AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE INCREASE OF FIREARMS CRIMES IN WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA, 2015 – 2019.

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AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE INCREASE OF FIREARMS CRIMES IN WINDHOEK, NAMIBIA, 2015 – 2019.

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ABSTRACT

This study focused on factors contributing to the increase in firearms crimes in Windhoek in Namibia. The research objectives for this study were as follows; to examine the factors contributing to the intensification of firearm crimes in Windhoek, Namibia; to analyse the impact of the firearm crimes in Windhoek of Namibia, and to find ways in which firearm crimes in Windhoek can be mitigated. The research found that domestic disputes, abuse of alcohol, lack of counselling of people in dispute, and exposure of people, especially children, to violent situations are contributing to the scourge of violence in Windhoek. It was also found that the high rate of unemployment and subsequent rising poverty levels in Windhoek are among the generating and contributing factors to firearm increase crimes in Windhoek. The study also found that firearm crimes have a negative impact on socioeconomic dynamics in Windhoek. Individuals, families, and communities are feeling these impacts. This is so because some businesses are being forced to cut down on their operating hours due to the fear of being robbed. Similarly, firearm crimes targeting businesspersons are also impacting economic activities because most businesses have reduced their operating hours due to fear of being the next victim. This research has unearthed mitigating measures by increasing the number of police officers who conduct night-time patrols and enhancing police visibility in the City. In addition, the researchers concluded that firearm crimes could be mitigated by training police officers on how to identify and counsel people who are at risk of committing these types of heinous crimes. It is also revealed that the intensification of firearm crimes in Windhoek can be mitigated through strict firearm regulations by the government. Hence, the adoption of comprehensive firearm legislation could go a long way in this regard. This firearm legislation could be in the form of firearm license renewals, repossession of firearms from all firearm crime offenders, firearm crime risky individuals, and providing firearm amnesty to those in possession of illegal firearms.

DECLARATIONS

I, Dusken Kweta Munzenze hereby declare that this study is my own work and is a true reflection of my research and that this work, or any part thereof has not been submitted for a degree at any other institution.

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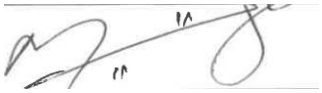
Dusken Kweta Munzenze		20 October 2022
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DEDICATION

I dedicate this research to my wife Mrs. Kereen Munzenze for her unwavering support and encouragement, as well as my son Fidel Munzenze and my daughter Faith Munzenze who sacrificed to miss me in times of need and had to channel the funds from their father because of the substantial amount of money that had to be paid towards procuring study material and payment for tuition fees for this qualification.

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Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

The study was aimed at analysing the factors contributing to the upsurge of firearms crimes in Windhoek. Firearm crime refers to all illegal activities that are perpetrated by the use of weapons. There has been a widespread international outcry in respect of analysing firearm crimes (Amnesty International, 2020). In the Namibian context, there is a general increase/ rife in firearm crimes particularly in Windhoek, a phenomenon that remains one of Namibia's challenges. (Ngutjinazo, 2018). Residents of Windhoek are arguing that the police's failure to prevent crime has exacerbated the current crime situation in Windhoek (Ngutjinazo, 2018). This is despite the core mandate of the Namibian police force as that of preventing crimes as enshrined in the policy manual/functions. The inhabitants postulate that the State should be the mechanism by which people ought to seek and attain adequate levels of security against social threats. In addition, the police should refrain from being a reactive police instead of proactive to curtail the current crime rate, (The Namibian Crime Bulletin2018). Although crime prevention is impossible police mandate, because the police cannot be everywhere at all time, hence it should be a collective mandate between the Police and the community, respectively.

The Namibian Police report indicated in their report that 12 women were murdered in Windhoek alone, between January and September during the year under review (Nampol Report, 2018). The Namibian Crime Bulletin (2018) also shows a significant increase in firearm crimes, especially in the affluent residential areas of Khomasdal. According to Ngutjinazo (2018), the first six months of 2018, saw 49 000 criminal cases being reported in Namibia of which these were in Windhoek. Furthermore, the Deputy Minister of Safety and Security Daniel Kashikola, emphasized that the government was extremely concerned about the deteriorating and uncontrolled firearm crimes level in Namibia (New Era, 2018), substantiated this. The police-chief Sabastian Ndaitunga, also stated that about 388 murder cases and 1 050 attempted-murder cases involving firearms were reported in Namibia from January 2011 to January 2016. In addition, there were 1 997 cases in which firearms were pointed at people and 1 641 armed robberies, and the majority of these cases were reported in Windhoek (Haidula, 2016). These were crimes ranging from murder, armed

robbery, house robbery, theft of motor vehicles, and femicide perpetrated against women and children by people(families) who were supposed to protect them (Ngutjinazo, 2018).

1.1 Background of the study

May (2017) a global report indicated that the increase in the use of firearms in domestic violence and robberies. In addition, the United States of America has experienced mass shootings among students, and (Umberger, 2015), Sandy Hook Elementary School incident where a twenty-year-old man shot 20 students and 6 staff members. Similarly, in Africa firearms are widely being used as tools of crime Cafferty, 2015. South Africa is reported to be leading in firearm crimes. Post-democratic South Africa has witnessed an increase in firearm-related crimes. This could be attributed to less stringent regulations on firearms ownership, (Lamb, 2021). South Africa became independent in 1910 and democratically in 1994.

Though Namibia is not a having firearm crimes rate as high as South Africa, (Coomer , 2017), stated that considering the small population of Namibia and the present firearm crimes, as a case that can be argued that Namibia is as well in the same predicament as that of South Africa with regard to the seriousness of firearm crimes and the two countries are sharing the borders. Current firearm crimes in Namibia and more so in Windhoek, which has, the highest number of crimes committed using firearms are worrisome and a bone of contention to the security authorities and the inhabitant. In a related study, (Boer, 2016) noted that an upsurge of firearm crimes in and around Windhoek is a challenge, which needs collective intervention from the government, civil society, and churches. Firearm violence is a problem that affects everyone in society (Coomer et al., (2017), It is therefore important for everyone in society to be involved in combatting this form of crime. (Boer ,2016) and Coomer et al., (2017), also concur that there must be background checks on those intending to buy firearms as well as firearms induction of new firearm owners and renewal of firearm licenses after every five years. It is upon this background that this study focused on investigating factors contributing to firearm crimes in Windhoek.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The upsurge of crimes committed using firearms soon after Namibia obtained independence has obliterated the hopes of many Namibian that wished to live in a better independent Namibia, after 21 years of harsh war to liberate this country(The Namibian Police report, 2016),. Firearm crimes

have brought reminiscent of the experience of the harsh war that Namibians had endured during the war of struggle for the independence of this country. (The Namibian Police report, 2016), This was said by the Minister of Safety and Security Daniel Ashikola, as he indicated that between 2011 and 2016, 338 people were murdered using firearms and more than 1000 cases of armed robbery were reported. (Haidula, 2016), these figures translate to an upsurge of about 75% and 80% of criminal activities that were committed using firearms in 2016.

In addition, Governor Laura Mc Leod-Katjirua also pointed out in her State address in Windhoek in 2019, that Windhoek was becoming a crime-prone area and hub for criminals. She also indicated the risen number of cash in transit robberies, which involved the use of firearms in Windhoek during the five years from 2015 to 2019 (Muntanga, 2019). In the same vein the Nampol deputy chief for operation Deputy Inspector General for operation Joseph Shimweelao Shikongo pointed out that between March and August 2018, 18 814 criminal cases were reported in Namibia, while Windhoek saw about a 10 percent increase in firearm-related criminal activities during the first two quarters of that year 2018, (Staff Reporter, 2018). The increase in the rate of firearm crime in Windhoek is also substantiated by the call from the Namibian Police Chief in Windhoek for residents to help in tracing a gang of cash-in-transit robbers who stole an unknown amount of cash at the Black Chain Shopping Centre on 19 September 2020 as reported by (Terblanché ,2020).
Six men armed with *pangas* and pistols held the residents of a house on Colombia Street in the Dorado Park residential area of Windhoek at firearm point and robbed them of their valuable possessions, (Informante, 2020). This indicates the seriousness of firearm crimes and crimes related offences in Windhoek. Therefore, the essence of this study was to investigate the factors that contribute to firearm crime in this Windhoek**.**

1.3 Research Objectives

1. To examine the factors contributing to the intensification of firearm crimes in Windhoek, Namibia.
2. To analyse the impact of firearm crimes in Windhoek of Namibia.
3. To find ways in which firearm crimes in Windhoek can be mitigated.

1.4 Significance of the study

The study provided the government with information on the seriousness of firearm crimes in Windhoek so that legislators can review the current firearm ownership policies. The study seeks to inform the government of the risks faced by the police personnel in the current crime environment so that measures can be put in place to curtail such risks. The study also informed the police to continuously view firearm crime management strategies.

1.5 Limitations

Due to the dominance and exponential of firearm cases in Windhoek, the study selected Windhoek in Namibia, because of its population diversity, and elsewhere could be difficult to secure appointments with all the targeted respondents, and other stakeholders that are required to complete the study. The other limitation of this research was that it used a qualitative approach method to gather data which seeks an in-depth overview. However, there is a need for further research on this topic to be done by using other methods of research.

1.6 Delimitation

This study was carried out among the public of Windhoek and the Police investigation sub-division that is assigned to investigate serious crimes in Windhoek.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2. 1 Introduction

The chapter explores the relevant conceptual and theoretical underpinnings of firearms crimes in Namibia. This chapter discusses the Social - Ecological Theory that was used to guide this study. This theory illuminates the reasons why people commit firearm crimes. Furthermore, this chapter also outlines the International, Sub-Saharan Africa and Namibia perspectives on firearm crimes. The role of the United Nations in respect of firearm crimes is also outlined under the sub-heading of international perspective of firearm crime. Literature on the trend of firearm crime in sub-Saharan Africa and Namibia is also presented. This literature review also outlines reasons that have been brought forward on why there has been a general increase in the rate of firearm crimes as well as the impact of firearm crimes on societies and economies. The chapter concludes with an explanation of what different studies have shown to be effective ways that can be used to combat firearm crimes.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This study was informed by the Social-Ecological Theory (SET), which postulates that a closer look at firearm crime and the perpetrators revealed some similar trends and probabilities theories. This theory considers the complex interplay between individual, relationship, community, and societal factors (Kleck, 2016). Bronfenbrenner (2018), also maintains that the Ecological systems theory offered a framework through which community psychologists examine individual relationships within the communities and wider society. The theory is also commonly referred to as the ecological/ system framework.

2.3 Review of related theories

A body of research has emerged regarding the relationship between firearm availability and crime. Overall, the results of this research came up with mixed findings (Kleck, 2016). Some studies have found supporting the proposition that increasing firearm availability increases crime, while others found the opposite. Furthermore, how a firearm influences crime seems to vary by the type of crime, for example, armed robbery, murder crime, hijacking, and gender-based violence. Although scholars (John & Lott, 2020) continue to disagree about the nature of the firearm availability - crime relationship, there is some correlation evidence that shows the ownership of a firearm

intensifies violence; thereby suggesting a weapon as an instrument has an effect on human being mentality. For instance, (Cook, Philip, & Ludwig 2016) found a significant positive relationship between levels of firearm availability and rates of homicide. They stated that the presence of a firearm during an altercation is likely to lead to a firearm crime which may result in inflict injuries or death.

On the other hand, findings by John et al, showed that there an increase in firearm crimes was attributed by firearm possession.

2.4 International trends in firearm crimes

According to (Bollard, 2016), says that most countries must recognize that there was a need to enact laws that regulate firearms use to promote safety as well as prevent threats to public safety. It was in this regard that the United Nations Organization provided guidelines on how countries can control firearm crimes (Chermak, 2018). As posited by (Webster & Vernick, 2019), The United Nations Security Council framework on firearms has mandatory legislative powers regarding collective security as well as executive powers to enforce those decisions. The UN Security Council has a stance on firearms control that compels member states to comply.

This was supported by (Snyder & Sickmund, 2018), who indicated that each member state was obliged to develop national legislation to ensure compliance with the United Nations (UN) treaties. This means that local firearms legislation in every country can determine the type of weapon that should be easily available to the public. The formulation of the legislation thus depends on a great range of factors including the respective state's political and social makeup public attitudes and perceptions towards firearm ownership, crime, and private and national interests (Klofas, 2019). Consequently, weapons that are generally and easily made available in a state are the ones that are mostly used in committing crimes. A case in mind is the United Kingdom, where there is stricter control on rifles than on shot firearms which results in the latter being popularly used by criminals (Azrael & Hemingway, 2018). Unlike the current trend in Namibia whilst any person who is above 18 years is eligible to purchase a firearm. The only limitation is that when you have a criminal records in your name.

2.5 Sub-Sahara Africa's trend on firearm crimes

According to (Alpers et al, 2018), the UN program of action on small arms requires all participating states to implement a wide range of measures to control small arms. These measures include safe storage of weapons, destruction of surpluses, proper marking and tracing of weapons, reporting of transfers and control of manufacturing, dealing, brokering, and the exportation of firearms, preventing them from getting into the wrong hands (Ryan, 2018). Hence, the Southern African Development Community (SADC), in compliance with this UN program of action and other UN treaties, developed a SADC protocol on the control of firearms. The SADC group went on to form the Southern African Police Chiefs Co-operation Organization (SARPCO) as an oversight body for the implementation of the SADC protocol on firearms.

In terms of SADC's article 7 of the Protocol on the Control of Firearms, Ammunition and other related materials all SADC member states must have a coordinated review of national procedures and criteria for issuing and withdrawing firearm a license. SADC member states are also required to establish a national electronic database of licensed firearms, firearm owners, and commercial firearm traders within their territories (Mothsedi, 2019). This database is good for Namibia because will know-how main firearms were reported stolen and those that were disposed of.

In addition, the Legislative measures proclaimed in article 5 of the SADC Protocol require member states to include in their legislation a total prohibition of the possession and use of light weapons by civilians and the centralization of civilian-owned firearm registration. More so, the Protocol makes provisions to ensure the effective control of firearms including their storage and use. Also included is the requirement for member countries to carry out competency testing of prospective firearm owners while restrictions are to be made on owners' rights to relinquish control as well as the use of firearms and ammunition (Mothsedi, 2019).

Thus, in South Africa, the Firearms Control Act, Act 60 of 2000 was proclaimed to control legal firearms and reduce proliferation, as well as the easy availability of small arms in the country. The idea behind this act was to address firearm-related crimes by removing illegally possessed firearms from society while taking cognizance of the constitution as well as the human rights of individuals. The bottom line of this FCA 60/2000 is in line with the government's commitment to reduce the

flow of illegal firearms into South Africa and to prevent legally owned firearms from becoming illegal through criminal activities. However, as stated by Alpers et al, the success of any firearm policy is measured by how it is implemented and its successful curtailing firearm crimes.

Furthermore, Sub Saharan Africa is guided by (SARPCO)' which correlate with the firearm legislative frameworks, which include the Bamako Declaration. Paragraph 3A (ix), which calls for the conclusion of a binding agreement between state parties to strengthen continental cooperation in relation to how they deal with firearm crime. As revealed by (Mothsedi,2019), this declaration is the one that made the South African parliament to adopt the SADC policy on small arms and cross-border crime prevention and the implementation protocol in 2003. It enabled the South African Police Service to participate within SA cities for firearm crime operations such as "Operation Mangochi", "Scorpion", ",Green Mamba", ",Katse", and "Operation Rachel" in Mozambique among others operations.

The former President of Botswana, Mr Festus Mogae, interestingly, indicated that countries in the Southern part of Africa were still experiencing an upsurge of firearm crimes, which mainly involved the use of light weapons. Mr. Mogae said that criminals were increasingly operating across borders, which called for even more coordinated programs between neighbouring states to address the challenge (Ryan, 2018).

Similarly, the former Commissioner of Botswana Police, Commissioner Moleboge, indicated that small arms that find their way into the wrong hands result in the loss of lives and properties in a form of car-jacking and armed robbery (Safer Africa; 2016). It is in this view that United Nations encourage the disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as arms limitations to curb the illicit traffic in small arms. (Cooper et al, 2020). In terms of paragraph 3A (ii,) of the Bamako declaration calls upon member states to put in place structures to address the problem of small arms and light weapons. In order to enhance the capacity of national law enforcement and security agencies that can effectively deal with all aspects of firearms problems. In addition, (Bolland; 2016) indicated that a major problem facing countries in southern Africa is how to improve control of illegal firearms due to the huge number of legal firearms which enter the illegal pool through smuggling, loss, and thefts. A 2017 crime report released by SAPS also confirmed a rise in the illegal importation and smuggling of firearms into South Africa, Cooper, et al, 2020. The report indicates

that theft and robbery with firearms whereas illegal possession and firearm that reported lost are plausibly the most attributing factors to general availability of illegal firearms in South Africa (Bolland,2017). Thus, Ryan, 2018) posits that the increase related crimes have resulted recently in a vigorous campaign for stricter firearm control in South Africa.

2.6 Namibia's perspective on firearm crimes

The Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR, 2016), on small firearm legislation said that firearm legislations has been in existence in Namibia since 1938. This law had been governing civilian firearm ownership and use as enshrined in the Arms and Ammunition Act, Number 7 of 1996 before it was amended in 2019. The Act regulates the licensing of firearms to citizens, firearm dealers, exporters as well as manufacturers. In addition, the Act provides for the regulation of ammunition and explosives. However, according to Shapwanale, 2016, the Arms and ammunition Act of 1996 appears to be ineffective in addressing the problem of firearm crimes in the country and there was a need to revise it, (Shapwanale, 2016).

In Namibia firearm crime is viewed by the general public as the most challenging problem facing society and is regarded as the most serious and fearful kind of crime(Finck ,2016) . Cafferty 2015, stated that the violent crimes and most homicides in the country as being as the results of the easy availability of firearms. This was further amplified by Coomer (2017), who stated that hand firearms are the most preferred weapon of choice in the execution of violent crimes in Namibia which has a negative impact on the livelihood of the society. In line with this Boer (2016), postulated that the only way that may reduce firearm crimes is through proper firearm regulations.

Causes of firearm violence

Hardy, 2016, stated that firearm violence is attributed to various factors that are associated with an individual family history, the school in which a person schooled, peer pressure, community, and socio-cultural risk factors that interact over time during childhood and adolescence. This means that there is no single reason that can be singled out as the only attribute to the commission of firearm crime. However, Bolland, 2016.

2.7.1 Dispute-related causes

Disputes can be referred to as quarrels, arguments, altercations, clashes, or adversaries that take place between two or more people. These according to Azrael & Hemingway. A study by Wachs,

2018, revealed that most shootings and homicides that took place in Rochester, America were due to, domestic disputes and drug-related disputes. Half of the shootings and homicides that were experienced in Rochester from 2014 to 2019 were dispute-related to drugs and altercation and often involved people who knew each other, Koper et al. They pointed out that the majority of shootings typically involve people who are acquaintances.

2.7.2 Drug-related disputes

Firearm crimes are usually connected to drug-related disputes (Smith, 2016). Drug-related disputes as posited by the Violence Policy Centre (2019) are a result of ongoing disputes involving drugs, which escalate especially when rival gangs are involved and members of each side become caught up in retaliation that eventually results in a homicide. According to Smith (2016), there are strong indications of links between drug markets and the growth of firearm prevalence in urban communities, Alpers et al. Drug dealers will not summon the police for protection even when their lives are in danger, (Borum& Verhaagen, 2017).

Moreover, a study by Chermak, 2018, observed an emergence of youth gangs in most location in Windhoek. Where they creates buffer zones where the other group of the gang are prohibited to go. As a result both gang members intend to aim themselves under the pretext of self-defence, (Snyder& Sickmund, 2018). These gang has a very low level of skills in settling disputes without physical force (Wachs et al, 2018). The high levels of poverty, single-parent, and the level of education exacerbated the sense of economic despondency, O'Toole, 2018. This was also supported by Chermak, 2018. Another study by Alpers et al, 2018.

