An examination of a sense of entitlement in violent men: Violence towards others and the self

Sofia Fisher

BA (Hons)

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School of Law/ School of Psychology
Murdoch University
Western Australia

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Declaration

This thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any other university and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except when due reference is made in the text.

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Sofia Fisher

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Publications from this Thesis

Sections of this thesis have already been presented as a book chapter, journal articles, conference paper and poster. They are as follows:

Book Chapter:


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Conference paper:


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Abstract

This body of work examines the concept of an inflated sense of entitlement, the modern term for a concept that can be traced back to Plato in 360 BCE (Before Christian Era). Although the concept is advanced and examined in philosophical terms, Plato’s work is also considered to be one of the first and most comprehensive psychological theories of human motivation. A sense of entitlement is frequently referred to in contemporary literature, and yet there has been a lack of investigations into the nature of entitlement and how it operates in violent men. This investigation set out to rectify the deficiency by examining the concept through four studies. The global purpose of this thesis is to determine if an inflated sense of entitlement is related to both violent offending and self-harming behaviour.

The first study was designed to refine a definition of an inflated sense of entitlement for violent offenders and to determine if there was a qualitative difference in this characteristic between violent offenders and male members of the general public. The study examined twelve domains used to describe an inflated sense of entitlement. It also identified two main themes which were an action theme and an experiential theme. The action theme included actions that were likely to be elicited when an inflated sense of entitlement was violated. These actions were assault, confrontation and rejection of others. This was particularly so when the domains of anger, respect, power, obedience from subordinates and obedience from family and friends were violated. The experiential theme included emotions and cognition and whether these were expressed in an outward direction towards others or inwardly towards the self.

The second study was conducted on archival material from a prison database. It examined the self-harming behaviour of offenders currently incarcerated in Western Australia (WA). This study was conducted to test the assumption that violent offenders are more likely to self-harm than non-violent offenders, using a current cohort. It was revealed that violent offenders self-harm at a far higher rate than incarcerated non-violent offenders. Of the self-harming offenders, nine out of ten were violent offenders. It was also found that violent offenders were far less likely to have warnings of potential self-harm on the prison database than non-violent offenders.
The third study involved the construction and validation of the Sense of Entitlement Questionnaire (SOEQ) on a student population. The purpose of this study was to enable the measurement of an inflated sense of entitlement in violent men. The action themes and the domains from the first study formed the basis of the questions. This scale had sound psychometric properties and revealed two statistical factors indicating both attitude and behaviour subscales. Further investigations found differences in levels of an inflated sense of entitlement in terms of age and sex.

The fourth study was the administration of the SOEQ to violent and non-violent, as well as self-harming and non-self harming, incarcerated offenders. This was to establish the level of an inflated sense of entitlement in violent men as well as to establish the level of an inflated sense of entitlement in self-harming offenders. It was found that violent men have an inflated sense of entitlement in both attitude and behaviour. If their inflated sense of entitlement was violated then violence was most likely their first choice. This was particularly likely when the respect, power, forgiveness and anger domains were involved. When examining self-harming behaviour and entitlement, this study found a difference in attitude only.

This body of work demonstrated that an inflated sense of entitlement is related both to violent offending and self-harming behaviour. Through these investigations different aspects of an inflated sense of entitlement were identified, which included a strong desire for respect, power, admiration and status, as well as a profound aversion to feelings of shame, disrespect and humiliation. A violation of an inflated sense of entitlement has the capacity to end in violent behaviour towards others and harm towards the self. These findings show how an inflated sense of entitlement meets two of the three criteria required to qualify as a criminogenic need: that is, that the characteristic has the ability to distinguish non-criminal from criminal behaviour and has the ability to be measured. This opens the way for further research to investigate the third criterion required to qualify for a criminogenic need, which is whether an inflated sense of entitlement can be changed.
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Presentation Style

