate the perspective of others (Bergeron & Valliant, 2001:38). They are therefore inadequately socialized and unable to experience self-actualisation.

The researcher is of the opinion that there is a comparison between the principal components of socialization as identified by Lykken and Maslow's self-actualisation hierarchy. Conscientiousness can be linked to an individual's safety and security needs whereby the person will refrain from crime in

order to avoid the negative consequences associated with punishment and society's condemnation. Conforming to society's rules creates a safe environment within which a person's affiliation needs can be met. This in turn, creates an enabling environment to form affectionate and pro-social relationships. According to Maslow's hierarchy, safety and affiliation needs are driven by deficiency needs (D need) (Schott, 1992:108-109). It is the researcher's view that both conscientiousness and pro-sociality, as in the case with Maslow's theory, is based on feelings of incompleteness. Through socialization a person strives to be part of, and to be accepted by society, thereby becoming complete. Acceptance of adult responsibility can be compared to what Maslow described as self-actualisation.

Self-actualisation can be defined as being able (B needs). These needs motivate a person to make use of and exploit one's talents, capacities and potential and therefore sustaining a person's interest without being driven by feelings of deficiency (compare Neher, 1991:90 & Mittelman, 1991:151). A person can achieve self-actualisation provided that resources are available and the environment is conducive to facilitate self-actualisation.

Acceptance of adult responsibility is characterized by a person's willingness to utilize inherent talent, capacities and potential for individual growth as well as the growth of the society. The principals as depicted in both Maslow's theory, and the

socialization process represent the interactive relationship between the individual and other systems within a community. In order to be part of this collective conscience the individual should conform to the system's rules but should also be willing to contribute to the well being of the system. A person will only be able to contribute to society and experience personal satisfaction when he/she conforms to society's rules and builds meaningful relations within society.

Agents of socialization, among others, family, peers, school and mass media influence people's values and behaviour. Just as a person can be socialized positively, a person can also be socialized to break the law by learning the values, norms and skills of a criminal or delinquent subculture (Barkan, 1997:187 and Conklin, 1995:227). In this respect Tshiwula (1998:10) mentions the possibility that offenders can be socialized by inmates within a criminal sub-culture while being incarcerated. This can create a greater risk for further criminalization. Siegel & Senna (2000:165) states that early socialization experiences has a lifelong influence and impact on an individual and that even the most adverse environmental circumstances will not attribute to delinquency if a person's socialization experiences are positive and supportive.

In relation to the socialization process of children Conklin (1995:226) emphasizes the role that parenting and innate

characteristics play. He is of the opinion that parental socialization is a major factor in the causation or prevention of criminal behaviour. Lykken (1995:8) concurs stating that parents are firstly obliged to provide basic nurturing, food, shelter and protection for children. After the mentioned care, the second most important task of a parent is the socialization of a child. According to him parenting refers to all the learned experiences that promote pro-social activities and condemn antisocial behaviour. Even though few parents socialize their children to be delinquent, factors can inherently contribute to delinquent socialization. This can be attributed to adverse circumstances rooted in limited contact and identification with parents and inconsequent discipline (compare Lykken, 1995:8; Buikhuisen & Mednick, 1988:40 and Wilson & Herrnstein, 1985:226). The role of parents in the socialization of a child will be analysed more in-depth during the discussion of familial criminal risk factors.

Linking to personality and temperament Lykken (1995:9) refers to innate characteristics such as impulsiveness, aggressiveness and low IQ that will make it harder to socialize a child successfully. It can therefore be stated that there is interdependency between the individual and society in the learning of pro-social values and successful socialization.

In conclusion, socialization can be viewed as a process whereby pro-social values are learned through interaction with socialization

agents. Two theories that play an important role in socialization are the social control and learning theories.

### **3.2.7 Alcohol and drug abuse as risk factors for offending**

Conklin (2001:315) states that there is three facilitating factors that are often present when crimes are committed, namely alcohol, drugs and firearms. He is further of the opinion that the presence of these factors will increase the chance that a situation may lead to criminal violence or theft. For the purpose of this study, the influence of alcohol and drug abuse as risk factors associated with the causation of crime, will be explored.