In addition to this, firearm crime can also be triggered by gang-related disputes. These quarrels or altercations emanate between rival gangs and tend to lead to casualties or fatalities (Hardy 2016). Along these lines, shooting can almost be seen as an alternative t resolving their disputes. At times, firing at someone was not the actual plan or attempt to kill but that may result in killing another person, Chermak, 2018. What this implies is that one mistake may result in the untimely death of a person.

2.7.4 Romantic jealousy

According to Chermak,2018, stated that romantic jealousy refers to a feeling of bitterness that people who are in an intimate relationship experience when one of the partners appears to be

moving out of the relationship. This often leads to feelings of resentment against the one trying to break away from the relationship. In most cases as posited by Hardy in Chermak, 2018, that the ones who often feel, aggrieved resort to the use of firearm violence as a vindictive measure. (Piehl 2018). This indicates that there has been incidences where firearm violence, which in most cases is caused by romantic jealousy.

There is a premise that a family behaviour at home plays an important role to play in term of social and development of a child. A child who grow-up in a violent home may became violent when that child grow-up, Mahler, 2017. Thus, the family context is quite influential in the development and continuity of anti-social behaviour. Examples of family risk factors include low parent-child synchrony and warmth, poor or disrupted attachment, harsh or inconsistent discipline (overly strict or permissive), poor parental monitoring, the modelling of anti-social behaviour, pro-violent attitudes and criminal justice involvement, and coercive parent-child interaction patterns.

Families can play a role in establishing and maintaining normative beliefs about violence and firearm usage. For example, pro-violence attitudes and the criminality of parents and siblings during childhood have been found to predict adolescent gang membership and delinquency (Peak, 2017). What this means is that youths from families that encourage the use of firearms in solving problems may perceive firearms to be an appropriate means to solve problems and protect themselves. This orthodoxy can be influential on how a child perceived peace over violence, (Peak, 217)

2.7.5 Poor parental monitoring and supervision

Another influence on firearm violence is poor parental monitoring and supervision. According to Chermak, 2018, poor parental monitoring and supervision. Parents intend to spoil their children by thinking that they love them when they give them all that they need. They should be limitations by a child to everything, they are incidences where parents cannot watch TV at home because their children are having a TV remote. And they intend to watch everything that they want without parental guidance. For example, impulsive or aggressive children who are often unsupervised and live in a home with access to firearms may be at risk. Therefore, parents must be involved in the upbringing of their children. Children who develop beliefs that aggression is a desirable and effective way to interact with others are more likely to use coercion and violence instrumental to achieve goals or solve problems, (Mahler, 2017).

What this implies is that children brought up under such family circumstances (violent) are likely to justify the use of firearm violence to settle issues with other people. This assertion with the study of Hardy, 2016, who indicated that pro-violence attitudes and the criminality of parents and siblings during childhood tend to predict adolescent gang membership and delinquency. What is implied here is that youths from families that encourage the use of firearms for solving problems may perceive firearms to be an appropriate means to solve problems and protect themselves when they are exposed to challenging confrontations in communities.

2.7.6 Coercive parent-child interactions

Coercive parent-child interactions refer to a relationship whereby the parents tend to be unduly authoritative and are not willing to give their children any kind of freedom. According to Curriero, 2017, such coercive parent-child relationships have been associated with the emergence of aggressive behaviour toward children. This assertion was in conflict with that of Chermak, 2018, who says that parents should be able to give limitation to their children. As also opined by Hong, 2018, who says that children will initially learn to use coercive behaviours such as temper tantrums to escape parental discipline. What this means is that when parents acquiesce to these negative behaviours, they inadvertently reward children for coercive behaviours, reinforcing the idea that aggression or violence is adaptive and can be used as instrumental to achieve goals. According to the Violent Policy Centre (2019), such interaction patterns tend to escalate in their severity, for example, from whining, to temper tantrums, to hitting and frequency, leading to increased aggression and non-compliance. This is further noted by, Webster & Vernick (2019) who hint that such kind of behaviours tends to develop as children grow up and eventually manifest themselves when they become adults when they are likely to end up resorting to the use of a firearm to settle or end disputes.

2.7.7 Unsafe storage of firearms

A study by Fox & Burstein, 2017, showed that many families that own firearms do not keep them safely stored at home. Cooper et al, 2020, reveal that the keeping of firearms at home is a cause of youth to access the firearm and use them violently, for example, in suicides, homicides, and unintentional fatalities to young people because, young people are not well trained in the firearm

handling Fox et al, 2017. What is implied from this is that the more easily accessible firearms to children the more risks it possesses to them, (Cooper et al, 2020,).

2.7.8 School and Peer influences.

Azrael & Hemingway, 2018, stated that children who enter school with high levels of aggressive behaviour, cognitive or neurobiological deficits, and poor emotional regulation may have difficulty adjusting to the school setting and getting along with peers. As also opined by Buka, 2017, chances are high that such kinds of children will resort to firearm violence to solve disputes, should they have access to firearms. This assertion was accord also by Alpers & Wilson, 2018, that indicated that highly aggressive children who have earned to use aggression instrumentally at home will likely use such behaviour with teachers.

Chapman& Alpers, 2017, posited that aggressive children, victimized, and academically marginalized from the school setting may suffer high levels of peer rejection that amplify pre-existing aggressive behaviours. Of the same view Bloom, 2017, notes that peer deviancy training is a primary mechanism in the trajectory from overt, highly aggressive behaviours during childhood to more covert processes during adolescence, such as lying, stealing, substance use, and weapon carrying. Adding to this Piehl, 2018, points out that schools that do not provide safe environments to protect students from bullying or criminal victimization. If students are not protected at school and constantly being bullied at school it may increase risks that students will bring weapons to school. This leads to homicides and suicides occurring at schools or during transportation to and from school, (Piehl, 2018).

Poorly-funded schools located in low-income neighbourhoods finding it difficult to address the issue of firearm crime because of fewer resources to address the behavioural, academic, mental health, and medical needs of their students, (Piehl, 2018). In addition, these schools tend to have stricter policies toward discipline, are less clinically informed about problem behaviours, and have stronger zero-tolerance policies that result in more expulsions and suspensions. In the same vein, Garmo, 2019. In particular, impoverished schools, are more at risk for aggression and violence in schools and their communities. This is also supported by Snyder et al, 2018, who noted that schools that provide safe environments that protect students from bullying or criminal victimization support student engagement to reduce incidents of student conflicts that could curtail in learners bringing weapons to school.

2.7.9 Involvement in and exposure to risk behaviours

A survey done by Manganello, 2018, in Chicago, America, indicated that 5.1% of high school students in Grades 9–12 reported carrying a firearm in the 30 days before the survey, and 5.4% of students had carried a weapon (firearm, knife, or shape objects) on school grounds at least once in the 30 days before the survey. Added to this Piehl et al, 2018, observes that youths who carry firearms to school are more likely to be more involved in multiple problem behaviours such as being afflicted h gangs and carrying firearms for personal safety.

Petrie, 2019, also noted that involvement in and exposure to the behaviours at school such as physical fighting, being threatened, using substances, or selling drugs on school grounds have been positively correlated with an increased likelihood of learners carrying weapons to school. In a similar study, Linkenbach et al, (2019, revealed that firearm-carrying youths have higher rates of substance use, violence exposure, gang affiliation, and peer victimization,(Garmo ,2019). Learners with perceived interpersonal challenges tend to affiliate in deviant peer groups a phenomenon, which usually increases the risk for firearm violence. Therefore, they feel safer when they carry weapons to school, (Truman (2017).

2.7.10 Socio cultural context:

Living in extremely disadvantaged, under-resourced communities with high levels of crime and violence creates serious obstacles to healthy development. Recent estimates show that currently in the United States, 16.4 million children live in poverty and 7.4 million of those live in extreme poverty. One in four children under 5 years of age is poor during the formative years of brain development. In addition, 22% of children who have lived in poverty do not graduate from high school, compared with 6% of children who have never been poor (Children's Defence Fund, 2018). For families and youths, living in poverty is associated with high levels of familial stress, poor child nutrition, elevated risks of injury, and limited access to adequate health care,(Wachs,2018). As opined by Wachs, 2018, these environmental adversities can, in turn, compromise children's health status and increase the risk for involvement in violent behaviour, contributing significantly to involvement in violent behaviours involving the use of firearms, (Wachs, 2018).

Fox & Burstein, 2017, revealed that aggressive children and adolescents who are living in neighbourhoods with high levels of community violence, drug and firearm trafficking, gang presence, and inadequate housing may have increased exposure to violence and opportunities for involvement in deviant behaviour. In support of this Fox et al, as mentioned by Chermak, 2018, revealed that communities that have better resources, disenfranchised and impoverished communities may also lack social, recreational, and vocational opportunities that contribute to positive youth development. From this, it can be inferred that youths with high levels of pre-existing aggressive behaviour and emerging involvement with deviant or gang-involved peers may be especially at risk for increased violent behaviour and subsequent criminal justice involvement when exposed to impoverished and high-crime communities. Exposure to violence in one's community, a low sense of community safety, unsupervised access to firearms, and involvement in risky community behaviours such as drug dealing all contribute to youths' involvement in firearm carrying and firearm violence. Studies by Violence Policy Centre, 2019, also indicated that after exposure to violence, youths are more likely to start carrying firearms in their communities. (Violence Policy Centre, 2019).

2.7.11 Exposure to violent media

This is also reiterated by Koper, 2018, who stresses that exposure of children and adolescents to violent media, in movies and television, is associated with increased aggressive behaviours, aggressive thoughts and feelings, increased physiological arousal, and decreased pro-social behaviours. A case in point that seems to be in support of this is an incident in Kenya where a young boy killed both his parents and siblings and attributed the gruesome act to a movie he had recently watched that was portraying such a homicide style. Furthermore, Watkins,2017, intimates that exposure to violence in one's community, a low sense of community safety, unsupervised access to firearms, and involvement in risky community behaviours tend to contribute to youths' involvement in firearm carrying and firearm violence, (Watkins,2017,).

Social-cognitive theory on violent media exposure suggests that these images are part of children's socialization experiences, similar to violence exposure in inter-personal and community contexts (Cooper& Smith 2020). What is implied in the above statements is that the viewing of violent images can serve to desensitize children to violence and normalize violent behaviour, particularly when children have previously developed beliefs that aggression and violence are an acceptable means of achieving goals or resolving conflicts. More so, a study by Roth (2018) notes a link

between violent media exposure and subsequent violent behaviours and that some children may be more susceptible to this risk factor than others may. For instance, (Cooper & Smith 2020), found that identification with aggressive characters on television and the perception that television violence was real were robust predictors of later aggression over time. Thus, as also alluded to by Linkenbach & Stark (2019) exposure to violent media, especially for youths with pre-existing aggressive tendencies and poor parental monitoring, may be an important contextual factor that amplifies the risk for violent behaviour and firearm use.

2.7.12 Illegal proliferation of firearms

In a study by (Piehl, 2018), there is a challenge for authorities to improve control over illegal firearms due to the huge number of legal firearms, which enter the illegal pool through loss and thefts. Connected with this is a report released by SAPS in 2016, which indicated that there is illegal importation and smuggling of firearms into most southern African countries. Most African countries do not have proper policies to effectively regulate firearms and cannot account for missing firearms, some of which are smuggled across the country's borders. This is further reiterated by the head of the SARPCCO, Fernando Joao Cumbe, who pointed out that the issue of illicit trafficking, smuggling and proliferation of small arms and the light weapons is an undisputed major international issue across Africa and is affecting the city because it is the key driver of violent deaths. In addition to that, Cumbe signalled that the proliferation of firearms is rapidly growing through established transnational organized crime syndicates that participate in the commission of gruesome crimes such as murder poaching and armed robberies (The New Era, 19 September 2017). The alarming rise in the theft of firearms reported lost in Namibia is perceived exacerbating the incidents of violent crime, (Violence Policy Centre 2019). Legal firearms reported lost**,** are certainly the most important factors contributing to the apparent general availability of illegal firearms in South Africa. The Namibian Sun (5 September, 2019) reported that 301 firearms were reported to have been stolen or lost in Namibia in the financial year of 2018-19. What this implies is that most of these firearms might have ended in the hands of criminals who then might have used them to carry out their violent operations.

2. 8 Impact of firearm crimes

The following presents what has shown to be socio-economic effects of firearm crime Literature that was reviewed reveals that mass shootings tend to bring about traumatic experiences upon the

victims, the perpetrators of the crime, and witnesses to the shooting This literature review also presents what studies have indicated to be the impact of firearm crimes on housing prices and local economies in which the crimes are most prevalent. In addition, a presentation is made on what studies have indicated to be the effect of firearm crime on community health and the countries' economies.

2.8.1 Social impact

Klofas (2019), firearms provide individuals with the capacity to carry out multiple-fatality shootings that inflict great trauma and grief on society. According to Snyder & Sickmund's (2018)'s observations, firearm usage is not limited to armed robberies, vehicle thefts, hi-jacking, house robberies, farm/plot attacks and business robberies. Firearm violence is also rife in homes despite what firearms opponents regard as an overregulated environment (Klofas, 2019).

According to (Petrie, 2019), the majority of homicides that take place in families are a result of firearm misuse. This is supported by (Chapman & Alpers, 2017) who observed that in 2018; almost 75% of fatalities that occurred in South Africa were a result of firearm shots. In the same study by the author, the majority of murders that took place in the families were carried out with firearms, and most of the victims were females. The implication of this is that such kind of violence results in children being left as orphans. The children who are left behind often go through traumatic experiences, which tend to affect them psychologically.

This is also supported by Fox & Burstein (2017) who posit that firearm violence causes trauma, which is so destructive because it affects not only the victims but also their friends, family members, neighbourhoods, and communities. Chapman et al, 2017, also observe that firearm violence is a systemic trauma in that it permeates and affects the social and interpersonal systems of those shot. Furthermore, Petrie (2019) states that the mental health effects of firearm violence can include anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). A study by Mahler (2017) indicates that most firearm violence survivors tend to experience increased fear and vigilance while some become so fearful that they do not want to leave their homes.

Another finding by Truman (2017)) showed that women who were survivors of intimate partner violence were more likely to have more severe symptoms of PTSD if their intimate partners had threatened them with a firearm or feared that their intimate partners would use a firearm against them. Hardy (2016) notes that fear leads many survivors of firearm violence to avoid situations where they might be reminded of the violence. In addition, firearm violence survivors often experience agitation and sleep disturbances (Manganello 2018), react in fear toward anyone who resembles perpetrators (Enrick 2017), and worries that perpetrators are going to seek revenge (Snyder & Stickman 2018). To cope with trauma, these clients might avoid spending time in the area where the violence occurred or even move from the area and limit social activities (Koper 2019). What this means is that firearm crime survivors end up constricting their experience of the world in order to manage their fears and anxieties.

A study by O'Toole (2018) reveals secondary trauma, which is often associated with those who are closest to firearm violence survivors. This secondary trauma affects those who are the first responders to assist on the scene of firearm violence to health care workers (nurses, doctors) who see the horrific damage firearm violence causes. Again, Walker (2017) argues that trauma's impact can be magnified if a person is repeatedly exposed to firearm violence. What this implies is that these survivors tend to acquire some adaptive behaviours, which include learning how to interpret noises, faces, and body language for possible threats. There is therefore a loss of peace of mind as the firearm survivors are always worried about when and where the next firearm shot will come from. In these ways, firearm violence survivors learn to accommodate the violence in their lives, but that comes at the cost of their psychosocial, medical, and mental health (Cooper & Smith 2020).

In addition, mental health problems can affect a firearm violence survivor's physical healing. A study of adults hospitalized for firearm-related injuries found that those with pre-existing depression had an increased risk of discharge to a care facility or in-hospital mortality (Piehl 2018). Chapman et al, 2017, also indicate that living under the threat of a firearm violence affects one's health. Although trauma related to firearm violence is usually associated with the victims and their social networks, there also is trauma related to perpetrators, (Chapman et al, 2017). With incarceration comes trauma for perpetrators' family members—for example, women who are left to care for children on their own and children who can only see a parent by visiting a prison. In

addition, when perpetrators are released back into the community, they return having experienced the trauma of incarceration.

Another study by (Azrael & Hemingway, 2018) reveals that the most disturbing traumatic effect of firearm violence is that it can lead to more violence. What this denotes is that due to a sense of feeling unsafe, expecting to be victimized, and doubting that police will protect them, people in high-violence communities may choose to carry firearms for protection. This as stated by Buka (2017) is hardly a solution at all, but a prime facilitator of violence, as the possession of firearms is an act that increases the odds of violence. Thus, community violence becomes a never-ending cycle whereby violence begets more violence (Mahler, 2017).

The presence of firearm violence in most societies is forcing many citizens to acquire small arms for self-protection. This acquisition of firearms by the public has also exacerbated the misuse of firearms, especially by teenagers and thus has made most communities more vulnerable to firearm violence. Furthermore, the fear of firearm violence, and people's perceived risk, tend to impose a wide array of social and psychological burdens on community members (Vernick, 2017). Similarly, Borum & Verhaagen, 2017, observe that, in a firearm-violent prone environment in which individuals see themselves as losing power and control over the dangers and fears they face, firearms provide a means to reduce fear and to regain some defence against their ever-present threats and enemies. However, danger may also lie ahead, as Koper, 2017, notes that most of these firearms that would have been purchased for the right motives tend to fall into wrong hands of criminal-minded individuals due to firearm theft.

In concurrence with the above, O'Toole ,2018, points out the 'fear and loathing hypothesis' which suggests that people buy firearms in response to their fear of firearm violence and other incivilities present in their society. By implication, individuals, because of fear of crime and violence, go through a mental process where they deplore crime, criminals and the likes and then end up purchasing firearms for protection. The problem with this is that firearms pose a credible threat, even in the hands of a weak and unskilled attacker Vernick (2017) and instead of being used for self-defence against enemies; they can be inappropriately used in family disputes.

Thus, firearm violence is one of the major factors that has resulted in fractured families, neighbourhoods and communities (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco et al, 2017, Connected to this

Cooper et al, 2020, reveals accounts of children in impacted communities who have slept in tubs to avoid bullets fired at night as well as mothers who under stress due to firearm violence, are giving birth to babies with lower birth weights. Incidentally, Wellford, Pepper & Petrie (2019) note that in some South African neighbourhoods, children cannot even go to the library because their streets are not safe due to firearm violence, further putting them at a disadvantage in schools. Hardy (2016) posits that in communities where firearm violence is common, residents can experience hopelessness and a sense that the violence is just part of everyday life. Bloom (2017) describes how one firearm violence survivor showed no outward emotion when she firearm violence as a fact of daily life. (Vernick, 2017) also posits that people living in such communities often also face barriers such as poverty, lack of education, and minimal job prospects that limit their options for the future.

2.8.2 Mass Shootings and Trauma

In addition to the above, a survey of American adults conducted in August 2019 by the American Psychological Association (2019) found that nearly 80% of adults experience stress because of the possibility of a mass shooting. In the same survey one-third of adults said fear of a mass shooting prevented them from going to certain places or events, and one-fourth said they had changed how they lived their lives because of fear of a mass shooting. The sad effect of mass shootings as noted by Truman (2017) is that it diverts important resources, such as, time, money, and policy initiatives to address the trauma of firearm violence in those areas that need the resources the most. What this means is that the money that will be used in the engagement of firearm violence could have been used to develop these communities.

2.8.3 Housing Prices and Local Economy

A study by (Koper, 2018) shows that higher levels of neighbourhood violence can be associated with fewer retail and service establishments as well as fewer new jobs. Higher levels of firearm violence are also associated with lower home values, credit scores, and home-ownership rates. As a result, firearm violence hurts a community's housing prices and drives residents to relocate from or avoid moving to affected neighbourhoods. The result of this is that families that cannot relocate

to other areas eventually find themselves in a poverty trap due to falling income. As these residents 'incomes fall most of the young people resort to drug trafficking which in turn fuels firearm violence in these communities (Jimerson, 2018).

2.8.4 Community Health

According to Borum& Verhaagen (2017), in 2016, the American Medical Association (AMA), the country's largest physicians group, adopted a formal policy calling firearm violence a public health crisis Hong 2018) who notes that people living in volatile communities, who often are impacted by firearm violence, may experience stress, depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) supports this. This has detrimental effects on the survivors, but also on witnesses, bystanders, neighbours, and all those who love them.

2.8.5 Economic impact

According to Schwab (2018), violence affects the economic and health of the communities. This is so because volatile and violent occurrences cut into business revenues and limit business activities in all the areas that are affected, Jimerson (2018).In addition to this, (Azrael & Hemingway ,2018) observe that property values in both residential and commercial areas decrease as violent crime increases. What this means is that as the value of real estate plummets so does investment in these violent prone cities decreases. Research by (Watkins, 2017) also indicate that firearm crime tend to put significant pressure on economies because of the hospital and lifetime health care costs of treating firearm violence victims. What this means is that cities that have higher rates of firearm crime also tend to have higher health care costs as compared to those that have a lower rate of firearm crime. Unavoidable costs also emanate from lost productivity as businesses operate below capacity because of the prevalence of firearm crime (Azrael & Hemingway2018).Furthermore, O'Toole (2018) highlights that firearm violence leads to higher associated costs across the criminal justice system because of prevention, investigation, court, and prison costs. It can be seen that all these factors translate into monetary costs that the public and society pay for and do actually affect economies of a country. For instance, the American Embassy issued a warning sign to travellers coming to Namibia on the risk of them falling into armed robbers (Pratt, 2016).

In addition, Vernick (2017) points out that the impact of firearm violence extends beyond the victims and their families and significantly affects the businesses and residents in neighbourhoods of firearm violence in the form of downsizing, decreased revenues, and, in its most severe form, the closing of this relationship between firearm violence and the economic health of neighbourhoods at the most grassroots levels businesses (Koper, 2017). Findings made by Garmo (2019) also indicate that an increase in firearm homicides or firearm fire in neighbourhoods can lower the number of establishments, employment in establishments, and sales in establishments. Studies made by Peak (2017), reveal that firearm violence is costing the U.S. economy $229 billion each year which is equivalent to 1.4% of its gross domestic product.

In a similar study by(Piehl ,2018) which was based on an existing national database that was derived from 1,012 non-federal community hospital discharge information in 22 states in America it was revealed that 35,810 firearm-related injuries nationwide in 2018 and estimated the total associated hospital charges of over USD$802 million. The average cost per case was USD$22,396 dollars. In another study, Webster & Vernick (2019) conducted a review of all serious abdominal firearm-related injuries (requiring admission to hospital and emergency surgery) at a state hospital in South Africa over a 6-month period. Their findings indicated that the hospital spent a minimum of USD$30,803 on the treatment of the 21 abdominal firearm shot victims from admission to discharge. On average, the treatment of each patient cost approximately USD$1,467.

Some research specifically examined the costs for firearms injuries in comparison with cut/stab wounds. Miller and Cohen (2019) estimated that firearm shot injuries in America cost an estimated USD$126 billion in 2017, which is more than twice the costs for cut/stab wounds (USD$51 billion). Costs under their consideration included medical care payments, productivity losses, pain and suffering and lost quality of life. In terms of medical attention, the average treatment cost for each firearm shot survivor was USD$154,000 versus USD$12,000 per cut/stab survivor. In another study based on U.S. hospital records, Mock (2017) also suggested that the average acute medical care costs for firearm shot wounds were more than two times higher than stab wounds. Moreover, the authors estimated that if all the 1,116 firearm shot-wound patients in their study suffered stab wounds instead, there would be an annual saving of $1.3 million in health care costs. In addition to the direct expenditures on health care, professional services and related goods, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (2017) also estimated the indirect costs such as

lost productivity due to firearm injuries in the US. They reported that the total cost of firearm injuries in Sub-Sahara Africa in 2019 was approximately $20.4 billion, including $1.4 billion for direct expenditures, $1.6 billion for lost productivity resulting from injury-related illness and disability, and $17.4 billion for lost productivity from premature death (Mock, 2017).

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (2017) estimated the costs of accidental deaths caused by firearms in New Zealand, covering medical costs, hospitalization costs, productivity losses, and the lost value of human life. The annual total cost amounted to $1.3 million ($144,656 per incident). Similarly, Borum& Verhaagen (2017) conducted a comprehensive study of the various costs associated with firearm wounds in Canada, which included medical care, mental health care, public services (police investigation), productivity losses, funeral expenses, and pain and suffering, and lost quality of life. It was estimated that the total costs associated with firearm shot wounds in 2016 were CAD$6.6 billion. This was equivalent to CAD$235 per capita, as compared with CAD$595 in the US (converted to 2016 Canadian dollars from a 2016 US estimate) (Miller and Cohen (2019). The authors go on to suggest that the per-capita-cost difference might result from differences in firearm availability in the two countries.

As indicated by these studies, firearm-caused injuries pose a substantial financial burden to the health care system and on the society in general. The findings highlight the necessity for effective and successful firearm violence prevention strategies and firearm control policies. For instance, Snyder & Sickmund 2018 presented an estimation of the benefits of reducing firearm violence. Their results suggested that reducing firearm assaults by 30% was worth a total of USD$24.5 million to people in Sub-Sahara Africa.Having reviewed at what literature has on the causes and impact of firearm violence it is important at this juncture to discuss what some researchers have found on how firearm crime can be mitigated.

2.9 Ways in which firearm crimes can be dealt with

Firearm crime can be dealt with by strict government legislation. Strict firearm legislation involves regulating basic conditions of firearm acquisition, usage and sifting legitimate firearm users in

order to ensure that firearms are kept out of wrong hands (Reddy 2018). The USA, New Zealand, Great Britain, Canada and Australia had to tighten their firearm legislation to address violent crime. All these countries have firearm restrictions for people with criminal records, people addicted to drugs and perpetrators of domestic violence (Piehl (2018). As hinted by Cooper & Smith (2020) South Africa's experience confirms global studies showing that stricter firearm legislation saves lives. This is supported by Reddy (2018) who posits that Australia's firearm law reforms led to significant reductions in armed robbery and attempted murder.

Again, as noted by Piehl (2018) in the United States of America, the right to bear arms had been guaranteed by their Constitution until they were bombarded by a string of serious firearm-related incidents, like the Colorado mass shooting, where a firearm man acquired four firearms, including a high calibre rifle and continued to shoot and killed 12 people at a packed cinema and injuring 55 others. In Namibia anyone who is eighteen years of more of age has a right to own a firearm as long as they meet the requirements that are outlined in the Amended Arms and Ammunition Act of 2019. It is after this tragedy when the USA government called for stricter measures to regulate firearms (Wellford, Pepper & Petrie 2019). As highlighted by Cooper& Smith (2020) restrictions that were introduced for firearm ownership include the following categories: people convicted of crime and sanctioned for imprisonment for a period exceeding one year; fugitives from justice; drug users and addicts; persons with adjudicated mental defectives or committed to mental institutions; unauthorized immigrants and most non-immigrant visitors; persons dishonestly discharged from the armed forces; U.S citizenship enunciates; persons under court-order restraints related to harassing, stalking, or threatening an intimate partner or child of such intimate partner; and persons convicted of misdemeanours like domestic violence.

Namibia Amended Arms and Ammunition Act of 2019 requires people who are applying for firearms to be mentally fit, is not dependent on any substance which has an intoxicating or narcotic effect. Namibia Arms and Ammunition Amendment Act also stipulates that no one who has been convicted of a gun offense is allowed to obtain a gun license. In addition, no one who has been charged of domestic violence is also allowed to obtain a gun license (Namibia Amended Arms and Ammunition Act of 2019). This Act also prohibits anyone who has been convicted inside or outside Namibia for reckless or negligent handling of a firearm as well as a person who has been convicted of any drug related crime and has been sentenced to a period of imprisonment without

an option of a fine is supposed to be granted a firearm license. The government of Namibia is enacting legislation that are consistent with international trends. What is important is for law enforcers to make sure that these legislations are strictly adhered to in order for firearm crime to be successfully mitigated.

Still on this note, Ryan (2018) insists that such a strict firearm legislation is ideal as it limits access to certain types of firearms or precludes certain types of people from acquiring firearms. It can thus be inferred that effective enforcement of firearm legislation could have prevented the Colorado incident. Connected to this, Australia introduced a total ban on military type rifles and shot firearms to civilians, as well as the screening of firearm applicants and introduced a new legislation which required purchasers of firearms to prove that they had safe storage facilities while at the same time prices on hunting weapons was made extremely expensive (Azrael& Hemingway 2018). In addition to this, Hong (2018) indicates that the Australian government went on to imposing a ban on self-loading weapons with detachable magazines holding more than five rounds.

Thus, because of such stricter legislation the Australian Auditor-General commended the Australian government for successfully reducing the number of firearm incidents for the financial year 2017-18 (Koper (2019).

2.9.1 Firearm designs

Another strategy that can be effective in the curbing of firearm violence is the designing of firearms. Manganello (2018) opines that some design features on firearms, such as "smart firearms" that can be fired only by an authorized user. This would substantially reduce violence for example as argued by Wachs (2018) most young people, who are prohibited due to their age from legally purchasing a firearm, typically use a firearm from their own home to commit suicide (O'Toole 2018) and to carry out a school shooting Bandeira (2016). More so as pointed out by Cooper & Smith (2020), if personalized to an authorized adult in the home, the firearm could not be operated by the adolescent or others in the home, thus rendering it of little use to the potential suicide victim or school shooter.

2.9.2 Distribution of firearms

The distribution of firearms is largely the responsibility of a network of intermediaries between firearm manufacturers and firearm dealers Cooper & Smith (2020). When a firearm is recovered following its use (or suspected use) in a crime, law enforcement routinely requests that the firearm

be traced—that is, the serial number is reported to the manufacturer, who then contacts the distributor and/or dealer who, in turn, reviews records to determine the original purchaser of a specific weapon (Linkenbach & Stark, 2019; Reddy, 2018).

From the study done by Fox & Burstein (2017), the number of firearm traces in America is such that the manufacturers get many calls about their firearms each day. The same study also indicated that Smith and Wesson, with about 10% of market share, received a call every 7–8 minutes about one of their firearms. Thus, one could reasonably expect that manufacturers would have some knowledge of which distributors sell firearms that are disproportionately used in crime, and distributors would, in turn, know which retailers disproportionately sell firearms used in crime.
However, as observed by Cooper & Smith (2020) there are problems, for instance, a person who is prohibited from purchasing a firearm can engage someone else, who is not so prohibited, to purchase a firearm for him or her. The person doing the buying is called a "straw purchaser." As highlighted by a survey carried out by the Violence Policy Centre (2019) straw purchase attempts are not uncommon; in a random sample of 1,601 licensed dealers and pawnbrokers in America, two thirds reported experiencing straw purchase attempts. In a similar study of a sample of firearm dealers listed in telephone directories of the 20 largest U.S. cities, the majority of firearm dealer indicated a willingness to sell a hand firearm under the illegal straw purchase scenario (Piehl, 2018).
There is a need to carry out programs, which provide posters, and educational materials for display in firearm stores as well as tips for firearm dealers on how to identify and respond to straw purchase attempts that have not been evaluated (Mahler 2017). Webster & Vernick (2019) assert the importance of being able to identify high-risk dealers and insist that there should be undercover operations and lawsuits against firearm dealers who facilitate illegal straw sales in order to reduce the diversion of firearms to criminals.

2.9.3 Firearm purchases

According to Koper (2017), the restrictions on purchasing of firearms can go a long way in the fight against firearm crime. In America, the Firearm Control Act prohibits people from purchasing a firearm if they had been involuntarily committed to a psychiatric in-patient unit, while the Brady Hand firearm Violence Act (1994), known as the Brady Law, began the process of background

checks to identify individuals who might attempt to purchase a firearm despite prohibitions (Vernick2017). What this implies is that the rate of firearm violence should be reduced if these procedures are adequately implemented.

According to Walker (2017), firearm purchases in the United States of America are controlled mainly by the National Instant Check System (NICS). The same author indicates further that the firearm purchaser fills in a form, which carries a penalty of up to ten years if false information is provided, and then submits it to the firearm dealer with a photo ID. The dealer submits the purchaser's information to the NICS telephonically or online where the buyer is screened against the national database. Furthermore, Watkins (2017) submits that, if the buyer is approved, the dealer receives a purchase authorization number, which is endorsed on the application form to verify compliance. Buyers not approved by the system may request a written explanation and if necessary, supply additional or the latest information to correct any errors on the NICS database. Similarly, Great Britain is one of the most developed countries in the world, but they are also cautious with strict firearm laws in respect of who possesses firearms and for what reasons (Cook, 2019). As observed by Cooper & Smith (2020), Britain is also reported to have reduced firearm-related incidents by tightening control over 'who must bear arms'.

A person wishing to possess a firearm in Britain must be 18 years or older, provide information of previous convictions other than minor traffic offences, as well as the names and addresses of two people who have agreed to act as references to the chief officer of police in the area where he/she resides. It is important to note that immediate family members, serving police officials and firearm dealers cannot be used as referees (Hardy, 2016). In addition to that, Mahler (2017) observes that referees must be residents of Great Britain and should have known the applicant for at least two years and be of good character. Cooper & Smith (2020) also assert that each of the two referees through a signed statement, must verify information provided by the firearm applicant. Once all is in place, the chief police officer will certify that the applicant is fit, proper, not a prohibited person and then evaluate the reasons provided for the firearm to ascertain that the applicant does not, in all circumstances, pose a danger to the public safety and peace (Cooper & Smith, 2020).

Providing false information on the application form and failure to disclose previous convictions, no matter how trivial, may result in the refusal of the application (Hong, 2018). Further

requirements include the fact that applicants obtain forms from local police or internet, complete them and submit them to the police in the area where the applicant resides. People, as noted by Alpers & Wilson (2018), with more than one address need to apply using the address where they will be storing the firearm and a fee is paid when the application is submitted and refunded if the application is denied. Applicants should submit four photographs that must also be endorsed by the referees as the applicant's current likeliness, namely the way he/she looks at the time of the application. A separate motivation for the need of each firearm must be provided and access to storage facilities is a requirement. A police official must inspect such facilities before any firearm purchase is granted to the applicant.

Linked to this, Great Britain introduced a 28- day waiting period to buy a firearm (Roth, 2018). What this implies is that, the security personnel dealing with the issuance of firearm permits tend to have adequate time for thorough investigations on all the details about the firearm applicant. More importantly as further indicated by Vernick (2017) is that, an applicant is to provide genuine reasons separately for each firearm that he/she intends to purchase while there are stiff restrictions on private firearm sales. Furthermore, firearm sales in the United Kingdom are streamlined only through a licensed dealer or the police. As a result, the 2017 report on the evaluation of the Great Britain Firearms Act indicated that there was a dramatic reduction in firearm-related deaths (Amnesty International, 2018). These strict procedures that are followed by Great Britain have in the issuance of gun ownership licenses should be a lesson for Namibia. The Namibian government announced that new changes would be introduced on how people should be granted firearm licenses. These changes will be a result of amendments that were to be made to Namibia's Arms and Ammunition Act of 1996. These changes would require one to go for a competency test on firearm use before being granted a license, (Ngutjinazo 2019). The Namibian government has passed the Arms and Ammunition Amendment Act 2019 meant to make gun laws stricter so as to address firearm crime. This legislation now requires people to go for competency before being granted a firearm license. The amended act now also requires those seeking gun ownership licenses to go for medical clearance, be in possession of a medical clearance, and be in possession of a certificate of good conduct that is issued by the Namibia Police. The new Arms and Ammunition Amended Act also requires interviews to be conducted with relatives of people who are applying for gun ownership licenses, (Namibia Arms and Ammunition Act of 2019)

2.9.4 Firearm registration system

In New Zealand common mistakes on the NICS database included the non-capturing of overturned convictions by the appeal body (Vernick, 2017). New measures have reportedly resulted in a drop in firearm-related incidents in New Zealand. New Zealand passed legislation in 1983, which did away with the registration of sporting firearms, which comprise 97 percent of privately held firearms (Vernick, 2017). They registered the remaining three percent of hand firearms, which led to the reduction of crime with registered firearms, but it led to an increase in crime with unregistered ones. They retracted their earlier decision and once again registered all firearms and introduced a renewal system in which the police posted letters to the firearm owners at the expiry of the license, failure of which would lead to the cancellation of the license after six months, which led to a drastic reduction of firearm-related crimes. Snyder & Sickmund (2018) opines that the Australian government insists that all firearms must be registered at the time of sale and when the license is renewed. Cooper & Smith (2020) also indicates that firearm control in Canada places various restrictions on the acquisition, possession, use, sale, or production of firearms and requires the firearm purchaser to first produce a firearm license before taking possession of a firearm or purchasing ammunition.

On the other hand, Canada had a dysfunctional firearm registry system, which provided opportunities for the illegal possession and misuse of firearms (Bloom; 2017). Just like New Zealand, Canada did not register rifles and shot firearms and that led to a shift in crime to unlicensed firearms usage, as well as domestic homicides, suicides and accidents. This prompted Canada's government to invest billions of dollars to upgrade its database and processes (Chapman & Alpers 2017). Some of the processes include firearm registry online, which facilitated the re-licensing of all firearms. In essence, as reported by Jimerson (2018), that led to the reduction of firearm incidents in the country. Bandeira (2016) opines that firearm related legislations which governments put in place, can only be a success, if they are coupled with a robust firearm registration system. Chapman & Alpers (2017) observe that in Canada where violation of the Domestic Violence Act necessitates confiscation of the perpetrator‘s firearm, there will be a need for accurate records of licensed firearms in the perpetrator‘s name

The Violence Policy Centre (2019) reveals that, in a case in Australia, the police had to act on restraining orders and search a perpetrator‘s house where they confiscated five firearms.

Unfortunately, the police did not have knowledge of the sixth firearm that the perpetrator used to kill six more people, including the victim who initially secured a restraining order. In the above scenario, a sensible argument would be that the police would have acted differently if they knew how many firearms were registered in the perpetrator‘s name. Hence, as argued by Intimate (2020) proper registration, licensing of firearms and effective policing thereof is among the key control measures that can help the police to prevent and detect crime, as well as apprehend suspects.

This is also in harmony with Buka (2017) who insists that licensing the person and registering the firearm is a central part of any registration system, as it records the details of a firearm, together with information about the person responsible for this weapon, thereby linking a firearm to an owner.

2.9.5 Firearm License Renewals

As observed by Borum & Verhaagen (2017), the police in Australia were given the powers to take into account all relevant circumstances when deciding on a new or renewal of firearm license. For example, people convicted of assault and domestic violence were banned from having firearm licenses for at least five years. In addition to this, all people with pending domestic violence restraining orders against them are subjected to compulsory seizure of all their firearms (Schwab 2018). The system of renewals is an integral part of the licensing and registration system which makes provision for the legal firearm owner to reaffirm his/her responsibility for the firearm registered in his/her name or be given an opportunity to explain why he or she should no longer be accountable for its whereabouts. Such explanations may include a lawful transfer, theft (supported by a police report) or voluntary surrender (supported by evidence). According to Borum& Verhaagen (2017), Borum& Verhaagen (2017) firearm license renewal requires that genuine need for the continued ownership of the firearm must be proven again. Other benefits of a renewal system include enhancing police investigations; improving police officer safety; and reducing firearm theft. A renewal system also helps to enforce the legal obligation to report lost or stolen firearms; which in turn allows the police to more fully understand this flow and be able to respond accordingly. Ngutjinazo (2019) revealed that an estimated 700 illegal firearms which were reported to be in circulation in Namibia was causing the government to come up with new stricter laws on gun licensing. New measures to control firearm crime was to result in the amending of the Arms and Ammunition Act of 1996 so that stricter procedures in gun licensing and renewal were

to be followed. (Ngutjinazo 2019). What this implies is that Namibia is moving closer to other international standards of applying strict firearm licensing and renewal to fight firearm crime.