In 1972 Lombroso stated that "(T)here is one disease that without other causes - either inherited degeneracy or vices resulting from a bad education and environment - is capable of transforming a healthy individual into a vicious, hopelessly evil being. That disease is alcoholism" (Moyer, 2001:36). Lombroso believed that alcoholism is the only individual factor capable of causing criminal offending. This is rooted in its ability to inflame a person's passion, obscuring mental and moral faculties and destroying all senses of decency (Moyer, 2001:36). Conklin (2001:316-317) postulated that the link between crime and alcohol abuse lies in the explanation that alcohol reduces inhibitions that could trigger law-violating behaviour. It furthermore decreases the perception of the consequences of crime, diminishes the moral condemnation of criminal behaviour and makes crime seem more desirable. Another

explanation is that offenders use alcohol to reduce anxiety or build up courage to commit a crime. Even though the reason why alcohol abuse can be associated with crime is not yet clearly established through research, it can be frankly stated that there is a strong association between crime and alcohol abuse (Conklin, 2001:315, 318). As mentioned previously research indicates that substance abuse was in most cases present before the recidivist re-offended (Zamble and Quinncy, 1997:51).

According to Buikhuisen and Mednick (1988:21) confusion exists regarding the link between drug abuse and crime. The question can be asked whether drug abuse causes crime, or whether crime causes drug abuse. A further question emanating from this statement is whether drug use and crime is not the same thing. Taking into consideration that the abuse of illegal substances in itself is a crime, it can be concluded that a direct link between crime and drug abuse exists. In this regard Conklin (2001:318) states that the need to support a drug habit can lead to secondary crimes, for instance dealing in drugs. Barkan (1997:430) supports these previous opinions but state that even though there is a strong correlation between drug use and other types of crime this does not indicate that drug use causes crime. The drug-crime relationship can be explained based on the fact that frequently both drugs and crime are part of a common lifestyle or sub-culture. This lifestyle can be associated with interaction between drug using offenders (compare Conklin, 2001:319 and Barkan,

1997:431). Buikhuisen and Mednick (1988:21) further emphasizes that both drugs and crime is a manifestation of the tendency to pursue short term, immediate pleasure. In essence this is an indicator of a delinquent lifestyle.

It is therefore unclear whether drug abuse causes crime or if crime causes drug abuse. What is clear, however, is that the interaction between the two variables as well as the association with other drug using offenders can act as a risk indicator for criminality.

The assumption can therefore be made that substance abuse is characteristically distinguishable as an attribute associated with crime (Bergeron & Valliant, 2001:29). This can possibly be linked to the fact that both offending and substance abuse can be associated with ineffective strategies to resolve interpersonal conflict and general problems (Kuperminc & Allen, 2001:598, 615).

In relation to recidivism Zamble and Quinsey (1997:54) stated that as with other offenders, the recidivists lifestyle and the pre-offending period could usually be associated with alcohol and drug abuse. In comparison with other offenders recidivist's substance abuse is characterised by excessiveness.

Concluding the analyses of individual factors that could be associated with criminal causation, it is apparent that both genetic

and environmental factors are of importance in the formulation of the human personality. Genetic factors determine the potential and limits of human behaviour. Environmental circumstances, for instance socialization and alcohol and drug abuse, in turn influence the individual's development, personality and behaviour within these genetic boundaries. Even though adverse circumstances associated with any one of the mentioned individual risk factors could be linked with criminal causation the probability of delinquency increases if a variety of risk factors are present (McGuire, 1995:52).

### **3.3 FAMILIAL RISK FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH CRIMINAL CAUSATION**

Research findings indicated that offenders are less closely attached to their parents than non-delinquents (Conklin, 2001:230). In turn it can be stated that attachment to society directly emanates from parental attachment (Siegel & Senna, 2000:176). In this regard Siegel and Senna (2000:277) emphasizes that adverse home circumstances has a significant impact on offending. This is rooted in the assumption that the family is the primary unit in which a person is socialized regarding values, attitudes and processes that guide behavioural patterns in life.