Amnesty International reports that, in the1990 the Australian Firearm Law was amended and made the issue of firearm license renewals central in an effort to reduce the use of firearms in violent crime incidents. The police were given the powers to take into account all relevant circumstances when deciding on a new or renewal firearm license. In the amended law people convicted of assault and domestic violence are banned from having firearm licenses for at least five years; people with pending domestic violence restraining orders against them are refused to renew their firearm licenses and are subjected to compulsory seizure of all their firearms. In like manner, in South Africa stiff penalties are imposed on firearm owners who fail to renew their firearm licenses, (Borum & Verhaagen 2017). In addition, the South Africa, government mandated that there be an automatic disqualification of firearm-related crime offenders. What this means is that anyone who commits a crime using a firearm will have his/ her firearm license revoked and would never be permitted to possess a firearm. At the same time the South African government put in measures meant to link the police firearm system with the firearm dealers' and firearm smiths' systems for control purposes during the issuance and renewal of firearm licenses (Piehl 2018).

Furthermore, Cooper & Smith (2020) notes that the SAPS embarked on proactive firearm licensing measures which enable police to arrest people carrying unregistered firearms due to strict stipulations, in the FCA that require every person who carries a firearm to be in possession of a valid firearm license. Piehl (2018) also recommends the requirement, which Great Britain takes whereby immediate family, serving police officials and firearm dealers are excluded from the list of references for new applicants as well as license renewals. The country also has a system-generated list of people who failed to renew their firearm licenses (Roth, 2018). What this means is that the firearm controllers in the country can easily identify firearm owners who might be potential threats to the communities.

2.9.6 Firearm Free Zones

Another strategy that is aimed at reducing the occurrence of firearm crime is the introduction of what are called Firearm Free Zones (FFZ). A FFZ is an area, place or premise in which no person may be allowed to store or carry a firearm. In South Africa Chapter 140 of the Fire Crime Act

gives the Minister of Police the power to declare (by notice in the Government Gazette) any place to be a (FFZ) it is a criminal offence to contravene the FFZ status of any premises or category of premises. According to the Act such contravention caries the following penalties of imprisonment for allowing a firearm or ammunition into an FFZ: Five years for carrying a firearm or ammunition in an FFZ and ten years for storing a firearm or ammunition in an FFZ: The essence of such stiff penalties is to deter people from coming into these premises with firearms and thus reduce the likelihood of the commission of firearm violence (Alpers & Wilson 2018).

2.9.7 Firearm destruction

In order to reduce the potential for firearms diversion (and increases in firearm violence and crime), the South African security forces, particularly SAPS, have actively sought to destroy surplus, obsolete and confiscated firearms (Cooper & Smith, 2020). As stated by (Borum & Verhaagen (2017) to date, SAPS has destroyed in excess of half a million firearms since 2000. It is worth noticing that the marked increase in firearms destruction from 2003 was primarily due the rolling out of the FCA which was vigorously imposed by the South African security forces. The approximately 100% increase in firearm destructions between 2015 and 2016 can be mainly attributed to the firearm amnesty process that was undertaken in the country. The firearm amnesties have been effective in combatting firearm crimes in areas where it has been vigorously implemented (Borum & Verhaagen (2017). The Namibian government also carried out a firearm amnesty in 2016. This firearm amnesty resulted in more than 660 illegal firearms being surrendered to the police in Khomas region, Shapwanale (2016). What this means is that the Namibian government has also realised the importance of reducing the number of illegal firearms in the country as one of the ways of combatting firearm crimes. Another firearm amnesty was launched in 2021. (Namene, 2021). What this means is that the Namibian government is still committed to fighting firearm crime by using firearm amnesties among other measures.

2.9.8 Firearm buyback programs

Another strategy, which according to Truman (2017) has proved to be effective in the curbing of firearm violence in most countries, is the firearm buyback program. As stated by Petrie (2019), this kind of program involves the government committing funds in its security budget towards the purchasing of any kind of weapon from the general public. A firearm buyback program that was done in New Zealand resulted in the government purchasing almost firearms (Alpers & Wilson;

2018). Firearms buyback programmes were also carried in South Africa, Hong Kong and New Zealand (Cooper& Smith 2020). The net effect of such a [program is that it gives an incentive for people to part with their firearms while at the same reducing the number of weapons at the public‘s disposal that could be misused when they fall into the wrong hands. Finally, these buyback programs have been commended in the study by Linkenbach & Stark (2019) as being effective in raising awareness of people when it comes to firearms and firearm violence in the communities.

2.9.9 Firearms amnesties and collection schemes

The New Zealand government effected a firearm amnesty and buyback program after attacks at two Christchurch mosques, on 15 March 2019, which resulted in 51 deaths and multiple injuries (Hong, 2018). This scheme ran from 20 June 2019 to 20 December 2019 and its purpose was to remove semi-automatic firearms from the community because of their potential for significant harm. It required people to hand in their newly prohibited firearms, magazines, and parts for destruction. They would then receive compensation from the Crown if they had a valid firearms license. Dealers were also able to hand in their stock for compensation if they could not return it to their suppliers for a refund (Hong, 2018). Namibia has carried three firearm amnesties since her independence in 1990. The first firearm amnesty was done in 2016 and then extended until 18 February 2017. This amnesty program resulted in 925 firearms, 44, 000ammunitionand 66 explosives that were handed in. Amnesty is not a new exercise in the world, most countries do the same aimed at curtailing mash rooming of a firearms, backdated from 1916 which resulted in 1276 firearms, 99 509 pieces of ammunition and 81 unexploded ordinances being handed over to the police (Namene 2021).

2.9.10. Competency certificates

As indicated by Linkenbach & Stark (2019) governments can make it a requirement for firearm license applicants to be in possession of competency certificates in a bid to reduce firearm violence in a country. In South Africa the right to possess a firearm is not guaranteed by law. According to Chapter 6(2) of the Firearms Control Act 60 of 2000, only firearm applicants who are in possession of a competency certificate may apply for a firearm license. Also in Australia, the government mandates firearm buyers to be in possession of a proficiency certificate for semiautomatic firearms. A firearm competency shows that the applicant has been vetted and found to be of a sound mind,

temperament and responsible enough to be in possession of a firearm and is unlikely to misuse it (Cooper & Smith, 2020).

Applicants must provide genuine reasons to possess a firearm, for example, hunting, target shooting, collection, personal protection and/or security. Applications for firearms collection, target shooting and hunting need to be substantiated by additional attachments from respective associations of farm owners of the farms where the applicants intend to hunt (Bopape, 2008:168).

2.9.11 Minimum age for firearm ownership

The setting up of a minimum age of firearm ownership is considered a significant strategy of de-escalating firearm violence in most societies (Borum & Verhaagen 2017). In South Africa, the minimum age for firearm ownership is 18 years. Added to this, the applicant is supposed to have a clean criminal record and be a fit and proper person. Furthermore, the person must undergo safety training and must provide genuine reasons for the need to possess a firearm. On the other hand, the minimum age for firearm ownership in New Zealand is 21 years, while there are some exceptions for applicants who conduct business, or are gainfully employed in the firearm industry. In addition to these the Firearms Control Act puts a waiver on this minimum age restriction to dedicated hunters, sports persons as well as private firearm collectors, (Chapter 9(2) of the Firearms Control Act 60/2000). According to Alpers & Wilson (2018), evidence shows that limiting access to firearms (especially for young men between 15-29 years old) can prevent homicides, suicides and injuries, thereby reducing the costs of these forms of violence. In support to this, Jimerson (2018) hints that countries with 'restrictive' firearms law and lower firearm ownership levels tend to have lower levels of firearm violence. The minimum age required for an individual to possess a firearm in Namibia is eighteen. This minimum age is stated in the Constitution of Namibia, Section 8(1) of the Arms and Ammunition Act 1996 that a person who is not under the age of 18 years is disqualified or unfit, may with prior consent of the license holder, possess an arm for a period not exceeding 21 days. This shows that Namibia 's minimum age for one to be in possession of a firearm is the same with that of South Africa but different from that of New Zealand which requires a person to be 21 years old in older to be given a gun license. What this shows is that Namibia is not as strict as New Zealand in terms of minimum age allowed to possess a gun.

To help ensure that firearms are not sold to those who are prohibited from purchasing them, the National Instant Criminal Background Check System ([NICS], was developed in Australia so that the status of a potential purchaser could be checked immediately by a licensed firearm dealer (Snyder & Sickmund, 2018). Prohibited purchasers include, but are not limited to, convicted felons, persons dishonourably discharged from the military, those under a domestic violence restraining order, and, in the language of the federal law, persons who have been adjudicated as mentally defective or have been committed to any mental institution. The importance of background checks is further amplified by Cooper & Smith (2020) who insists that misdemeanants who were legally able to purchase hand firearms committed crimes involving violence following those purchases at a rate 2–10 times higher than that of hand firearm purchasers with no prior convictions (Snyder & Sickmund, 2018).

The firearm applicant must further pass background checks, which consider his/her criminal, mental, medical, domestic violence, addiction, employment, and previous firearm history, such as a past refusal of competency certificate or an unfitness declaration (Buka, 2017). In Great Britain, as indicated by Roth (2018) the background check and character reference consider, among others, the involvement of the applicant in domestic violence and in the generic misuse of firearms (Chapter 9(2) (l) of Firearms Control Act 60 of 2000).

In a related study, Webster & Vernick (2019) reveals that the background check done in South Africa is corroborated by a character reference for each firearm license the applicant requires. Hence, a person who is mentally unstable is, according to the evidence presented in the Stellenbosch court, a danger to others (Piehl 2018). A psychologist gave expert evidence in the Stellenbosch court that a Stellenbosch student murderer suffered from serious untreated and unmanaged psychological conditions, including a pervasive developmental disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, major depressive disorder and Asperger Syndrome which made him socially inept (Cape Argus, March 2012:2). Another incident involves an alleged mentally unstable student constable who was accused of shooting and killing a Soweto teenager whilst he was not supposed to have been carrying a firearm, because he was mentally unstable and was declared unfit to possess a firearm by the local designated firearm officer (The Star, 2012:3). These incidents show the importance of background checks prior to the issuance of firearm license to applicants.

2.9.12 Criminal Background Check System

The Criminal Background Check System is another way of combating the prevalence of firearm violence that has been implemented by most state departments responsible for the issuance of firearm licenses (O'Toole, 2018). To help ensure that firearms are not sold to those who are prohibited from purchasing them, the National Instant Criminal Background Check System ([NICS], part of the Brady Law) was developed by the American government so that a federally licensed firearm dealer could check the status of a potential purchaser immediately. Under this (NICS), prohibited purchasers include, but are not limited to, convicted felons, persons dishonourably discharged from the military, those under a domestic violence restraining order, and, in the language of the federal law, persons who have been adjudicated as mentally defective or have been committed to any mental institution (Manganello, 2018).

2.9.13 Legislative measures,

According to Azrael & Hemingway (2018), the fundamental role of government is to ensure the safety and security of its community by enacting legislation that will control all dangers that may cause physical, psychological and material harm. What this means is that, it is the government's obligation to enact laws and regulations that are targeted at firearm control due to the inherent danger posed by firearms on public safety. Firearm control includes a range of legislative measures, which place various restrictions on the acquisition, possession, use, sale and production of firearms. In the state of New York, as indicated by Garmo (2019), the court defined the level of state control over firearms in the case of *Hamilton v Accutec* as a practice where it is required of a person to produce a license or permit to purchase a firearm or ammunition.

Such a practice would include restrictions on multiple purchases of firearms, the enforcement of a waiting period on buyers and dealers reporting all sales to the police (Azrael& Hemingway, 2018). The fulcrum of such legislation is to limit access to certain types of firearms or to preclude certain types of people from acquiring firearms (Reddy, 2018). The Firearms Act is, according to Garmo (2019), a valid piece of legislation because it possesses all three criteria requirements for criminal law, inter alia, firearm control because of the inherent danger posed by firearms on public safety; the regulation of firearms as they are deemed dangerous products; and it is connected to prohibition backed by penalties.

It is widely believed that effective policing, as well as heavy sentences, has a deterrent role in reducing firearm-related violence and incidents,(Koper ,2017. In a similar manner, Vernick (2017) notes that while strict firearm policies generally do not affect the ability of law-abiding citizens to keep firearms for recreational or self-defence; these policies have the potential to reduce firearm violence by deterring violent offenders. The insinuation of all this is that people commit fewer crimes if criminal penalties are more severe or more certain. Thus, in order to improve the effectiveness of Firearm legislation the criminal justice intervention in the United States took the form of firearm courts which target firearm offenders for quicker and sometimes tougher processing than in community courts. Notwithstanding the above, Mahler (2017) believes that it is important for those entrusted with the enforcement of Firearm Acts to close the gap between policy and practice, which is believed to be attributing to the failure of most legislation. Well-crafted legislation, coupled with its proper implementation, as opined by Vernick (2017), is an effective antidote against firearm violence as it prevents firearms from getting into the wrong hands while the imposition of stiff penalties is tending to deter firearm owners from misusing them.

2.9.14 Police presence and patrols in neighbourhoods

According to the study by Linkenbach et al. (2019), one of the most important steps to take in the prevention of firearm-related incidents is to keep police officers at their posts in the neighbourhood and communities (Bloom, 2017). This crime prevention process will enable police to arrest people carrying unregistered firearms as a result of strict stipulations in the act that require every person who carries a firearm to be in possession of a valid firearm license. The detection and apprehension of suspects will prevent and combat crime (Alpers & Wilson, 2018). This is so because illegal firearms found in the possession of a person might be a result of burglary, theft, armed robbery, or any violence-related activity which may be tracked down to the scene of crime in the case of an arrest or discovery (Vernick, 2017).

This observation is also supported by Vernick (2017), who notes that a focused manner in the conducting of police roadblocks in neighbourhoods serves as an effective tool in curbing and disrupting movements of firearms. What this entails is that roadblocks, as well as stop- and-

searches which are not generic, but meant for checking firearms, help to address firearm-related incidents and counter any acts of firearm crimes which perpetrators might be envisaging. Still more on this subject of controlling the movement of firearms Piehl (2018)) notes that a stepping of border control is also an effective way of minimizing the influx of firearms into a country.

2.9.15 continuously research the effectiveness of their strategies

According to report by Interpol Cook (2019), there is a worrisome trend on the rate at which firearm crime is increasing in most sub-Saharan African countries. This kind of phenomenon emphasizes the fact that the police need to continuously research the effectiveness of their strategies and operations to counteract the sophisticated methods of committing crime. Thus, in regard to firearms, as stated by Mahler (2017) there is a dire need to constantly review processes and criteria used in the policing of firearms. Effective law enforcement entails the ability of the law enforcers to impose the Firearms Control Acts that are in place in their countries, in a way that addresses the firearm proliferation and firearm related incidents that affect people. In sync with this, Truman (2017), suggests that, in terms of administration, there should be proper processes to sift out at-risk individuals and firearms that continue to reach people who pose safety risks to others. Operationally, there should also be proper checks and balances to effectively monitor firearm transgressors among those already issued with firearm licenses while proper police actions should be carried out to address illegal firearms in circulation. At the same time, Piehl (2018) asserts that corrupt police officials who connive with firearm criminals should be dealt with decisively. There should be constant inter-city consultations on police operations to evaluate and evolve the current strategies, which different countries are using to combat firearm-violence.

2.9.16 Firearm violence predictive models

Research on impulsive violence has enabled scientists to develop moderately accurate predictive models that can identify individuals who are more likely than other persons to engage in this form of violence are. These models, however, cannot determine with certainty whether a particular person will engage in violence but can indicate whether a person has a high chance of doing so (Webster& Vernick 2019). This approach is known as a violence risk assessment or clinical assessment of dangerousness.

2.9.17 Violence risk assessment or clinical assessment of dangerousness

A violence risk assessment is conducted by a licensed mental health professional who has specific training in this area. The process generally involves comparing the person in question with known base rates for those of the same age/gender who have committed impulsive violence and then determining whether the person in question has individual risk factors that would increase that person's likelihood of engaging in impulsive violence. In addition, the process involves examining individual protective factors that would decrease the person's overall likelihood of engaging in impulsive violence. According to Snyder & Sickmund (2018), though research that has identified risk and protective factors for impulsive violence is limited in that more research has been conducted on men than women have and on incarcerated or institutionalized individuals than on those in the general population, this approach can still be effective in determining someone's relative likelihood of engaging in impulsive violence.

2.9.18 Behavioural threat assessment model

According to Pratt (2016), the behavioural threat assessment model is an alternative means of identifying individuals who are threatening, planning, or preparing to commit targeted violence. Behavioural threat assessment, just like the violence risk assessment also emphasize the need for interventions to prevent violence or harm when a threat has been identified. It represents a more comprehensive approach to violence prevention (Schwab, 2018). In addition, as stated by Koper (2019) this model is an empirically based approach that was developed largely by the U.S. Secret Service to evaluate threats to the president and other public figures and has since been adapted by the U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education for use in schools, colleges and universities, workplaces, and the U.S. military.

The behavioural model is based on findings made from 37 incidents of community attacks or targeted community shootings and interviews with firearm violence perpetrators in America (Alpers & Wilson, 2018). These studies known as the Safe Community Initiative, made findings which shed new light on ways to prevent some community shootings from occurring. Borum & Verhaagen (2017) posit that most community attacks are typically planned. The perpetrators often tell their confidants about their plans beforehand and are frequently despondent or suicidal prior to their attacks, with some expecting to be killed during their attacks (Webster & Vernick, 2019). The

model is run by threat assessment teams, which are typically multidisciplinary teams that are trained to identify potentially threatening persons and situations. They gather and analyse additional information, make an informed assessment of whether the person is on a pathway to violence—that is, determine whether the person poses a threat of interpersonal violence or self-harm—and if so, take steps to intervene, address any underlying problem or treatment need, and reduce the risk for violence (Bandeira, 2016).

The teams are also trained to make a vigorous and coordinated response to persons whose histories include acts of violence, threatened or actual use of weapons, and substance abuse, particularly if they have access to a firearm. The teams also study threats, including behaviours or statements reflecting thoughts or plans for a targeted attack by an individual. These are often confided to peers (Borum & Verhaagen, 2017). In addition, the teams study the individuals' ready access to a firearm or other lethal weapon and unusual preparation or practice for use (Klofas, 2019). They also go on to studying mental health symptoms, including depression with accompanying feelings of desperation and despondency, which will be shown by the person likely to misuse a firearm.

In many cases, this might include referring the person to mental health services and other sources of support. In some of these cases, psychiatric hospitalization may be needed to address despondence and suicidality. Non-psychiatric resources are also used to help alleviate the individual's problems or concerns. Studies that have been made reveal that where the behavioural threat assessment model has been used there has been a remarkable reduction in the acts of firearm crime (Azrael & Hemingway, 2018).

2.9.19 Community stakeholders' collaboration

According to Linkenbach & Stark (2019), there is a need to develop a new model that would bring community stakeholders together in a collaborative, problem-solving mode, with a goal of preventing individuals from engaging in firearm violence, whether directed at others or self-inflicted. This collaborative system should involve families, the security enforcing agents, the schools and the health care system. All these stakeholders are to function as a unit in the identification and prevention of firearm violence within the communities. Such collaborations, as

posited by Fox & Burstein (2017) have proved effective in the prevention of firearm violence in communities.

The health care system working together with families can be effective in addressing issues of firearm safety. For instance, paediatricians can counsel parents who possess firearms that storing firearms safely, preventing access to firearms reduces injury by as much as 70%, and that the presence of a firearm in the home increases the risk for suicide among adolescents. This observation is supported by Chermak,2018, who indicates that health care provider counselling, when linked with the distribution of cable locks, has been demonstrated to increase safer home storage of firearms (Smith, 2016). Health care workers can also counsel parents on the importance of removal of firearms or the restriction of access to firearms for children and adolescents with mood disorders, substance abuse (including alcohol), or history of suicide attempts (Hardy, 2016). In addition to this, collaborative systems help to identify youths and young adults who might be experiencing an emerging psychosis and refer them for prompt assessment to mental health professionals with sufficient clinical expertise in psychotic disorders so that they construct a clinical intervention plan that includes risk management (Jimerson, 2018).

Furthermore, such collaboration efforts with all community stakeholders such as families, public safety officials, schools, workplaces, neighbourhoods, mental health and public health systems, and faith-based groups, help in the sharing and dealing threats of firearm violence more effectively. For example, someone, or possibly several people within the community group might have heard something about an individual's thoughts and/or plans to use a firearm (Reddy, 2018). Now, if there were no collaboration between the different stakeholders, it would be a challenge for such information to be safely transmitted to the right kind of people who will be able to act upon it effectively. There will always be questions about where individuals can go with that information? How they can report it so that innocent people are not targeted or labelled unfairly—and how can their information initiate a comprehensive and effective crisis response that prevents harm to the individual of concern and the community? All these questions of concern by any person or group of society can be effectively addressed if there is a well-defined and coordinated firearm violence collaboration system (Cooper et al, 2020).

2.9.20 Social worker's involvement

Social workers are government or non-government individuals who are employed to give a service to people in the community (Peak, 2017). As indicated in the study by Alpers & Wilson (2018), social workers can play a significant role in the prevention of firearm violence. They should advocate for more resources to be used towards helping people, particularly adolescence. In this regard they should learn conflict resolution and emotional regulation skills so that they have better tools to deal with violence (Watkins, 2017). Furthermore, the enlisting of social workers to improve relationships between communities and police has been vital in high-violence communities as it has often resulted in people feeling that they can trust the police to protect them rather than resorting to carrying firearms (Perkins, 2017). What this means is that the less firearms get carried along by community members the less likelihood of the occurrence of firearm violence.

Social workers also advocate for policies proven to reduce firearm deaths, such as background checks on all firearm sales, red flag laws to temporarily remove firearms from people who pose a danger to themselves or others, and safe-storage laws to prevent children from unintentionally shooting themselves or others Roth (2018). In this way, these social workers tend to act as a pressure group forcing the law enforcers to do their work with more diligence. Finally, social workers can get involved in political action to advocate for firearm control and other policies to address poverty, racism, economic injustice, and other factors that contribute to firearm violence. A good example, as stated by Peak (2017) an American social workers pressure group, Moms Demand Action for Firearm Sense in America, which is focused on promoting firearm safety and violence prevention in neighbourhoods. They advocate for this through street marches, rallies, radio, television and print media campaign.

2.9.21 Tailor strategies to different kinds of violence

Appropriate strategies to prevent firearm violence should be tailored to different kinds of violence (Klofas, 2019). One example is the distinction between acts of impulsive violence (i.e., violence carried out in the heat of the moment, such as an argument that escalates into an assault) and acts of targeted or predatory violence (i.e., acts of violence that are planned in advance of the attack and directed toward an identified target). It is important to distinguish between impulsive violence

and targeted/predatory violence because these as pointed out by Peak (2017), are associated with different risk factors and require different prevention strategies. Once this distinction has been made, as noted by Klofas (2019), then the appropriate strategy tailored to the form of violence will then be carried out.

2.9.22 Targeted or predatory violence

The incidents of mass casualty firearm violence that have garnered worldwide media attention, such as the shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut, at a movie theatre Aurora, CO, at the Fort Hood military base, and at a political rally in a shopping centre in Tucson, Arizona , are all examples of targeted or predatory violence (Cooper et al, 2020).

A study by (Webster & Vernick, 2019) reveals that individuals motivated by personal problems who are at a point of despondency mainly carry out targeted violence. In their troubled state of mind, these individuals see no viable solution to their problems and envision no future. As hinted by Walker (2017) targeted violence can be mitigated with the behavioural threat assessment model. This kind of model is used not only to determine whether a person is planning a violent attack but also to identify personal or situational problems that could be addressed to alleviate desperation and restore hope. This can be done by providing services such as conflict resolution, credit counselling, job placement assistance, academic accommodations, and pastoral counselling which help to address personal problems and reduce desperation (Borum & Verhaagen; 2017). What this means is that when the underlying personal problems are alleviated, people who may have posed a threat of violence to others will no longer see violence as their best or only option for action.

2.9.23 Predicting and preventing impulsive Firearm violence

According to Snyder et al, 2018, impulsive firearm violence is characterised by reactive, overt, explosive reactions to any given situations that exceed normal and appropriate levels of emotion for the situation. A study by Schwab (2018), revealed that impulsive firearm violence can be attributed to dynamic factors such as, unmet mental health that needs for a conditions that is linked with violence to self (such as depression) or others (such as paranoia), lack of mental health care, substance abuse as well as abuse of alcohol. It requires law enforcing agents to be well trained into

ways of handling individuals who pose a firearm crime threat to others (Chapman& Alpers; 2017). These factors are considered amenable to intervention and treatment with the effect of reducing the risk for firearm violence.

2.9.24 Safe storage of firearms

As mentioned by Snyder et al, 2018, stated that one of the most effective ways of mitigating firearm violence is to embark on public health messaging campaigns around safe storage of firearms. What is implied here is that as long as there is no access to a firearm the chances of firearm violence will be limited. On account of this, The British government enacted the Child Access Prevention (CAP) laws, which focus on the responsibilities of adults (Buka, 2017). Under this legislation, adults are held criminally liable for unsafe storage of firearms around children. As hinted by Koper, 2019, the CAP laws have been associated with modest decreases in unintentional shootings of children and the suicides of adolescents in the United Kingdom.

In Australia, a Police Foundation (2013), roundtable on firearm violence and mental health reported that some police departments have reached out to communities and offered safe storage of firearms when community members have concern about a family member's access to firearms in the home. As a service to the community, the police would offer to keep firearms secured in accessible community locations until the threat has subsided and the community member requests the return.

However, Cook, 2019, suggests that professionals in health, education, and mental health emphasize basic safety precautions to parents. This practice of keeping firearms stored and locked must be encouraged, and the habit of keeping loaded, unlocked weapons available should be recognized as dangerous and rendered socially unacceptable. Namibia should emulated this policy as it is appears to be one a workable mitigation.

2.10 Conclusion

The chapter presented the Social Ecological Theory that was used to guide this study. The literature review also presented the views of different authors on some theories on the causes of firearm crimes. In addition, the chapter also outlined the International, Sub-Saharan Africa and Namibia

perspectives on firearm crimes. The role of the United Nations in respect of firearm crimes was also presented under the sub-heading of international perspectives of firearm crime. Literature on the trend of firearm crime in sub-Saharan Africa was also presented. This literature review also discussed reasons that have been brought forward on why there has been a general increase in the rate of firearm crimes as well as the impact of firearm crimes on societies and economies. Finally, the chapter concluded with an explanation on what different studies have shown to be effective ways that can be used to combat firearm crimes.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the research methodology of this study that presented the research paradigm that was used for this study. The research paradigm that was opted for this study was the interpretivist research paradigm. Reasons why the researcher opted for this paradigm are outlined in this chapter. In addition, this chapter gives reasons why the researcher opted to use the qualitative approach for this study. This is followed by a presentation of the population of this study as well as the sample size that were used and how the researcher arrived at this sample size. This chapter also details the research instruments that were used to obtain, gather from the research participants and how this data was going to be analysed. Finally, this chapter also reveals the ethical considerations that were observed by the researcher during the process of conducting this study.

3.2 Research paradigm/ philosophy

The main paradigms or philosophies in research are positivism, interpretivist and critical inquiry. First, the positivism paradigm is a methodological philosophy that is normally used in quantitative research (Crotty 2015, p8-9). It applies the methods of natural sciences to discover the study of social science. In this respect, understanding of phenomena, in reality, must be measured and supported by evidence (Creswell, 2016). This paradigm helps positivist researchers to understand objects by using empirical tests and methods such as sampling, measurement questionnaire, and focus group discussion. This suggests that insights provided by positivist researchers may have high-quality standard of validity and reliability (Cohen, 2017) and be generalised to large-scale of population (Creswell, 2016). As a result, researchers can save time and investments for using the findings of specific study for future quantitative predictions (Crotty, 2015). The limitations of positivism are that it impossible to measure intentions, attitudes and thoughts of a human because these concepts may not be clearly observed (Creswell, 2016). The paradigm also makes it difficult for respondents to give answers, which are more relevant to their personal cases (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). For these reasons, the researcher did not adopt this philosophy for the study on the factors contributing to firearm crime in Windhoek from 2015 to 2019.

The other paradigm is the critical inquiry approach, which is also known as the "transformative paradigm" (Cohen & Morrison, 2017). This philosophy is because reality is socially constructed through the media, institutions and society. Accordingly, critical researchers intentionally adopt the ethical, moral, political standard to judge the situation and practice their research with consideration of social, economic, political and cultural context for specific research's objects or events (Hamersley, 2013, p30). This critical theory approach is also based on that research should contain an action agenda for reform that may change the lives of participants. The main advantage of this approach is that it is objective and helps to identify, contest and solve social challenges. However, this paradigm's main limitation is that not all those who carry these researches are in key places of decision making.

Notwithstanding, the above this researcher opted to use the interpretive paradigm for this study. This is so for the following reasons. First, according to Antwi and Hamza (2015) the interpretive paradigm focuses on the understanding of an individual participant's experience and perceptions of social reality as experienced in their day-to-day environment, from the standpoint of their unique context and backgrounds. Hence, by adopting this philosophy the researcher was able to obtain data on factors that are contributing to firearm robberies in the Khomas as perceived by the research participants.

Furthermore, the interpretivist or philosophical interpretivist as noted by Babbie, (2015) is oriented towards the goal of understanding social reality. In this proposed study the social reality that is being studied is the causes of firearm crimes that are currently taking place in e Windhoek. The interpretivist paradigm is also because the way knowledge is obtained in human and social sciences cannot be the same as in physical sciences. This is so because humans interpret their world and then act based on such interpretation while the world does not (Hammersley 2013). It was for this reason also, that the researcher adopted this research paradigm since it was going to be of help in understanding the research participants' perceptions, opinions and attitudes towards factors that were contributing towards firearm crime in the Khomas as well the strategies that can be used to address the problem.

In addition to this, through the interpretivist philosophy, researchers tend to gain a deeper and detailed understanding of the topic under study instead without making generalisations (Creswell,

2016). This was important to the researcher in this proposed study because the researcher realises that findings from Windhoek on the factors contributing to firearm crimes might be unique to the city itself. More so, according to Hammersley (2013) interpretivist researchers try to understand the diverse ways of seeing and experiencing the world through different contexts and cultures. They also avoid the bias of studying the events and people with their own interpretations (Hammersley 2013). This is another reason why the researcher opted for the interpretivist philosophy because Khomas being a metropolitan city is home to people with different cultures and social backgrounds.

The other reason for opting for this paradigm is that; it was going to enable the researcher to carry out the study in its natural setting through the use of key methodologies as grounded theory. This entailed the use of in depth open-ended interviews to obtain qualitative data about the study topic of factors contributing to crime in Windhoek. This was so, because the philosophy thus adopted assisted the researcher to investigate and prompt participants' thoughts, values, prejudices, perceptions, views, feelings, and perspectives through the telephone interviews that were done as supported by (Wellington & Szczerbinski, 2017). Because of this, the valuable data that was collected provided the researcher with better insight for further action.

3.3 Research Design

According to Smith (2016), a research design is the overall plan used by the researcher in the process of data collection. It is a plan and structure on a research project that describes how, when, where data is to be collected and analysed (Creswell, 2016). There are three main research designs which are the qualitative, quantitative and the mixed design. First, quantitative research is a design used to quantify the problem by way of generating numerical data or data that can be transformed into usable statistics (Smith, 2016). It is used to quantify attitudes, opinions, behaviours, and other defined variables – and generalize results from a larger sample population (Creswell, 2016). This kind of research uses measurable data to formulate facts and uncover patterns in research. The data collection methods are much more structured than qualitative data (Babbie 2015). It is therefore for these reasons that the researcher opted for a qualitative rather than a quantitative approach in this study.

First, the researcher adopted the qualitative approach because according to Babbie (2015), it is primarily exploratory in nature and it helped in investigating the factors that were contributing to firearm crimes in Windhoek. This approach helped the researcher to gain an understanding of underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations of causes, effects and strategies of mitigating firearm violence in the Windhoek (Creswell 2016). Furthermore, the researcher the qualitative approach was used since it had the potency of uncovering trends in thought and opinions, and dive deeper into the problem of fire arm crime in the Khomas (Gay, Mills & Airasians 2009). Added to the above, this approach also enabled the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the topic of firearm crime in Khomas as the data was gathered was direct from the respondents themselves as advised by (Robert 2014).

3.4 Population of the study

A population is a larger group of people with one or more collective characteristics, from which a sample is obtained (Gay, Mills & Airasians, 2009). It is also defined as the entire group of people that is of interest to the researcher (Burns and Grove, 2005). The targeted population of this study were three police officers in the city of Windhoek criminal Investigating Department, three Public Prosecutors in the Khomas magisterial city, and three clinical psychologists in the city of Windhoek.

3.5 Sample & Sampling procedure

According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2017), a sample is representative of the total population. It is a small proportion of the population made up of individuals who are referred to as participants or respondents selected for the purpose of observation and analysing of their behaviours and actions to make conclusions of a study (Cox, 2015). The researcher used purposive sampling which had a sample size of nine participants. This sample size of nine was necessary for the researcher to obtain in depth data from the participants as more time of 15- 20 minutes was spent on each one of them during the data collection process, which was done telephonically. This was not going to be possible had a bigger sample size been used as this could have resulted in the interviews being done hastily without detailed data being gathered.

Furthermore, the sample was purposively selected and made up of three police officers from the Khomas Regional Crime Investigation Department, three Public Prosecutors from the Khomas magisterial district as well as three clinical psychologists from Windhoek State hospital as well. The sole reason behind this composition of the sample was that these people had first-hand experience of the issues that were under study and were in a favourable position to give insightful data on the causes of firearm crime in the city.

3.6 Research instruments.

In this investigation, data for the study was collected with in-depth telephone interviews. Interviews are qualitative methods in data gathering instruments with interesting properties such as being flexible in nature. The telephone interviews were opted for due to the challenges that were being experienced whereby most participants were not comfortable with face-to-face interviews due to the fear of the Covid -19 disease.

The researcher used interviews in this study because they had an advantage of illuminating the variety of viewpoints that were held by research participants. The interviews provided data for this study in a social context. Another advantage of using interviews as highlighted by Creswell (2016) is that, interviews help researchers to gather detailed data from the response with probing questions. Also unlike questionnaires, an interviewer will be able to rephrase the interview questions for respondents to have a clearer understanding of how they are supposed to respond. The researcher used open-ended questions in order to obtain as much data as possible on the respondents' thoughts, feelings and attitudes towards firearm crime in the city of Windhoek in Namibia.

3.7 Data analysis

According to Burns & Groves (2017), they define data analysis as a process of inspecting, cleansing, transforming, and modelling data with the goal of discovering useful information, suggesting conclusions, and supporting decision-making. Data analysis is a process carried out to minimize and categorise the meaning of data. Its vital importance is that, the technique that the researcher used for the data analysis must be legitimate, appropriate for the collected data as suggested by Cohen et al. (2017). In this particular study, the findings of the study have been

analysed using thematic analysis and descriptive analysis. Qualitative data was reduced by condensing the material systematically, and then structured into themes and patterns for effective analysis. In this study, the data was analysed by the following means:

Firstly, the data was analysed based on its content. Content analysis is a systematic examination of written or recorded communication in order to break the number of teachers down, identify and analyses the presence of relations of words, concepts or common themes (Creswell 2016). Content analysis has advantages, which include its ability to allow the researcher to reduce large amounts of unstructured content, describe the characteristics of the content, identify, and present the important aspects of the content. It also allows closeness to a text, which can alternate between specific categories and relationships. This analysis involves comparing and categorising data to draw meanings from it. Categories should reflect the purpose of the research. The researcher therefore analysed the data by grouping and categorising it according to themes and patterns. The researcher came up with the number of categories by finding out how often a category was mentioned by participants and the uniqueness of that category.

A theme is defined as an abstract entity that brings meaning and identity to a recurrent experience and its variant manifestations (Kawulich, 2010). As such, a theme captures and unifies the nature or basis of the experience into a meaningful whole. Therefore, the themes that were used were derived from the data that was collected. These themes were also aligned to the research objectives. The researcher then interpreted the data to draw meanings and conclusions from it and to create evidence and build arguments in light of the literature that was reviewed in the study.

3.8.1 No harm to participants

No harm to participants' principle suggests that the researcher should avoid harming respondents in any way, emotionally physically or psychologically (Goddard and Melville, 2012).

In this investigation, the voluntary respondents were not exposed to harm in any way, either physically or psychologically. The welfare of the respondents took precedence throughout the investigation.

3.8.2 Confidentiality and anonymity

The participants of the study were informed and assured about confidentiality in the study. In other words, the data of research participants was kept confidential. All the information that was collected for this study was treated as confidential as possible. Furthermore, the researcher ensured

that the identity of all the participants in this study was kept secret. The data that was collected was kept safe, while the names of interviewed persons were not written in the interview proceedings. This was done as per advice by Brink et al., (2012) that the upholding of anonymity of research participants in a study was a fundamental ethical principle. More so this ethical principle was applied in such a way that there was prevention of any link between responses and the research participants who supplied the information. Hence, in the analysis of the information that was gathered, the research participants were given codes to avoid revealing their real names.

3.8.3 Informed voluntary consent

Informed consent refers to a norm in which participants base their voluntary participation in a research project on a full understanding of the possible risks involved. The researcher ensured that participants in the study had all the information, which was necessary for them to make an informed decision on whether to participate in the study or not (Babbie, 2010).

3.9 Conclusion

This chapter outlined the research methodology that was used for this study. In doing so, the chapter explained the interpretivist paradigm as well as the qualitative research approach that was used to guide this study. This chapter also outlined the population of this study, the sample size for the study and how the researcher arrived at this sample size. In addition to this, the chapter outlined the research instrument that was used to obtain data that was needed in this study and how this data was analysed. Finally, the chapter detailed the ethical considerations that were observed by the researcher during the conducting of this study.

CHAPTER 4 DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter gives a detailed explanation of what emanated from the study that was conducted in Windhoek, Namibia. This study was an investigation into factors contributing to the increase of firearm crimes in Windhoek. Nine participants were involved in this study. Three participants were selected from the criminal investigating department of Windhoek, three were clinical psychologists working in Windhoek and three were prosecutors from the Khomas magisterial district. Findings from these participants are presented and discussed in this chapter.

4.2 Demographic information of research participants

Research Participant	Gender	Age group	Post	Years in current field of service	Years in Windhoek
1	M	20-29	Police officer	8	8
2	M	40-49	Clinical Psychologist	22	12
3	F	40-49	Public Prosecutor	29	14
4	M	50-60	Public Prosecutor	31	13
5	F	50-60	Police officer	23	12
6	F	40-49	Police officer	32	13
7	M	50-60	Clinical psychologist	35	16
8	F	30-39	Clinical Psychologist	17	12
9	M	20-29	Public Prosecutor	7	4

Table one above, shows the demographic profile of the participants. It shows that the respondents that were engaged were four females and five males. It follows that the sample had a gender balance. The average age of the research participants that were engaged in this study was 43 years. In addition to this these research, participants had a combined number of 204 years of service in their respective service sector which when translated to an average number of service gave 22.6 years. This average number of years in service for the research participants could be considered as being favourable about their knowledge of the topic on the investigation into the factors

contributing to the increase of firearms crimes in the city of Windhoek in Namibia, 2015 – 2019. In connection to this, the total number of years which research participants had spent working in Windhoek was 104 years and this gave them an average number of 11.5 years. The implication of this is that the research participants had a fair understanding of the topic under study and were thus in a position to generate insightful data that was being sought.