Barkan (1997:202) identified two main categories in relation to the causation of criminality, namely the role of family structure



and family functioning. Family structure refers to the physical composition of the family whereas family functioning refers to the inter-actional behavioural patterns and relationships within a family.

As in the case of both genetic and environmental factors the family also plays a determining role in the shaping of a person's personality. Parents provide the hereditary factors that determine a person's genetic make-up. Influential environmental interaction associated with socialization and the formation of behavioural patterns can often be traced back to interfamilial interaction. It is therefore of importance for this study to explore familial risk factors that could be associated with criminal behaviour and recidivism. For the purpose of this research study the influence of perinatal factors and the family structure and composition as risk predictors will be analysed. Furthermore, the family functioning, interaction and socialization in the formation of criminal behaviour patterns will also be discussed.

### **3.3.1 Perinatal risk factors associated with the causation of criminal behaviour**

Research indicated that there is a direct link between perinatal risk factors, crime, and anti-social behaviour (Wilson & Petersilia, 1995:76). Even though perinatal risk factors will not directly be addressed during the empirical study it is important to take note of it due to the predisposition it can create towards criminality.

Perinatal risk factors are not genetically based but are the result of destructive parental behaviour during pregnancy (Wilson & Petersilia, 1995:76). Bouton and Fanselow (1997:25) in this respect stress the bonding process between mother and foetus in the uterus. The bonding process occurs through chemosensory stimulation and auditory input by means of the mother's heartbeat and voice. This social bond is of importance as it forms the basis of, and affirms the status of the foetus as a human being. The researcher is of the opinion that if a bond is formed between parents and their child before birth, a decreased risk of adverse parental practices will exist.

Perinatal risk factors associated with juvenile delinquency and adult crime is among others; inadequate nutrition, exposure to smoking, alcohol, drugs, violence and abuse directed at the pregnant mother (Barkan, 1997:135). Potential adverse reactions of the mentioned risk factors are low birth weight, foetal alcohol syndrome, physical disabilities, cognitive deficits and learning difficulties. Other dispositional attributes reported to affect social interaction are IQ, and difficulties with developmental tasks (Policy framework for addressing crime prevention and children. Undated). For the purpose of this study, the focus will be on complications during pregnancy and birth as well as smoking and alcohol abuse during pregnancy.

Wilson and Petersilia (1995:76) postulate that there is a link between perinatal factors associated with criminal behaviour, in particular violent offending and violent recidivistic offending. In this regard perinatal complications related to criminal outcomes are postulated to be associated with brain dysfunction due to complications during delivery and pregnancy. This can result in disruption of foetal neural development (compare Barkan, 1997:135 and Wilson & Petersilia, 1995: 76-78).

Further research studies highlighted the association between maternal smoking during pregnancy and an increased risk of disruptive behaviour problems, conduct disorder, delinquency and adult crime in offspring (Maughan, Taylor & Taylor, 2001:1021 and Prenatal Smoking, Crime Link, 1999). The risk is based on the influence of perinatal smoking on the foetal brain development. A mother's smoking while being pregnant may result in adverse temperament, compromised neuropsychological functioning, hyperactivity, and poor social and family circumstances. It was found that the risk slightly decreases if a mother who smoked heavily gave up smoking for at least some time during pregnancy (Maughan *et al.*, 2001:1021).

Foetal alcohol syndrome can be defined as a set of physical, mental and neurobehavioral birth defects associated with alcohol consumption during pregnancy (National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, Undated). When a mother abuses alcohol during

pregnancy adverse substances, namely alcohol and teratagen, a human developmental toxin, enters the baby's bloodstream and interferes with development. This can result in cognitive and behavioural abnormalities (National Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, Undated). Adverse results of perinatal alcohol abuse are adverse reactions during pregnancy as well as after birth. It was found that perinatal alcohol exposure is a stronger risk indicator for adolescent alcohol abuse than a family history of alcohol abuse (On the "Nature vs. Nurture" Question, 1998:4).