4.3. Presentation of findings

This chapter presents, under appropriate headings the findings that were made from the research that was carried out on the topic the investigation into the factors contributing to the increase of firearms crimes in Windhoek in Namibia, 2015 – 2019. From the data that was generated from the respondents, the researcher was able to observe three main themes and their sub-themes as shown below;

Theme 1: why firearm crimes are taking place in t Windhoek of Namibia.	Sub-theme 1:1 level of understanding of the term firearm crimes among research participants Sub-theme 1:2 Personal related factors contributing to commission of firearm crime Sub theme 1: 3 Domestic related factors contributing to firearm crime Sub-theme 1:4 Social related factors contributing to firearm crime Sub-theme 1:5 Economic related factors contributing to firearm crime
Theme 2: Determining impact of firearm crimes in Windhoek	Sub-theme 2: Determining significance of firearm crime in Windhoek Sub-theme 2.1 Impact of firearm crime on individuals

	Sub-theme 2.2 impact of firearm crime on families
	Sub-theme 2.3 Impact of firearm crime on the community
	Sub-theme 2.4 Impact of firearm crime on the economy
Theme 3: strategies to deal with firearm crimes in Windhoek .	Sub-theme 3.1 Individual oriented strategies to mitigate firearm crime
	Sub-theme 3.2 domestic oriented strategies to mitigate firearm crime

4.4.1 Theme 1 Reasons for firearm crimes that are taking place in the Windhoek of Namibia

Findings that were made were merged under respective sub-themes, which are outlined below. The first sub-theme that was identified was on the level of understanding of the term firearm crime by research participants. The other themes that also emerged were personal factors contributing to commission of firearm crime, substance abuse, personal problems, poor safekeeping of firearms, the school, the community and exposure to violence in the community. Findings from these emerging sub-themes are presented and discussed in the following sections.

4.4.2 Sub theme 1.1 Level of understanding of the term firearm crimes

The respondents were requested to respond to question 2.1, which was, "What is your understanding of the term firearm crimes?" This question was meant to establish the level of understanding of research participants on what firearm crime was all about. The research participants' responses helped the researcher to find out if the research participants clearly understood the basis of the study. The responses that were given by the research participants appeared to indicate a fair knowledge of what firearm crime was all about. The first respondent gave the following answer, "*a firearm crime is when a person uses a gun to carry out an act of*

violence," Respondent (One). This statement from the first respondent appeared to be amplified by the third respondent with the following answer, "*Firearm crime refers to a situation whereby a gun is used to threaten, injure or kill a person intentionally or unintentionally,"* (*Respondent three)*

The respondents seemed to have a better appreciation of what firearm crime entailed. This was shown by the research participant appeared to indicate that threatening to use a firearm against a person also constituted firearm crime. In addition, Respondent (six) gave the following statement, "*Firearm crimes are all those acts of violence such as, passion killing, robbery or rape which are committed by someone using a gun".* In this response the research participant went on to highlight acts of violence like passion killing, robberies and rape in the definition of firearm crime. In this response the research participant appears to have a deeper grasp of what firearm crime is and criminal cases that are perpetrated with guns. Another response from Respondent (7), also appeared to reveal a good knowledge of what firearm crime was all about, "*This is when guns are misused by individuals as they try to get what they want by force, for example, carjacking, kidnapping, raping, house breaking or even committing suicide".* In this statement, the research participant appeared to be introducing an important aspect of firearm crimes, that guns can be used by individuals against other people and against oneself. All these responses reveal that the research participants had a fair understanding of what firearm crimes was all about. These findings appear to be in congruence with what (May 2017), Bolland (2016) and Finck (2016) posited on firearm crime as the violent misuse of guns to commit a crime or obtain something unlawfully or ventilate anger. The following is a presentation and analysis on findings that were made on factors that contribute to firearm crimes in Windhoek. The findings are presented and analysed under their respective sub-themes, which are personal factors, domestic factors, social factors and economic factors.

4.4.2 Sub-theme 1:2 Personal factors contributing to commission of firearm crime

One of the sub-themes that emerged from this study was that certain personal factors could be contributing factor towards the commission of firearm crime in Windhoek. Personal factors refer to those peculiar, private, specific or individual circumstances that have to do with oneself that contribute towards commission of a firearm crime. In relation to personal factors contributing towards firearm crimes in Windhoek *Respondent One,* gave the following statement,

> *I believe that most firearm violence is a result of cheating and poor anger management that takes place in relationships, these lead to arguments and misunderstandings. The result is often passion killing through the use of guns.* (Respondent 1)

In this statement the research participant appeared to be highlighting the fact that failure of individuals to relate towards each other in relationships often leads to firearm crime. The researcher appears to be blaming the commission of firearm crimes to cheating resulting in poor anger management that takes place when one of the parties feel betrayed. By referring to poor anger management as a cause of firearm crime, respondent one appears to be of the thought that the inability of aggrieved spouses to practice restraint could be the cause of the passion killings through the use of guns. Furthermore, the research participant also appears to be highlighting the arguments and misunderstandings that take place in relationships as being responsible for firearm crimes. It also appears that *Respondent One* is also blaming arguments and misunderstandings that ensue in these relationships whenever an act of unfaithfulness takes place as the cause of firearm crimes. The essence of *Respondent On*e's view is that arguments and misunderstandings are attributable to personal traits whereby the parties that are involved fail to appreciate each other's views. This could result in highly emotive exchanges that finally degenerate into firearm crimes. This finding from *Respondent one* appears to be in agreement with Wachs (2018)'s observations that most shootings and homicides that took place in Rochester, America were due to dispute-related circumstances which often premised around personal arguments between acquaintances. In addition to this finding, the researcher got the following statement from *Respondent Three.*

> *The misuse of firearm in this city is common among partners who are intimate. This happens in most cases with men when they feel disappointed with their girlfriends because of unfaithfulness***, (**Respondent 3).

The respondent appears to be blaming unfaithfulness between intimate partners as a reason for firearm crimes. The occurrence of unfaithfulness in intimate relationships always brings about altercations between the involved spouses due to jealous. This opinion from *Respondent three* appears to be confirmed by Chermak (2018) who indicates that there has been an increasing trend in the rate of firearm violence which in most cases is caused by romantic jealous. Thus, it could be from this perspective that *Respondent Three* could be seeing that jealous between couples in intimate relationships that could be causing firearm crime in Windhoek. Similarly, Respondent Five appeared to be of the same view with *Respondent Three* when giving the following response

> *Most people who go on to shooting their spouses do so because of a lack of problem solving skills in relationships. They feel that the only way to solve a problem is by killing their unfaithful partner,* (Respondent 3)

This research participant appears to be casting the blame on lack of problem solving skills between parties in relationships as to why firearm crime often happens. Problem solving skills are referred to as the ability to negotiate and come up with an amicable solution to a challenge Peak (2017). It implies that Respondent (3) was of the view that the occurrence of firearm crime in Windhoek was being caused by people in relationships failing to negotiate with each other and solving the problem of faithfulness that they might be facing. This failure could be the one that might be causing the partner that has a gun to end up killing his or her partner. A study by O'Toole 2018) highlights that low level skills in settling disputes without physical force often leads to firearm crimes. The other finding on causes of firearm crimes in Windhoek city was from Respondent Seven, who gave the following statement,

> *There is no counselling that takes place to help couples solve problems in their relationships. As a result, men end up using the firearm to settle scores with a woman they feel has betrayed them,* (Respondent 7).

It could be the understanding of Respondent Seven that the absence of counselling could be a factor causing fire arm crimes in most relationships. According to (Borum & Verhaagen; 2017) there is lack of pastoral counselling which helps to address personal problems and reduce desperation is a predictor of firearm violence. Respondent Seven could be attributing firearm crime to a lack of psychological support for perpetrators of firearm crime. These above responses also appear to

concur with what Chermak (2018) Hardy (2016) and (Piehl 2018) observed that feelings of resentment and hurt which, if people are not counselled to deal with during disagreements in relationships, often lead to firearm crimes.

4.4.2 Sub-theme 1.2.2 substance abuse

The study also identified another sub-theme of substance abuse as a cause for firearm crime in the city of Windhoek. Connected to this, *Respondent Two* gave the following statement,

> *I believe that people who commit firearm crime do so because of the influence of alcohol or drugs,* (Respondent 2)

The research participant appeared to be fully convinced that the alcohol and drug abuse was a factor towards the committing of crimes by many people. This view from Respondent Two appeared to be amplified by Respondent Four, who said the following during the interview session, *If one looks at the firearm violence-taking place in the city, l believe it is because of people taking too much alcohol. Alcohol initiates people to get angry quickly and lose control,* Respondent (4). In the statement, the respondent linked the abuse of alcohol to inability of one to control one's anger. What this implies is that one who is intoxicated loses control of him/ herself easily and this contributes towards committing a crime. This finding is also supported by Koper (2018) who notes that alcohol abuse affects the ability of one to use proper judgement in a situation. In a related study, Schwab (2018) noted a positive correlation between alcohol abuse and firearm crime. The study also got the following statement from *Respondent Six*

> *Drugs and alcohol abuse are mainly responsible for the killing that is taking place in the city. People tend to lose their sense of judgement when they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol; as a result, they end up resorting to firearm violence,* (Respondent 6).

The above statement from Respondent Six also appears to be in harmony with the findings of Wachs (2018) who found out that alcohol and substance abuse can greatly impair people's ability to make reasonable decisions during critical moments. Similarly, Koper (2018) posited that when confronted with frustrating and irritating circumstances most people who are under the influence of drugs tend to use firearms as an instrument of settling scores.

4.4.2 Sub-theme1.2.3 Exposure to violence

Data that was gathered seemed to reveal that exposure to violent behaviours could be a factor contributing towards firearm crimes in Windhoek. In that respect, Respondent One had the following to say

> *I feel some people are influenced into committing firearm violence by the kind of violent movies, which they are used to watching,* (Respondent 1)

The research participant for the above response appears to be placing much emphasis on violent movies' contribution towards firearm crime. This view from Respondent One appears to be reiterated by Respondent 3 who also had social media to blame for the upsurge of firearm violence in Windhoek. The following statement was made by Respondent 3 to that effect.

> *I blame social media for the increase in firearm violence that is taking place. This is because a person who watches a firearm violent video on the social media will feel encouraged to do the same when provoked.*

In the above statement, the research participant appears to be placing emphasis on what one watches as having an effect on behaviour. This is reiterated by Linkenbach & Stark (2019) who posit that exposure to violent media, especially for youths with pre-existing aggressive tendencies and poor parental monitoring, may be an important contextual factor that amplifies risk for violent behaviour and firearm, Respondent 5 highlighted that the way news on violent criminal acts is disseminated to make the criminals look more like heroes than villains. According to Linkenbach & Stark (2019) exposure to violent media, especially for youths with pre-existing aggressive tendencies and poor parental monitoring, may be an important contextual factor that amplifies risk for violent behaviour and firearm

> *Sometimes the way the media reports the acts of firearm violence, especially passion killing makes the people who commit such crimes appear like heroes.*

Commenting on the role of media about firearm crime, Koper (2018), highlights that media has a way of increasing aggressive behaviour, aggressive thoughts and feelings and decreasing of pro-social behaviours. This is also supported by Linkenbach & Stark (2019) who add that exposure to violent media, especially for youths with pre-existing aggressive tendencies makes them more inclined towards perpetrating firearm crime. In addition to this, *Respondent Seven* appears to highlight on the neighbourhoods in which people grow up in as having an influence in their adult

life behaviour.

> *Most firearm crimes are committed by adults who grew up in areas where fighting and violence is quite common. These people have accepted violence as a way of survival and as a result, they are not afraid of using a firearm to kill a person.*

The emphasis made by the respondent in the above statement is that children growing up in a community where violence has become a common phenomenon; tend to feel that such violence is a normal part of life. Hardy (2016), Koper (2018), Watkins (2017) and Roth (2018) appear to be in concurrence with this finding when they note that exposure to violence in one's community often develops beliefs that aggression and violence are an acceptable means of achieving goals or resolving conflicts.

4.4.2 Sub theme 1: 3.1 Domestic factors contributing to firearm crime

The study also elicited responses from participants that appeared to indicate that domestic factors could equally be blamed for some of the firearm crimes that are taking place. The following responses from the research appear to be indicating that there is a correlation between what happens in the homes with the tendency of individuals to commit firearm crime. For instance, *Respondent one* gave the following statement,

> *I feel that the firearm violence that we are witnessing in Khomas is a result of what was learnt in the family. As you see most of our families are dysfunctional: there is a lot of violence taking place in our homes, the result is that children are growing up with a feeling that violence is quite acceptable.*

From this statement the respondent appears to be convinced that firearm crime that takes place later in a person's life can be attributed to the family set up. Respondent one is suggesting that the exhibition of firearm crime is linked to some sort of learning that takes place in the families. What is implied here is that dysfunctional families are to be blamed for some acts of firearm crime taking place in Windhoek. This observation from the respondent appears to be congruent with findings that were made by Mahler (2017) that family influences tend to encourage firearm violence in most countries. Furthermore, Mahler (2017) sees the family as an important context for socialization and the development of normative beliefs about appropriate social behaviour. *Correspondingly,* Respondent 3 also gave the following statement that was linking firearm violence to families.

I blame the way that most of the parents raise up their children. Some are too strict while others give their children too much freedom. When parents are too strict or in addition, liberal, the children grow up into adults who are stubborn and rebellious and are likely to misuse firearm whenever they get access to them.

Another study by Hardy (2016) also notes that pro-violence attitudes and the criminality of parents and siblings during childhood tend to predict adolescent gang membership and delinquency. What is implied here is that youths from families that encourage the use of firearms for solving problems may perceive firearms to be an appropriate means to solve problems and protect themselves when they are exposed to challenging confrontations in communities. The following statement about factors causing firearm crime came from *Respondent 5*

Crime begets crime. Children whose parents misuse firearms tend to do the same when they grow up. The children have wrong models in their homes. As a result, they feel using firearms to achieve what they want is acceptable

A study by Hardy (2016) also appears to be supporting the sentiment of the above respondent. The study that reveals that pro-violence attitudes and the criminality of parents and siblings during childhood tend to predict adolescent gang membership and delinquency. This means that families that encourage the use of firearms for solving problems tend to give a bad example to children. This makes the children resort to the use of guns when exposed to challenging situations later in adult life. The following statement from *Respondent seven* also appears to be in harmony with the above findings.

Our children are seeing a lot of violence that is taking place in the homes. We have many women who are being shot by their spouses. Children growing up in these families are ending up feeling that if your spouse angers you, then you can easily shoot her to death if you have access to a firearm.

What the respondent seems to be saying in the above statement is that there is a lot of anger that is in homes where children have witnessed one of their parents being shot to death. Implied in Respondent seven‘s statement is that such pent up anger is likely to be ventilated at another person sooner or later in the person’s life. This perception by Respondent Seven appears to be in harmony with, Mahler (2017) ‘s observation that what happens in the families is a predictor of what children end up doing when they do in adult life.

4.4.2 Sub-theme 1.3.2 poor safekeeping of firearms

The research went on to make findings that seemed to suggest that the way that fire arms are being stored in the homes could be encouraging firearm crime that is taking place in Windhoek.
For instance, *Respondent one* gave the following statement that was related to the way that firearms are kept in the home could be bringing about firearm crime.

> *I feel that some of the robberies that are taking place is because of stolen firearms. It is easy to commit a crime with a stolen gun.*

In this statement, the research participant appears to be connecting firearms that are stolen due to poor safe-keeping to the occurrence of a firearm crime. This view by the research participant also appears to be in line with the Namibian Sun (5 September 2019)'s observation that one of the causes of firearms is the lack of proper care of firearms by gun owners.
Equally, *Respondent three* also appears to be consolidating the finding made from *Respondent one* by suggesting that most of the robberies that are occurring in the city "*are being carried out through the use of stolen firearms*". What the respondent implies in this statement is that a criminal activity such as robbery can be easily done with a stolen firearm because investigations on the crime are likely to lead to the owner of the gun instead of the crime perpetrator. Fox & Burstein (2017) appear to be in agreement with this finding as they posit that many times stolen firearms tend to fall into the hands of criminals.
Respondent seven and *Respondent nine* also seemed to echo the same views as expressed by Respondent three that are stolen firearms could be acting as catalysts to firearm crime in Windhoek. For instance, Respondent seven emphasised on "*irresponsibility*" of gun owners, which is leading to firearms being stolen by criminals while *Respondent Nine* also emphasised on "negligence" of the firearm owners. This *irresponsibility* and *carelessness* of firearm owners as noted by these two respondents is usually seen when people leave their guns under the seats of their cars.

4.4.2 Sub-theme 1:4 Social factors contributing to firearm crime

The study also found out that there were social factors that seemed to be responsible for firearm crime in the city of Windhoek. Social factors refer to circumstances that have to do with the day to day living of people within a given a society. The study went on to finding out sub-themes that

had to do with how certain social factors were playing a role in bringing about firearm crime. The first findings that were made were linked with the schools.

4.4.2 Sub-theme 1.4.1 the school

Under this sub-theme on the influence of schools on occurrence of firearm crime in Windhoek, *Respondent one* had the following to say about the schools,

> *I feel that our schools are not doing enough to help educating children on the dangers of engaging in firearm criminal activities.*

What the above respondent appears to be pointing out is that the schools as agents of socialisation where not doing enough to mitigate the use of firearms for violence. This view also appears to be in agreement with Bloom (2017) who posited that peer deviancy training in schools is a primary mechanism in the trajectory from overt, highly aggressive behaviours during childhood to more covert processes such as firearm violence. In the same vein, *Respondent 3* also appeared to be placing part of the blame on schools for firearm crime that is taking place by stating that, "*peer pressure*" and "*wrong influences*" that normally take place at schools could be equally blamed for firearm crime that was taking place in the city. Findings that were made by Pratt (2016) indicated that most poor schools do not have the resources to identify and deal with problem behaviour in children. This often makes children to succumb to wrong influences and peer pressure, which might lead to firearm crime. Similarly, *Respondent 5* gave the following statement

> *The schools are not able to identify and counsel children who are inclined towards committing violent acts. Because of this, children who leave schools with aggressive inclination tend to engage in firearm crime much easily.*

What this research participant appears to be saying is that children whose aggressive behaviour is not addressed are more likely to engage in firearm crime after leaving schools. This finding from *Respondent five* appears to be connected with the findings that were made by Pratt (2016) that schools with fewer resources of addressing behavioural, academic, mental health and medical needs of students tend to be less tolerant of problem behaviours. Such a lack of tolerance is seen by expelling the children from the school instead of counselling them. Expelling a child might in fact embolden a child towards anti-social behaviour, such as firearm crime in adulthood (Garmo 2019)

4.4.2 Sub-theme: the community

From the study that was carried out it also appeared as if the community was also contributing towards firearm crime that was taking place in Windhoek. The following is the data that was collected from the respondents on how they perceived the community could be aiding firearm crime occurrences. Respondent one noted that, "*children growing up in poor communities are being enticed into criminal behaviour",* especially when they see some people who are engaging in criminal activities, "*driving fancy cars*". Implied by the respondent is that some people who are trapped in poverty might feel that the only way to be rich is with guns. This appears to be supported by Wachs (2018) who argued that living in poverty is associated with high levels of familial stress, which in turn makes people vulnerable to criminal activities like firearm crime.

The researcher also got the following statement from *Respondent 4* which suggests that the condition of unemployment could be causing firearm crimes.

> *The lack of employment in our communities is causing people to engage in firearm crime. This is because they feel that using a firearm is the only way they can help themselves and their families to survive.*

In this statement the research appears to be blaming the unemployment levels in communities as being responsible for firearm crimes such as robberies. What the research participant could be suggesting is that people in poverty-stricken tend to be driven to committing firearm crimes by the poverty in their communities. This finding from Respondent 4 appears to be in harmony with findings that were made by *Respondent 7*

> *Our communities do not have any sport fields where young people can spend time, there are no industries where the young ones go and work. This makes them to be tempted to carry out firearm robberies.*

The above statement from Respondent 7 appears to be placing the blame on lack of recreational amenities in the communities. Lack of recreational facilities could be giving young people a lot of idle time, which in turn could be giving them a chance to carry out firearm crimes. Chermak (2018) appears to concur with the finding as he who posits that disenfranchised and impoverished communities lack social, recreational and vocational opportunities that contribute to positive youth development.

4.4.2 Sub-theme exposure to violence in the community

In addition to the above findings, the researcher also got findings that appeared to be alluding the firearm crimes taking place in the city of Khomas to the exposure of most adolescence to violence in the communities. The following responses about this were obtained,

I have a feeling that people are committing crime because they are seeing it being done everywhere around them. (Respondent three)

What is implied in the above statement is the fact that firearm crime is taking place in and around Windhoek could be resulting in those who have inclined to committing firearm crime to be enticed into carrying out such firearm crime. It appears as if *Respondent 3*'s statement is in congruent with Watkins (2017)'s observation that exposure to violence in one's community tend to contribute towards youth's involvement in carrying firearms around and committing firearm violence. In addition, the researcher got the following finding,

> *People are no longer feeling safe in the community. This is what is making them buy firearms. Therefore, firearms are now easily accessible. These firearms are now being used for passion killing or being stolen by criminals to be used in armed robberies,* (Respondent 5).

From this Respondent 5's view a lack of feeling of security in the communities is a factor contributing towards firearm crime. The respondent is actually linking the increased rate of firearm abuse in the form of spouses killing their spouses due to relationship disputes. Findings by Hardy (2016) also appear to indicate that increased access of firearms in communities is a trigger to firearm crime. Koper (2018) also appears to be in concurrence with Respondent 5 when he posits that a low sense of community safety results in increased firearm crime.

4.4.3 Theme 2 Impact of firearm crime

The study went on further to finding out the impacts that are being caused by firearm crime. The findings of the study in that regard are presented under their respective themes, which are, the impact of firearm crime on individuals, the impact of firearm crime on families, the impact of firearm crime on the community and the impact of firearm crime on the economy.

4.4.3 Sub-theme 2.1 Impact of firearm crime on the individuals.

Outlined below are the responses by the research participants on the effect of firearm crime on the individuals. This study went on to make findings that appeared to reveal that firearm crime was affecting individuals. According to *Respondent three,* a firearm victim often goes through life *"a sense of fear and makes unable to lead a normal life out of fear of another attack".* What Respondent three appears to be stressing is that once a person has been subjected to firearm crime then that person will always be fearful of another attack. This view from *Respondent three* appears to be in agreement with the findings that were made by Mahler (2017) who indicates that most firearm violence survivors tend to experience increased fear and vigilance while some become so fearful that they do not want to leave their homes.

Similarly, Respondent four gave the following statement, "*Firearm violence results in the perpetrators experiencing guilt and often times they end up committing suicide."* Implied in this statement by Respondent four is that firearm crime often affects both the perpetrator and the victim. The respondent brought about the issue of guilt that always attends one who commits a firearm and asserts that this guilt makes the perpetrator commit suicide. This finding from Respondent four appears to be in line with the observation that was made by (Chapman& Alpers 2017) that firearm perpetrators may end up committing suicide due to the guilt they experience after killing a person. In addition to this Respondent Seven also appears to suggest the negative impact of firearm crime in the following response that was solicited.

> *Many people who survive firearm crime have to carry with them injuries throughout their lives. This affects them in their careers. There are some who actually get disabled and end up dependent on other people for their living.* Respondent (7)

> Respondent three appears to be identifying the physical consequences of firearm crime, which are permanent injuries, physical incapacitation of victims which makes them less dependent on themselves. A study by Buka (2017) appears to be in harmony with Respondent three's view by positing that firearm victims often have dramatic changes to their lives, as some may be permanently disabled. These once active people start living under the care of other people. In addition, Respondent 9 pointed out that some firearm violence victims of firearm violence survivors often end up going through *"depression* and *a sense of hopelessness."* Azrael &

Hemingway (2018) also seems to be in concurrence with what respondent nine pointed UT by positing that firearm violence survivors tend to go through life with a sense of fear and depression and mental instability. In addition to this, the study also got a response from *Respondent five* on the impact of firearm crime on families,

> *Firearm crime rips families apart. This is true with passion killing whereby the victims are mostly women. This means that the children are left without anyone to take care of him or her.* (Respondent 5)

This response which was obtained from the research participant appears to be in harmony with the findings that were made by Chapman& Alpers (2017) that firearm violence often results in fractured families while with incarceration comes the trauma for perpetrators' family members—for example, women who are left to care for children on their own and children who can only see a parent by visiting a prison.

4.4.3 Sub-theme 2.3 Impact of firearm crime on the community

Another sub- theme that emerged from the study was that of the effect of firearm crime on the community. Respondent two gave the following statement in respect of the impact of firearm crime on the community.

> *We are afraid of driving anywhere in the city at night because there are chances of being attacked by armed robbers*, (Respondent 2)

What this respondent appears to be pointing out is that it is now risky for motorists to be driving late in the night. It seems as if *Respondent two* is of the view that there are high chances of one losing a car to carjackers at night. This statement from Respondent one appears to be in harmony with Snyder& Sickmund (2018)'s findings that firearm usage is usually associated with carjacking in most cities. In addition to this *Respondent, four* gave the following statement,

> *Firearm crime that is taking place in the communities is resulting in children being left without parents; this is especially true with the passion killings that are taking place.* (Respondent 4)

The above response from the research participant appears to suggest that the firearm crimes are affecting communities negatively as there are children who being orphaned because of their parents being shot to death. This view from *Respondent four* appears to be in agreement with findings that

were made by Petrie (2019) the majority of homicides that take place in families are a result of firearm misuse and that most of the victims are females. In addition to this *Respondent, five* made the following statement from the interview that was carried out,

> *When a person is injured or shot dead in our neighbourhood, we all get affected because when one is shot, then we ask ourselves, why? Why? And who is going to be a victim next.* (Respondent 5)

What this research participant seems to be pointing out is that firearm crime is not affecting the victims alone but the family members and the rest of the people in the community. It appears that the people are always shocked when there is an act of firearm violence within the community. This could be making them fearful of who will be the next victim of such act of violence. This sentiment from *Respondent five* appears to be in line with what was posited by Fox and Burstein (2017) that acts of firearm crime causes trauma not only within the affected families but also throughout the communities. Also in concurrence with *Respondent five's* statement is Chapman and Alpers (2017)'s assertion that firearm violence is a systemic trauma that infuses and impacts the social and interpersonal systems of those victimised. The research also went on to make the following finding from Respondent six on the impact of firearm crime on communities. Respondent six made the following statement to that effect,

> *It is not easy to attend a scene where someone has been shot to death or seriously injured. The scene is always horrifying and you can see the pain in the eyes of everyone who is attending the scene where violence has taken place. I tell you it is not easy at all.* (Respondent 6)

The above statement from *Respondent six* appears to express the grief that people who witness and attend to a firearm crime scene often experiences. It appears as if Respondent six is pointing out the emotional stress that is experienced by the witnesses to a firearm crime scene. The words," horrifying", "pain in the eyes," "not easy at all" appear to be painting the deep feelings of stress that the people that are always witnessing these crime scenes are always going through. This finding from the research participant appears to be in harmony with the findings that were made by O'Toole (2018) that there is always a secondary trauma experience that witnesses to firearm

crime scenes always have. This secondary trauma also affects the nurses, doctors and law-enforcing agents who see the ghastly damage that are caused by firearm violence.

Similarly, *Respondent seven,* gave the following statement in regard to the impact of firearm crime.

> *I do not feel that our law enforcers are not doing enough to protect us from criminals that are always on the move at night with firearms. I feel l must protect myself with my own gun. This way l feel safe in my house and when l am travelling at night.* (Respondent 7)

Respondent seven appears to be expressing a lack of confidence in the effectiveness of the police to protect the people in the city from firearm violence. This is shown by the phrase, "*not doing enough", "protect myself". "My own gun"* It appears as if the loss of confidence in the police to protect the people from criminals with firearm is low. This could be leading people like *Respondent seven* to purchase firearms to protect themselves. What this could mean is that there is an increase in the number of firearms that are in possession of people. This then could be increasing the likelihood of more firearms being stolen by criminals and thus being used to further their criminal activities. This response from *Respondent seven* appears to be in agreement with the findings that were made by Azrael & Hemingway (2018) reveals that due to a sense of feeling unsafe, expecting to be victimized, and doubting that police will protect them, people in high-violence communities may choose to carry firearms for protection. However, this might not solve the problem of firearm violence because the more people carry guns, the more there will be the chances of firearm crime (2017). The study was also able to get the following response from *Respondent nine* on the impact of crime on the community:

> *"I feel we are slowly losing the battle against firearm crime in our society. Just by reading the newspapers and looking at what is happening around you, you can see that we are experiencing more crime, more robbery, more killing through firearms. I do not know what we can be done*" (Respondent 9).

The above response from the research participants has the following phrases, "*slowly losing the battle", "more robbery", "more killing", "do not know "*The picture which Respondent nine appears to be painting is that the rate of firearm arm crime in the city could be rising. This rate of firearm crime, which is rising, could be an indication that the fight against firearm crime is not reducing the rate of this criminal activity. At the same time Respondent, nine could be expressing a sense of hopelessness on the success of any endeavour to reduce firearm violence in the city.

This sentiment from *Respondent nine* could be in agreement with the findings that were made by Hardy (2016) that a sense of hopelessness always creeps into residents of firearm crime prone areas. People end up accepting firearm crime as part of their everyday life.

4.4.3 Sub-theme 2.4 Impact of firearm crime on the economy

The impact of firearm crime on the economy was another sub-theme that emerged from this study. The findings as it is going to be shown in the presentations and discussions done below seem to indicate that there might be some effects on business activities because of firearm crime. *Respondent two* had the following to point out in regards to the impact of firearm crime on the economy in Windhoek,

> *You see most of our shops in Windhoek are now afraid of staying open late into the night. They can be attacked and robbed by armed robbers. I think this is affecting their business, because if by not staying open for a long time, they are failing to make as much profit as they can possibly make."* (Respondent 2).

What seems to be revealed from this respondent is that there is an element of fear of armed robbers among the businesses operating in the city of Windhoek. This fear could be causing businesses to avoid trading for longer periods of time, which in turn is affecting their profit margins. In other words, the businesses could be making better profits if they were to remain open until late. The view thus expressed and inferred from *Respondent two* seem to be in agreement with the findings that were made by Vernick (2017) that firearm crime tends to affect businesses in the form of downsizing, decreased revenues and in severe cases closure of businesses. Thus, the economic health of the economies tends to be affected.

> *The fear of being robbed is stopping people from starting businesses in our high-density areas where firearm violence is reportedly being high. This means that the young people in our areas will continue struggling for jobs.* (Respondent 3)

The statement from the research participant appears to pointing out that some businesses could now be reluctant of opening businesses in some parts of the city where firearm crime rates appear to be high. This finding from *Respondent 3's* statement appears to be in concurrence with what

Garmo (2019) posited that higher levels of neighbourhood firearm violence can result in fewer retail and service establishments as most businesses are always wary of firearm crime.

The study also went on to obtaining the following statement from *Respondent eight.*

> *A lot of money is being lost because of firearm violence. Money that is supposed to be used to develop the city is now being used in the fight against firearm crime.* (Respondent 8)

What the researcher noted from this statement by *Respondent eight* is firearm violence in the city could be affecting the budgets that are intended for the development of the city. It could be that more money that could have been used to build industries and improve the standard of living of the people is now being used to fight against firearm crime. Thus, firearm crime could be slowing down the development of Windhoek. Findings thus made from *Respondent eight's* statement appear to be in agreement with findings by Azrael & Hemingway (2018) that the opportunity cost of fighting firearm crime is the lost financial resources that could have been used to develop the neighbourhood (Watkins 2017). *Respondent nine* also made the following contribution about the impact of firearm crime on the economy of Windhoek,

> *The target of firearm violence are those people that are rich and are contributing to the economy of our country. These people are either being murdered during armed robberies.* (Respondent 9)

From the statement above Respondent nine appears to be pointing out that armed robbers who are targeting businesses could be causing the injury or death to owners of these businesses. Implied in this statement is that the attack to these business people could be affecting business activities in the city. This finding that was made from Respondent nine appears to be in agreement with the argument by Miller and Cohen (2019) that firearm shot injuries in America cost an estimated USD$126 billion in 2017.

4.4.3 Theme 3: Strategies to deal with firearm crimes in Windhoek

Under this theme on the strategies to deal with firearm, crime the findings that were made have been categorized under the following sub-themes emerged individual oriented strategies to

mitigate firearm crime, domestic oriented strategies to mitigate firearm crime, national strategies to mitigate firearm crime and international strategies to mitigate firearm crime**.**

4.4.3 Theme 3 Sub-theme 3.1 Individual oriented strategies to mitigate firearm crime

The first sub-theme to be presented and discussed under theme 3 is that which deals with individual oriented strategies that can be used to deal with the problem of firearm violence in the city. The responses from the participants in connection with this strategy that can be used to counter fire arm crime in Windhoek. When it came to strategies *Respondent one* gave the following statement*, "Our police force presence in the curbing firearm crime must be felt, in fact, l feel that first of all they must be trained to identify people who pose a threat to others through firearm violence,"* (Respondent 1). In this response from the research participant it appears as if there is a particular emphasis on the need for the police to be more actively engaged in the fight against firearm crime in Windhoek. It also appears as if this active engagement by the police in fighting firearm crime as viewed by the research can be possible upon the training of the law enforcing agents. This view from the research participants also seems to be supported by Pie who posits that effective measures to deter firearm crime is to ensure that the law enforcing agents are well trained. Correspondingly, *Respondent 3* gave the following response during the interview,

> *I feel that doctors, counsellors and psychologists must find out if their patients with mental problems have access to any firearms. They should then take appropriate action of making these patients not have access to these firearms while they are still under treatment.*
> (Respondent 3)

In this statement, Respondent three appears to link the commission of firearm crime to the mental stability of the patients. What is inferred from this statement also is that mentally ill patients might be getting access to guns, which they in turn could be using to commit firearm crime. This sentiment from the research participants is also echoed by Snyder & Sickmund (2018) who argue that mental health practitioners should play an active part in the fight against firearm crime. They can only do that if they give information on the likelihood of certain people committing firearm crime.

Related to the above finding Respondent seven gave the following statement, *Our police force must be taught on how to advise people, especially couples that have disputes and are in possession of a firearm"* It seems as if the Respondent "was linking the lack of counselling of couples in

dispute to the commission of passion killing. What is implied in this statement is that counselling of couples involved in domestic dispute, could actual prevent some firearm crimes. This perception from Respondent seven appears to be in agreement with findings from a study by Webster & Vernick (2019) that indicated that most of the disputes that end up in passion could actually be avoided if the law enforcing agents that deal with domestic disputes is trained in professional counselling. In addition to this Respondent eight gave the following response,

I feel that crime can be averted by training psychologists on how to identify feelings such as anger, depression, despondency and any other mental problems, which are likely to result in patients committing firearm crimes. (Respondent 8)

What was observed from Respondent eight's statement is a need for training of health personnel to identify and examine emotional or psychological states of their mentally ill patients. After health personnel have done this they should then proceed to finding out if the patients in such mental health conditions are likely to engage in firearm crime or not. This finding from the study appears to be also posited by Borum & Verhaagen (2017) that, mental health practitioners ought to study the likelihood of certain of their patients to committing firearm crime. These responses from the research participants appear to agree that early identifying of likelihood criminal acts is possible. The Respondents also appear to agree that early detection, by mental health workers and police, of possible firearm crime is needful in the fight against firearm crimes.

4.4.3 Theme 3 Sub-theme 3.1.2 purchasing of firearms

The research went on to obtaining the following responses that were categorized under the theme, purchasing of firearms. The research participants appeared to agree that there was need for measures to be put so that the purchasing of firearms by the general population is restricted. The following is therefore a presentation of the responses of research participants on how they felt firearm crimes could be mitigated through firearm purchase measures. In that context, Respondent two gave the following statement,

> *The authority responsible for selling firearms must check the history of those who want to buy firearms so that they determine if they are not going to misuse them.* (Respondent 2)

Respondent two appears to be suggesting that an understanding of the background or history of a gun purchaser is important if firearm crime is to be controlled. The respondent appears to be

indicating that the history of one wishing to purchase a firearm can indicate the likelihood of the individual to commit a firearm crime. This finding from Respondent two appears to be coordinated with observations that were made by Cooper & Smith (2020) those restrictions to firearm ownership after background checks is imperative to the fighting of firearm crimes. Thus, people convicted of a crime and sanctioned for imprisonment for a period exceeding one year; fugitives from justice; drug users and addicts could be among those to be denied purchasing of firearms.

In what appears to be in harmony with the other respondents, *Respondent* seven gave the following statement,

> *I feel that there should be stringent measures put in place in order to make sure that weapons do not fall into the wrong kind of people.* (Respondent 7)

In this response. Respondent seven appears to be suggesting that without effective ways of dealing with purchasing of firearms the battle against firearm crime could be a difficult one. The use of the word, "stringent" seems to be suggesting very strict measures to be applied. This view of Respondent seven appears to be suggesting that the current procedures of gun purchasing might be proving ineffective in avoiding guns from being purchased by criminals. This finding from Respondent could be linking with Ryan (2018) who assert that a strict firearm legislation that limits access to certain types of firearms or precludes certain types of people from acquiring firearms is effective in curbing firearm crimes. Watkins (2017) also highlights on the importance of restricting the purchasing of arms and the need for background checks on those who intend to purchase arms.

4.4.3 Sub-theme 3.2 domestic oriented strategies to mitigate firearm crime

During this study, the researcher also went in to obtain data that also appeared to indicate that some strategies that could be employed in the city of Windhoek to curb firearm violence. Respondent one gave the following statement,

I feel that the police should be given the right to withdraw firearms from risky individuals and keep them somewhere safe until they are convinced that the individuals no longer pose a risk to anyone. Respondent one appears to be suggesting that the police must go through the list of firearm owners in Windhoek and then determine whom the risky individuals among these firearm owners are. After making a determination, the police should then withdraw guns from these risky individuals until such a time these individuals have proved that they no longer pose any risk to anyone. Implied in Respondent one's statement is that in doing so chances of risky individuals committing firearm

crime would be reduced. This approach as advocated by Respondent one appears to be in harmony with what Piehl (2018) posits that legislation should be in place to give police officers the right to repossess weapons from anyone who is considered a threat to other people.

In addition to this *Respondent two* pointed out the need for the law enforcing agents to be accorded the right to, "*inspect the homes of people who purchase firearms so that they assess the safety of firearms in those homes."* Similarly, *Respondent 3 also indicated that parents ought to be taught on how to keep firearms in a safe place where children or anyone can not have access to."* It seems as if these research participants were linking poor storage of firearms to occurrence of firearm crimes. The view of these two Respondents is that, keeping of firearms away from children and inspection of firearm storage in homes could reduce the chances of firearms ending up in the hands of wrong people who might misuse them for firearm crimes. These assertions by the two Respondents appear to harmonise with the findings that were made by Alpers & Wilson (2018) that emphasises on safekeeping of firearms by the law enforcers could be an effective way of mitigating firearm crime.

4.4.3 Sub-theme 3.2 Community oriented strategies

The other theme that appeared to have emerged from the study was the one, which was linked to the community. There was a recurrent view of a need for more law enforcing agents to be in the communities to combat firearm crimes. The following responses appear to be pointing to that effect, *Respondent five*

> *I feel that criminals take advantage of the absence of the police in our communities. There is need for the police force to be more visible in our communities so that they deter criminal activities.*

Respondent six

> *The police should patrol our streets more often. This will make criminals to be afraid of carrying out their activities at night.*

These responses appear to indicate that there could be few police officers making patrols in and around the city of Windhoek. The responses also seem to be indicating that an increase in the patrols being done by the law enforcing agents could help to curb firearm crime activities that are taking place in the city, This view appears to be in agreement with the findings that were made by

Bloom (2017) and Alpers & Wilson (2018) that the visibility of law enforcing agents in communities is always instrumental in mitigating firearm crime in neighbourhoods. In the same vein *Respondent 8,* also suggested that firearm crime could be reduced if the police, "*mounted road blocks and searched for unregistered firearms".* It seems as if the research participants observed that there are few roadblocks in the city. The research participant appears to be convinced that these roadblocks could be effective if they are solely dedicated to the searching of unregistered firearms. The respondent could be suggesting that armed robbers could be carrying unregistered firearms in their cars. This view is also, in agreement with what was revealed in studies by Linkenbach & Stark (2019) that systemic searches by the police could prove effective deterrents in the commission of gunfire violence.