In conclusion, the assumption can be made that adverse influences during pregnancy has a strong negative reaction resulting in physical, developmental and social problems after birth and during the life of a child. The perinatal exposure to negative parental, and especially maternal actions can create a predisposition for anti-social and possibly criminal behaviour.

### **3.3.2 Family structure and composition versus crime**

In relation to family structure and composition most studies and debates take place on the influence of broken homes on delinquency. Broken homes can be defined as being inclusive of families that are not structurally intact due to among other reasons, death of a parent, divorce, desertion, separation or illegitimacy (compare Conklin, 2001:241 and Siegel & Senna, 2000:279). The researcher is of the opinion that the emphasis should be on the fact that a child is raised in a home where one

parent is absent resulting in child rearing becoming the responsibility of the single remaining parent or a third party. The raising of a child is inclusive of the physical as well as psychosocial care of the child.

Even though it is speculated whether broken homes act as a risk factor for delinquent behaviour the general consensus is that broken homes contribute to delinquency. It is furthermore indicated that there is a significant association between parental absence and criminality (compare Siegel & Senna, 2002:280; Barkan, 1997: 203 and Bartollas, 1997:232). Conklin (2001:241) proposes that broken homes can impact on delinquency in various ways such as producing unstable habits and personalities. This is rooted in inadequate socializing due to isolation from conventional social order that is responsible for shaping a child's behaviour. Broken homes produce stress and conflict that could lead to acting out behaviour. Children growing up in broken homes often have fewer resources and opportunities thus leaving them disadvantaged in competing for education and employment (Conklin, 2001: 241). Juby and Farrington (2001:25) concur with Conklin and add that the greater the instability within a family the more damaging the effects thereof on the family members, especially on children going through various life course stages. The researcher came to the conclusion that crime is not caused by broken families but by the adverse circumstances associated with,

and caused by, the breaking up of the families. This aspect will be explored in more detail in this chapter (see point 3.3).

Research indicated that there is a strong relation between delinquency and children's early separation from parents (Conklin, 2001:242). It was found that children's prolonged separation from parents, especially from the mother, during early years (first five years of life) has an impact on the child's ability to develop feelings and empathy and form meaningful relationships with peers and adults. These characteristics can be associated with crime and delinquency (compare Juby & Farrington, 2001:24 and The Commission on Behavioural and Social Science and Education (CBSSE), 1995).

Research by the CBSSE (1995) indicated that there is a direct association between poverty and family structure. In the book "Losing Generation: Adolescents in High-Risk Settings" it is indicated that single-parent families are more likely to live in poverty (CBSSE, 1995). In contrast two wage earning families on average has an income that is three times higher than families with a one wage income (CBSSE, 1995:44). Wilson and Petersilia (1995:133) indicated that even though in itself poverty is not a major cause of crime it could be stated that there is a risk that relatively poor people can turn to crime as an economic or psychological escape. In conclusion, children growing up in a single parent family are at a disadvantage, regardless of income. It can

further be assumed that if poverty is added to this equation, children growing up in these circumstances are in double jeopardy due to the added risk (CBSSE, 1995:49). The researcher is of the opinion that a hiatus exists insofar that both absent parents and poverty acts as risk predictors for criminal causation. As mentioned previously it is difficult to determine if a risk factor is the symptom or probable cause of offending (Maguire *et al.*, 1997:383). It is therefore of importance to take note of both these factors as possible contributing factors in the criminal behavioural process.

Regarding family structure and composition research further indicated that middle children are more likely to exhibit delinquent behaviour (Siegel & Senna, 2000:284). This is based on the proposition that first born children receive the majority of the parents' attention. The last-born children in turn benefit from parental experience as well as the presence of older siblings that can serve as role models (compare Siegel & Senna, 2000:284 and Bartollas, 1997:233). Hirschi is of the opinion that family size rather than birth position can be associated with delinquency (Bartollas, 1997:233). He based his opinion on research that indicated that members of larger families are more prone to delinquency than those in smaller families. Children in large families are often characterised by relatively limited supervision. This can be ascribed to the limited time and discipline parents can give to individual children due to the size of the family (Siegel &

Senna, 2000:284). In both cases the reason for the findings can be associated with family functioning and roles associated with the socialization process of a child. These aspects will be discussed later on in this chapter (confer point 3.3).

Research indicated that children growing up in families where one parent died were better off than children who grew up in families disrupted by divorce. Parental absence was, *per se*, not identified as cause of antisocial behaviour. It was furthermore found that remarriage did not mitigate the effects of divorce. Children growing up in merged families had considerably more problems than children growing up with both biological parents (compare Juby & Farrington, 2001:24, 37 and Siegel & Senna, 2000:283).

It can therefore be concluded that family structure and composition cannot be linked directly to criminal causation but rather act as predisposing factors that could be associated with a higher risk of criminality.

### **3.3.3 Family functioning as risk factor for criminal causation**

In relation to family functioning, criminal risk factors can be associated with the interpersonal relationships, functioning and socialization within the family. In this respect Siegel & Senna (2000:278) identified four broad categories that could be associated with delinquency, namely

- marital conflict and break-up;



- inter-familial and interpersonal conflict;
- parental neglect and insensitivity towards emotional needs; and
- parental deviance evolving in the deviant socialization of children.

According to Cummings & Davies (2002:35) conflict within a family can be divided in child-related and non-child related conflict as well as marital and parent-child conflict. The researcher came to the conclusion that even though Siegel and Senna (2000:278) refers to marital and familial conflict as two separate categories they are intertwined and often bound in a reciprocal behavioural pattern. Therefore for the purpose of this research study the two categories will be discussed jointly.

Even though marital and interfamilial conflict can be viewed as normal and even unavoidable, a child's perception of the conflict can have a lasting effect. Cummings and Davies (2002:34) postulates that a child's perception of marital and interfamilial conflict is based on a past history of such events as well as current conflict related stimuli. They further state that these perceptions emanate from the child's cognitive appraisal of the situation, emotional reaction towards the situation and their behavioural coping skills. In essence children will evaluate the effect of marital and interfamilial conflict against the meaning thereof for themselves and their family (Cummings & Davies, 2002:35).

Different forms of marital and interfamilial conflict have different effects on children. These effects can range from negative, benign to even positive. Interfamilial behaviour that was identified as being negative or destructive includes inter-parental aggression or violence. This is inclusive of verbal aggression and hostility as well as aggression towards objects. Non-verbal conflict such as parental withdrawal, conflict involving threats to the intactness of the family (e.g. threats of leaving), and conflict regarding child-related themes were also found to have a negative influence on children (Cummings & Davies, 2002:35). Siegel and Senna (2000:282) are of the opinion that children growing up in an environment of discord and conflict often exhibit aggressive delinquent behaviour, having learned at a young age that aggression has pay offs. Maguire *et al.* (1997:387) concur that parental aggressiveness and conflict were strongly associated with violent offending by their children.

Children exposed to marital and familial conflicts are behaviourally affected on emotional, physiological and social levels. This often results in externalised disorders (conduct problems) as well as internalised disorders (anxiety and depression). The child experiences a lack of emotional security resulting in a negative and hostile family representation. This in turn affects children's adjustment and ability to form interpersonal relationships on all

levels (compare Cummings & Davies, 2001:41-44 and Siegel & Senna, 2000:282,283).

Emery's three ways model, as quoted in Cummings & Davies (2001:43), gives an indication of the long-term consequences that chronic exposure to marital conflict has on children. The adverse effect of marital conflict produces distress in children resulting in acting out behaviour. Acting out behaviour is characterised by aggression and temper tantrums and is in turn often aimed at distracting the parents from their dispute, leading to a reduction in the child's exposure to negative stimuli. This becomes a repetitive behaviour pattern whereby the child's acting out becomes persistently more destructive. Through constant reinforcement an escalation in the severity of the behaviour takes place, evolving in a broader pattern of behavioural problems (Cummings & Davies, 2001:43). Siegel and Senna (2000:283) concur, adding that parents with "out of control" children often tend to give in to the children's demands in order to avoid an escalation in aggressive acting out behaviour. Giving in to demands also alleviate the parent's own discomfort.