4.4.3 Sub-theme 3.3 national strategies to mitigate firearm crime

In addition to the above sub-theme, the research made findings that seemed to indicate the need for national strategies to mitigate firearm crime in Windhoek. The following responses appeared to be pointing to that effect. *Respondent three* gave the following response

> *The government must make sure that, licenses for the firearms are renewed every now and again and those who fail to do so are taken to task*

The above response from *Respondent three* seems to suggest the need for effective legislation by the central government to help curb firearm crime. Implied in this statement by *Respondent three is* that annual renewal of firearm licenses is likely to make firearm owners accountable to the guns in their possession. Also implied in this view of Respondent three is that annual renewal of gun licenses would make it easier for the law enforcing agents to have knowledge of any stolen or lost firearms. Also implied in *Respondent three*'s statement is that fewer firearms might end up getting stolen as gun owners will be forced to give reasons for their whereabouts when they renew licenses. This view from the respondent appears to be in agreement with Borum & Verhaagen (2017) 's argument that a renewal system helps the law enforcing agents to be able to carry out investigations more effectively, ensures that police officers' safety is enhanced, and discourages theft of firearms, while at the same it helps the police to keep track of stolen firearms.

In addition to this Respondent five also gave the following statement connected to how firearm crimes could be mitigated in Windhoek, "*There must be a law that once a person misuses a firearm then the person will not be allowed to possess a gun for the rest of his or her life.* What this

respondent suggested is that firearm offenders are supposed to lose the privilege of possessing guns for the rest of their lives. Implied in this response is that gun owners would be careful in how they handle their guns due to the fear of never owning a gun for the rest of their lives. This finding from the research appears to be in line with the observations that were made by (Reddy 2018) who posits that strict legislation can reduce firearm crime rate. Similarly, *Respondent six* made the following statement in relation to how firearm crime in Windhoek could be mitigated

> *There must be a law that prohibits people who have a record in dealing with drugs or abusing alcohol or have been engaged in domestic or public violence from purchasing any firearm*

The response above stated the need for a law that prohibits a specific group of people from owning firearms. Respondent six mentioned this group as comprising of drug dealers, alcoholics, and people involved in domestic disputes and public violence. It appears as if Respondent six is convinced that this group of people are likely to misuse firearms. This sentiment appears to be supported by Koper (2018) who posit that drug dealers could be involved in drug conflicts which might force them to use firearms, those abusing alcohol might misuse firearms when they are in a drunken state (Schwab, 2018) and those involved in domestic and public disputes are likely to abuse firearms to settle scores during disputes (Snyder & Sickmund, 2018). Finally, the research had the following finding from *Respondent seven* about how firearm crime in Windhoek could be mitigated

> *The government must ask all those people who are possessing guns illegally to return them to the police. The people returning the firearms must not be arrested.*

The above statement from the respondent appears to be indicating that a lot of firearms that are used for criminal activities are the ones that are being illegally possessed by people. Inferred from this statement is that with such, handing back of illegal firearms to the police there will be fewer illegal firearms in Windhoek, hence fewer firearm crimes. This view from *Respondent Seven* appears to be supported by findings made by (Borum & Verhaagen (2017) that firearm amenities can go a long way in curbing firearm crime.

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter presented and discussed the findings that were made from the research that was carried out. It gave the demography of the research participants and the themes as well as the sub-themes that emerged. The chapter also assessed the findings from the research in light of the literature that

was reviewed. The following chapter presents the conclusions, summary of the study as well as the recommendation.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5. 1 Introduction

This chapter gives the summary of the thesis, the conclusions and recommendations on the research topic, "An investigation into the factors contributing to the increase of firearms crimes in Windhoek in Namibia, 2015 – 2019." The study was guided by the following research objectives

- To examine the factors contributing to the intensification of firearm crimes in Windhoek of Namibia.
- To analyse the impact of firearm crimes in Windhoek of Namibia.
- To find ways in which firearm crimes in Windhoek can be mitigated.

Chapter one

This chapter presents an introduction, statement of the problem, research objectives, and significance of the study, limitation and delimitation of the study

Chapter two

The chapter presented the Social Ecological Theory that was used to guide this study. The literature review also presented the views of different authors on some theories on the causes of firearm crimes. In addition, the chapter also outlined the International, Sub-Saharan Africa and Namibia perspectives on firearm crimes. The role of the United Nations in respect of firearm crimes was also presented under the sub-heading of international perspectives of firearm crime. Literature on the trend of firearm crime in sub Saharan Africa and in Namibia was also presented. This literature review also discussed reasons that have been brought forward on why there has been a general increase in the rate of firearm crimes as well as the impact of firearm crimes on societies and economies. Finally, the chapter concluded with an explanation on what different studies have shown to be effective ways that can be used to combat firearm crimes.

Chapter three

Chapter three showed the research methodology that that was used for this study. In this chapter it is revealed as well, the research philosophy, research design, population, sample and sampling procedure, data collection instruments, and ethical consideration which were used in the study.

Chapter four

This chapter presented and discussed the findings that were made from the research that was conducted. It gave the demography of the research participants, the themes as well as the sub-themes that emerged from this study. The chapter also analysed the findings from the research in light of the literature that was reviewed. This analysis of the findings was merged with what literature revealed. The presentation and analysis of the findings that were made was done under the themes that emerged. The first theme to be presented and analysed was why firearm crimes are taking place in Windhoek of Namibia. The second theme was determining the impact of firearm crimes in Windhoek and the third one was on strategies that can be used to deal with firearm crimes in Windhoek.

5.2 Conclusions

The following conclusions are made from this research that was based on the topic, an investigation into the factors contributing to the increase of firearms crimes in Windhoek. These conclusions, which are being made, were arrived at after comparing findings that were made from this study with other findings that were made from similar researches as revealed by the literature that was reviewed.

The following conclusions are drawn from findings that were made on the level of understanding the research participants on what firearm crime is. The respondents knew what firearm crime was all about. They knew that firearm crime involved more than committing injury with a gun to someone or committing of homicide. The respondents knew that even the mere threatening to kill someone with a firearm constituted firearm crime. The research participants thus had a good understanding of firearm crime and were thus able to give meaningful contributions towards the study.

The first theme that emerged from the study was on the factors that are contributing to the intensification of firearm crime in Windhoek. First from the data that was obtained and analysed it can be safely concluded that the cheating of couples in relationships is causing firearm crime that is taking place in Windhoek. Cheating in relationships often leads to frustration, disappointment and quarrels between couples. There is no anger management on the part of the

aggrieved parties. This lack of anger management is thus leading the offended parties to commit homicide on the other partners. Firearm crime in Windhoek is also being caused by lack of problem solving skills between people. This is often taking place in relationships. A lack of counselling on how couples should solve problems pertaining to their relationships is resulting in men settling their scores against their partners whom they feel would have disappointed them. In addition to this, it is also concluded that some of the acts of firearm crime taking place in Windhoek are a result of alcohol and drug abuse. The abuse of alcohol and drugs, which makes people, lose their sense of judgement when they engage in arguments with others is also responsible for the firearm crimes taking place in Windhoek. The violent movies that people, especially young children are watching are also responsible for the increase in firearm crime.

Linked to the movies which people are being exposed to, is the social media that is influencing people into committing firearm crimes. People in Windhoek who have an inclination towards firearm crime are being emboldened to committing those firearm crimes by the violent firearm crime videos, which are circulated on the social media. In addition to the way that the media is reporting violent firearm criminal behaviour in a way that portrays the perpetrators, appear like heroes and villains. This is resulting in firearm crime appear less apprehensive. Those committing firearm crimes, such as passion killing of spouses with guns, are being made to appear as heroes and not villains. From the findings that were made from this study, it can also be concluded that adults who grew up in areas of the city where violence and fighting is common are causing some acts of firearm crimes in Windhoek.

It is therefore the acceptance of fighting and violence as a normal thing that is normal for one to survive that is causing the increase in the rate of firearm crimes in Windhoek. Furthermore, lessons, which are learnt in dysfunctional homes where parents are always fighting, are contributing towards the misuse of firearm in Windhoek, by these children when they become adults. It is a question of charity begins at home. In addition, the way parents raise their children is making these very children to engage in firearm crimes as they are turning into adults. Parents are contributing towards the misuse of firearms by their children through the way they are raising them. Parents who are either too strict or too liberal are making children to grow up as stubborn and rebellious which in the end is making these children to grow up into adults who are committing firearm crime in Windhoek. It is concluded that, the wrong kind of behaviour, that parents are modelling before

their children, whereby the parents are using firearm to commit crime is making the children grow up with the same attitude, hence the increase in the rate of firearm crimes in Windhoek.

It is also concluded that the increase of firearm crime in Windhoek is also because of firearms that are being stolen. Criminals are finding it easy to commit armed robberies using firearms that were stolen and which they possess illegally. The irresponsibility of gun owners in the way they are storing guns in their homes and carrying them in their cars is also causing these weapons to be stolen, thus contributing towards an increase in firearm crime in Windhoek. It is also concluded that the increase in firearm crime is also in part because schools in Windhoek are not actively playing their part in educating children on the dangers of engaging in firearm crimes. The schools are not identifying and counselling children who are inclined towards committing firearm crimes.

This is causing children to leave schools with aggressive tendencies, which are making them engage in firearm crimes. Furthermore, it is concluded that the poverty levels in some poor communities, in which most young people are growing up in is driving them to take part in firearm crimes such as armed robberies and carjacking . Similarly, lack of employment is also causing an increase in firearm crimes in Windhoek, because some unemployed youths are feeling that the only way out of the poverty trap is with firearms. In addition, the increase in firearm crime in Windhoek is being caused by lack of recreational facilities for young, unemployed youths. The young people end up engaging in drug pedalling which is making them feel the necessity of carrying around firearms, which eventually are being used in firearm crimes. Finally, the increase in the rate of firearm crime is being caused by the fact that firearm crime is being witnessed everywhere and this is making the committing of firearm crime appear to be normal to those who are perpetrating it.

The second objectives of this study was to analyse the impact of firearm crimes in Windhoek, Namibia. The following conclusions based on findings from this research are therefore made. This study can safely conclude that people in Windhoek are living under fear of firearm crime. Some people who are committing firearm crime, such as passion shooting of their spouses often end up committing suicide. It is also concluded that, firearm crime in Namibia is resulting in surviving victims having to carry injuries throughout their lives. In addition to this, firearm crime in Windhoek is making some to be disabled and to end up being dependent on other people for a

living. A sense of depression and hopelessness is being experienced by that experiencing firearm crime. Based on findings from this study, it is safely concluded that firearm crime in Windhoek is ripping families apart, as children whose mothers are mostly victims of domestic firearm violence are being left without anyone to take care of them.

The increase in the rate of firearm crimes in Windhoek is making motorists afraid of driving in the city at night. It is also concluded that the intensification of firearm crime in Windhoek is affecting residents by making them wonder who might be the next victim of firearm crimes. Those attending firearm crime scenes and witnessing the victims of firearm crime often find it difficult to come to terms with the experiences of seeing the injured or murdered firearm crime victims. The intensification of firearm crime is making people feel that the law enforcing agents are not doing enough to protect the people. There is also a sense of resignation by people as they are feeling that the battle against firearm crime is slowly being lost. Some residents in the city are thus being forced to purchase firearms for personal protection.

The intensification of firearm crime is also making most shops in Windhoek fearful of operating late into the night, out of fear of being attacked by armed robbers. Not operating late into the late is causing some shops not to maximise their profits. In addition, few businesses are opening up in areas of the city where firearm violence is reportedly high. The opening up of few businesses in firearm crime prone areas of the city is increasing unemployment rate and poverty in these places. Firearm crime is causing money to be diverted from development projects in the city to the combatting of firearm crime. The targeting of rich business people is causing the loss of people who are contributing to the development of the economy.

The final objective of this study was to find out ways in which firearm crimes in Windhoek can be mitigated. The following conclusions are therefore made on how firearm crimes in Windhoek can be mitigated. The number of police officers moving around the city especially at night is not enough. It is concluded that an increase in the number of these law-enforcing agents patrolling areas in the city where crime is rife can result in the mitigation of firearm crime. It is also concluded that training of police officers on how to identify gun owners who are likely to cause firearm crime can go a long way in mitigating firearm crime in Windhoek. Firearm crime in Windhoek can also

be mitigated if counsellors and doctors who are working with patients mentally are trained to find out if their mentally ill patients have a tendency to commit any firearm crime. Under circumstances where mental health practitioners realise that their gun owning patients are likely to commit firearm crime, appropriate action with the help of law enforcing agents should be taken to ensure that these patients do not have access to a firearm. Firearm crime in Windhoek can also be reduced if the police are trained on how to advise people who are in dispute and are in possession of firearms on how to resolve their problems without resorting to the use of firearms. Equally, psychologists in Windhoek can help in the fight against firearm crime, if they are trained on how to identify feelings of anger, depression, despondency and other mental problems, which are likely to result in their patients committing firearm crime.

Similarly, it is concluded that firearm crime in Windhoek can be mitigated if authorities that are responsible for the selling of firearms carry out effective check of the history of people intending to buy firearms so that they ascertain any likelihood of misusing firearms. It is also concluded that putting in place of strict measures to ensure that weapons that are bought do not fall into the hands of wrong people can go a long way in helping curb firearm crime in Windhoek. It is also concluded that giving the police authority to withdraw firearms from any individuals deemed to be risky and storing these weapons at a safe place can help mitigate firearm crimes. These individuals can only be given back their firearms once it is determined that they cease to pose a risk to anyone. It is also safely, concluded that firearm crimes in Windhoek can be reduced by empowering the police to inspect the homes of firearm owners to inspect how safely the firearm are being stored. In addition, it is concluded that firearm crime in Windhoek can be reduced by teaching gun owners on how to properly keep their firearms safely so that they are not stolen. More to this, the mounting of roadblocks aimed at searching unregistered firearms in and around Windhoek can help in the fight against firearm crimes. Equally, the government of Namibia can help reduce firearm crime violence in Windhoek by insisting on a more regular renewal of firearm licenses by gun owners. Taking to task all those who fail to renew gun licenses is also effective in reducing firearm crime in the city. Furthermore, a permanent withdrawal of firearms from those found guilty of misusing firearms is another effective way of reducing firearm crimes in Windhoek. It is also concluded that prohibiting people who have a record of dealing in drugs, abusing alcohol and are involved in domestic disputes from purchasing arms can help in reducing firearm crimes in Windhoek. Finally,

the government can help in the fight against firearm crimes by issuing an amnesty on people who are illegally possessing firearms.

This study on the investigation into the factors contributing to the increase of firearm crimes in Windhoek concludes that individual, family, social and economic factors are all responsible for the increase of firearm crimes in Windhoek. The study also concludes that the increase of firearm crimes is affecting resident's families, and the communities and businesses activities in Windhoek. The following are therefore recommendations, on measures that should be put in place in order to mitigate firearm crimes in Windhoek.

5.3 Recommendations

The findings from this study and related literature indicate that the mitigation of firearm crime should be a priority task by central as well as local government authorities such as Windhoek Municipality. Without a concerted effort towards the fight against firearm, crime in the city of Windhoek is likely to continue seeing its socio-economic fabric being torn apart. The central government authority of Namibia, through the Ministry of Home Affairs, should therefore improve the number of patrols in and around. These patrols especially if done at night will frighten firearm crime offenders hence reduce firearm crime in Windhoek. The law enforcing officers should be trained on how to identify gun owners who are inclined towards committing firearm crime. At the same time, the state police department in Windhoek must work closely with counsellors and doctors to find out how to withdraw firearms from gun owning, mentally ill patients who show a tendency to commit any firearm crime. In addition, the police should be trained on how to counsel people in disputes so that they do not end up resorting to the use of firearms.

Furthermore, gun-issuing authorities should carry out effective check-ups of the history of people intending to buy firearms so that firearms do not end up in the hands of criminal minded people. Equally important, the police should be given authority to withdraw firearms from any risky individuals such as mentally ill patients, alcoholics, people involved in family disputes and public violence, from committing firearm crime. The police should also be given authority to inspect how gun owners are keeping their firearms to reduce the theft of firearms. The state police should mount roadblocks in Windhoek aimed at searching for illegal firearms in cars. Such roadblocks will help

in stopping the movement of firearms meant for criminal activities by motorists. This in turn will help to reduce the occurrence firearm crime.

In addition, the government of Namibia should insist on regular renewal of licenses by gun owners. The regular renewal of gun licenses will make gun owners to be more responsible in how they store their weapons, as well help the police to track all lost and stolen firearms this will help to reduce firearm crimes because some firearms will be tracked and found before they are used in firearm crimes. More important, the government should offer amnesty to people who are in possession of firearms illegally. Such an amnesty will reduce the number of illegal firearms in circulation in Windhoek, which in turn will reduce the number of firearms that are likely to be used in the committing of firearm crimes. Implementation of these recommendations is envisaged to help in the combatting of firearm crime in the city of Windhoek.

5.4 Need for further research

In closing, this study was focused on factors contributing to the intensification of firearm crimes in the Windhoek of Namibia, 2015-2019. This was a localized research and hence the findings from the study ought to be authenticated by the same study being carried out in other regions. At the same time, there is a need for further study to be carried out using a different methodology other than the qualitative one that was used in this study.

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Interview respondents should be presented in the reference list, follow guidelines of presenting these.

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6. APPENDICES

6.1 APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Please Note:

This interview schedule is going to uphold all the ethical principles, which include your right to privacy, right to answer or not to answer any of the questions confidentiality, anonymity, and your free consent, welfare during and after this session as well as your right to withdraw from the interview at any time of the session. All information will only be used for studying the topic:

An investigation into the factors contributing to firearm crimes in Windhoek, from 2015-2020

The interview is divided into 4 sessions and no answer will be deemed wrong or right

Session 1: Demographic information

1.1 Which age group do you fall in?

20-29 [ ] 30-39 [ ] 40-49 [ ] 50-60 [ ]

1.2 What is your current position at work?

……
…

1.3 How many years of experience do you have in your current field?

……
……1.4 Of your years of experience in education how many of those have you worked in the Windhoek?

……
……

Session 2. To identify reasons for firearm crimes that are taking place in the Windhoek of Namibia

2.1 What is your understanding of the term firearm crimes?

2. 2. In your own opinion what are the reasons for the occurrence of firearm crimes in the city?

Session 3. To determine the impact of firearm crimes in the Windhoek of Namibia

3.1 To what level do you feel that firearm crime is significant in the city of Khomas?

Very high [ ] high level [ ] low level [ ] very low level [ ]

3.2 What are the impacts of firearm crime on the city of Khomas?

Session 4. To find ways in which firearm crimes in Windhoek can be dealt with

4.1 Do you feel that a firearm crime in Windhoek can be dealt with?

Strongly Agree [ ] Agree [ ] Disagree [ ] Strongly Disagree [ ] Not sure [ ]

4.2 Explain various strategies in which firearm crimes in Windhoek can be dealt with

6.2 Appendix B Permission letter from UNAM

11th May, 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH

Research is an integral part of postgraduate studies at the University of Namibia (UNAM). It is carried out in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Postgraduate degrees. Against this background, I write to kindly request your permission to allow **Dusken K Munzenze** (Student number : **200239503**) who is completing his/her Master of Security Studies (MASSS) degree at the School of Military Science, UNAM, carry out studies in your facility.

The title of the study is, ***An Investigation into the factors contributing to the firearm crimes in Khomas region from 2015- 2019.*** The student will use the methods of questionnaire and interview to collect data from stakeholders. The data collected will be used specifically for academic purposes and will not be passed on to a third party in accordance with research ethics and UNAM's confidentiality policy.

It would be highly appreciated if your good office would facilitate the student's study by granting him permission to carry out his/her study in your organisation. I thank you for your continued support and kind consideration of our request.

Yours Sincerely

Dr. Iroanya Richard Obinna
Acting Associate Dean
School of Military Science
University of Namibia, Windhoek

6.3 Appendix C: Certificate of English Editing

CERTIFICATE OF ENGLISH EDITING

This certificate serves to confirm that the document listed below has been professionally edited for language and related issues by
Precise Communications

Document Title

An investigation into the factors contributing to the increase of firearm crimes in Windhoek, Namibia (2015-2019)

Author(s)

DUSKEN K MUNZENZE

R NYANGO
Chief Editor

00121

10 NOVEMBER 2021
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