The child's symptomatic behavioural problems often can be viewed as the primary "problem" within the family system. In this regard the researcher experienced that from a parental point of view, it is a lot easier to blame a child for marital associated family problems than to explore and acknowledge the real causes

thereof. From a theoretical perspective, within this dynamic and reciprocal inter-actionable process associated with marital and familial conflict, children often tend to be labelled as being difficult. This in turn can result in the child developing negative self-cognitions, self-blame and associated behavioural problems. Children develop a negative family representation and pessimistic future perspective (compare Siegel & Senna, 2001:213,220; Bartollas, 1997:184 and Conklin, 1995:314). Unknowingly, and often unintentionally, children are drawn into this process, and sadly their life course development and social functioning often become attributes of the adverse effects of marital and familial conflict. Siegel and Senna (2000:283) refers to this behavioural pattern as "... an endless cycle of family stress and delinquency".

The second familial criminal risk factor identified by Siegel and Senna (2000:278) is parental neglect and insensitivity towards a child's emotional needs. Parental neglect is associated with, and is inclusive of, child abuse and is often associated deprivation of the child's emotional needs. Bartollas (1997:236) concurs stating that child abuse are usually divided into three areas namely neglect, physical and emotional abuse and sexual abuse. Child abuse is rooted in a behavioural pattern and seldom consists of a single act of abuse or neglect (compare Siegel and Senna, 2000:288 and Bartollas, 1997:236). Farrington is of the opinion that there is an intergenerational continuation of behavioural patterns associated with child abuse and interfamilial conflict (Maguire *et al.*,

1997:389). In this regard research indicated that children raised in a family environment where abuse and conflict are present tend to have poor relationships with their partners and children. These relationships often end in separation. Family violence tends to form part of the relationship dynamics. Abuse, neglect and emotional deprivation, similarly to interfamilial conflict, encourages children to utilize aggression as a coping and problem solving mechanism. It further has a negative impact on a child's ability to form meaningful interpersonal relationships (Siegel & Senna, 2000:306). The inability to form interpersonal relationships can result in a weakened bond with society that, according to the social control theory, can open up opportunities to become involved in crime (Conklin, 1995:218).

The last interfamilial criminal risk factor identified by Siegel and Senna (2000:278) is parental deviancy and deviant socialization. Research indicated that twice as many sons of convicted parents are themselves convicted (Maguire, *et al.*, 1997:389). Farrington as quoted in Maguire, *et al.* (1997:390) indicated that the juvenile record of parents and children tend to be similar regarding offending rate and the type of offence. He ascribes this to genetic factors as well as adverse parental socialization associated with erratic discipline, poor supervision, parental conflict and criminal or anti-social parental role models.

As stated previously early parental socialization has a lifelong influence on a child. This could play an important role in the causation or prevention of criminal behaviour (compare Siegel & Senna, 2000: 165 and Conklin, 1995:226). Conklin (2001:152) defines socialization as nurturance, discipline or training of a child.

Exploring the literature on socialization the researcher came to the conclusion that a parent's role in the socialization process of a child revolves around monitoring of behaviour, psychological presence, disciplining of unacceptable behaviour and the reinforcing of pro-social behaviour. In this regard Conklin (2001:230) postulates that it is not always critical that the parents should be physically present to supervise behaviour, but rather psychologically present. Being psychologically present literally implies that a child will consciously or unconsciously evaluate behaviour against their parents' opinion of that particular act. Therefore a child whose parents condemn criminal behaviour is less likely to commit crime based on their disapproval of crime. Wright and Cullen (2001:679) is of the opinion that psychological presence also implies parental control where a parent makes an explicit effort to monitor children's behaviour and act upon misbehaviour. The constant monitoring of behaviour in turn breeds self control within children. The emphasis of social control therefore clearly falls on the monitoring of behaviour and the punishment of anti-social or unacceptable behaviour.

In their research Wright and Cullen (2001:679) explored an alternative perspective to social control, namely that of parental social support. Social support can be associated with parental emotional support that is an instrumental resource for coping with everyday life events. As with social control, social support also acts as protective factor against delinquency. Their research further indicated that social support tends to promote pro-social behaviour and can be associated with the assimilation of moral values, motives and social skills. Social support furthermore assists with the building and maintaining of affective attachment between children and parents (Wright & Cullen, 2001:680). Research done by Loeber and Stouthamer-Loeber as quoted in Wright & Cullen (2001:680) indicated that there is a strong relation between a lack of parental support and delinquent behaviour.

In conclusion Wright and Cullen (2001:695) emphasize the intertwined nature of social support and control based on the belief that both social support and control can be viewed as a worthwhile investment of parental time.

The researcher concurs with Wright and Cullen but would like to highlight the importance of the presence of both social control and support in the socialization of a child (compare point 3.2.6). The researcher experienced in her work environment that in some instances parents would solely focus on social control. The

emphasis is then only placed on the monitoring and rectifying of negative behaviour. In this instance, discipline without emotional support can lead to feelings of rejection. On the other hand social support (emotional parental involvement) without social control (discipline) can lead to inadequate self-control by a child. Therefore it is important not to take it for granted that social control is automatically associated with social support. The emphasis should be on a balanced approach whereby both social control and support is incorporated to act as protection against delinquency.

Toby as quoted by Conklin (2001:238) is of the opinion that socialization will reduce criminal behaviour if:

- parents clearly define their expectations of children;
- there is a close parent-child relationship;
- parents control their reaction towards their children's rebellious behaviour; and
- parents reinforce the learning of pro-social behaviour and discipline the failure to learn acceptable behaviour.

All of the mentioned aspects have been discussed with the exception of discipline, which will subsequently be discussed.

Barkan (1997:204) is of the opinion that it is important to identify the most effective type of discipline. For the purpose of the research study the researcher evaluated the Brown and Barkan



(2001) discipline styles in relation to Wright and Cullen's (2001) research on social control and support, which is reflected in Table 4.

Table 4 : Evaluation of Barkan and Brown's disciplinary styles

Discipline styles		Evaluation of disciplinary styles
Barkan	Brown	Wright and Cullen
<b>Punitive discipline</b> Harsh rules, frequent spanking for often trivial offences	<b>Authoritarian discipline</b> Tight control with cold and detached parental attitude	Social control without social support, lacking meaningful child-parent relationship
<b>Lax or permissive discipline</b> Few rules allowing children to do what they want	<b>Permissive discipline</b> Nurturing and encouragement without any control. Children often lax self control.	Social support without social control can cause a lack of emotional security and self-control. This can be strongly linked with delinquency
Barkan	Brown	Wright and Cullen
<b>Erratic discipline</b> Inconsistent discipline switching between punitive and permissive		This leads to confusion. Neither social control nor support is fully implemented. Feeling of disillusion and rejection may be experienced.
<b>Firm but fair discipline</b> Assertive but not overbearing discipline leaving room for autonomy	<b>Authoritative discipline</b> High degree of control with a great amount of support and encouragement	Balance between social control and social support.

(Source: Brown, 2001:239; Barkan, 1997:204-205 and Wright & Cullen, 2001:679).

It is apparent that the most effective disciplinary style is based on a combination between social control and social support. By making use of the firm but fair or authoritative disciplinary style, the learning of pro-social behavioural patterns, values and norms are accomplished. The researcher is of the opinion that an effective disciplinary style is a reflection of parents' socialization competencies and abilities.

In this regard Wilson and Petersilia (1995: 128, 129) came to the conclusion that in order to prevent criminal behaviour parents should:

- restrict children's activities and maintain physical surveillance by knowing their whereabouts;
- reduce crime by protecting their home and the occupants thereof against physical, emotional and material harm; and
- act as probation or parole agencies willing to guarantee their member's good conduct.

In conclusion, regarding familial risk factors associated with criminal causation, it is apparent that stable factors, such as perinatal risk factors and the family structure and composition, could create the predisposition for criminal behaviour. The dynamic factors, including interfamilial conflict, abuse and ineffective socialization, could act as triggers and will determine the type and extend of the criminal behaviour. Socialization can

also be viewed as the extension of a person's abilities to associate and interact with systems in the broader community.

### **3.4 COMMUNITY ASSOCIATED CRIMINAL RISK FACTORS**

Brown (2001:258) postulates that opportunities to learn how to commit crime can be associated with the social disorganisation of a community. This occurs due to the breakdown of social control among traditional primary community groups such as the family (Bartollas, 1997:131). Research indicated that offenders tend to come from what Bartholas and Miller (1998:121) refer to as toxic neighbourhoods. These communities are characterized by poverty, unemployment and adhering to delinquent values and traditions. A general culture that promotes crime exists within these communities (compare Bartollas & Miller, 1998:121 and Bartollas, 1997:131-133). An example thereof is a community where male aggression and dominance (machismo) is the accepted norm. Such a community will often be associated with a higher percentage of rapes and crimes associated with violence against woman. Based on this male dominated environment the general culture will inevitably condone such acts (Brown, 2001:259).

Socially disorganised communities create an environment where juveniles can interact and learn from adult offenders. Adult criminals also often act as role models for these youths (Brown, 2001:258). Through this association and the association with other

delinquent peers, delinquent behaviour tends to become an alternative mode of socialization (Hill, 2002:135).

Next to the family, peers are one of the most influential agents that can have an effect on pro-social or delinquent socialization (compare Brown, 2001:258 and Bartollas & Miller, 1998:120). School often creates the opportunity to come in touch with other delinquent peers. Bartollas and Miller (1998:118) are of the opinion that schools are increasingly being acknowledged as an arena for youth crimes. They attribute this to peer group influence stating that, not surprising, much of youth crimes are committed in groups. Research found that offenders indicated that the motive for committing crime at a young age was for thrills and because of peer influence (Maguire *et al.*, 1997:382). Research further indicated that it was noticeable that children with a history of delinquent behaviour tend to go to schools known for their high delinquency rate. The opposite was found in the case of non-delinquent youths (Maguire *et al.*, 1997:392). Farrington ascribes this to parental involvement stating that parents who are interested in their children's education inevitably will enrol them in the school with a low delinquency rate (Maguire *et al.*, 1997:329).

In relation to co-offending relationships research indicated that these relationships tended not to persist (Maguire *et al.*, 1997:381). The researcher ascribes this to the general inability of the offender to form meaningful social relationships.

In conclusion it can be stated that the community can create an environment that can adhere to, and promote either pro-criminal or pro-social values. However, a toxic community is one risk factor that in association with other factors could contribute to delinquency.

### **3.5 CONCLUSION**

The chapter focussed on the importance and role of both genetic (hereditary) and environmental factors in the shaping of the personality and criminal causation. In order to explore criminal causation, risk factors were divided into three categories, namely individual, family and community-based factors.

In relation to individual risk factors the link between genetic and hereditary factors and criminal causation was clearly indicated. It was concluded that socialization was learned behaviour that is based on pro-social or pro-criminal influences from meaningful systems within society. A direct link between criminality and alcohol and drug abuse were established in relation to individual risk factors for criminal causation.

Regarding familial risk factors associated with criminal causation it was apparent that stable factors could create a predisposition for criminal behaviour. The dynamic factors in turn could act as trigger that will determine the type and extend of the criminal

behaviour. Socialization can also be viewed as the extension of a person's abilities to associate and interact with systems in the broader community.

Lastly, the community can create an environment that can adhere to, and promote either pro-criminal or pro-social values. Communities that adhere to pro-criminal values act as risk factor for criminal causation.

In relation to all the mentioned risk factors it should be taken into consideration that a single risk factor can act as a risk predictor but that various risk factors in association with one another could more likely contribute to the causation of a criminal and recidivistic lifestyle.