To assist with the interpretation of this thesis it is necessary to provide an explanation of the presentation style. This thesis consists of a series of four studies with each chapter consisting of a single study. However, for ease of reading, only one reference list is provided at the end of this thesis. APA 5th edition was used.
Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Overview

The opening chapter of this thesis provides a brief account of the historical development of the concept of an inflated sense of entitlement and then examines contemporary psychological literature. Until now an inflated sense of entitlement has only been dealt with in a peripheral manner and this thesis sets out to rectify the insufficiency. It is argued throughout this chapter that an inflated sense of entitlement is an important criminogenic need that deserves far greater attention than it currently receives. It is also argued that violent offenders have an inflated sense of entitlement, which motivates them to violate others, and that an inflated sense of entitlement has the capacity to propel some offenders to turn their anger against themselves. The over-arching aim of this thesis is to investigate an inflated sense of entitlement and how it relates to violent and self-harming behaviour. A theoretical model of an inflated sense of entitlement is presented in this introduction to illustrate how it consists of a set of attitudes as well as a set of behaviours. The model is then followed by the rationale for the four separate studies that have been designed for this investigation. To begin with key constructs will be defined. This will be followed by an historical overview of the origins of an inflated sense of entitlement.
1.2 Violence and Violent Offender Treatment

Recently, it has been suggested that criminogenic needs are likely to underpin both offending behaviour and self-harming behaviour (Fisher, Hall, & Beven, 2008; Hall, Fisher, & Dear, 2006). This introduction will include the current treatment strategies for offenders and the definition of criminogenic needs. To begin with, however, it is necessary to define some of the core concepts referred to throughout this thesis: aggression, hostility and violence.

When attempting to define and measure anti-social behaviour difficulties soon arise, partly due to the variation of values and standards both within and between various groups (Budd & Simms, 2001). As Megargee and Hokanson (1970) comment, there are as many theories of aggression as there are points of view, all stemming from a variety of different disciplines. Locating clear definitions in the literature has also been difficult. A brief discussion on selected definitions of aggression, hostility and violence will be provided in this section.

The common understanding of the term aggression, according to Gottfredson and Hirschi (1993), is that “aggression connotes unprovoked, senseless, or unjustifiable violence or threat of violence” (p.52). Anderson and Bushman (2002) defined human aggression as “any behavior directed toward another individual that is carried out with the proximate (immediate) intent to cause harm (p. 28, italics in original). Aggression has also been defined by other researchers as behaviour that is intended to inflict pain which may be physical or psychological, such as humiliation or degradation of another (Averil, 1982; Bandurra 1973; Hamberger & Guse, 2002). Finman and Berkowitz (1989) argue that anger is not necessarily required for aggressive behaviour to occur. For instance, instrumental aggression is described as a premeditated and calculated act that is motivated by a goal other than injury to a
person or property (Buss, 1961; Feshback, 1964). However, some researchers argue that the dichotomy between instrumental or cold aggression and hostile or hot aggression is blurred due to situations where multiple motives may be elicited during the course of an incident (Bushman & Anderson, 2001; Indermaur, 2001).

Notwithstanding the debate on instrumental or hostile aggression, researchers seem to agree that the key descriptors for aggression appear to be actions to cause physical and psychological injury motivated by humiliation and anger (Averil, 1982; Bandurra, 1973; Hamberger & Guse, 2002).

When examining hostility, Finman and Berkowitz (1989) defined it as a cognitive construct that comprises unfavourable judgments of another. As negative cognitive judgments are consciously engaged they have the capacity to increase the propulsion of angry emotions towards violent behaviour (Finman & Berkowitz, 1989). However, Copello and Tata (1990) argue that this definition should be extended to include the tendency to make violent threats towards another. Hart and Joubert (1996) also defined hostility as a behavioural response.

Although there is a wide range of definitions of violence, according to Hart (1998), there is no simple way to define violence. Some researchers maintain that there is an immediacy that differentiates aggression from violence (Bushman & Anderson, 2001; Scott, 1977). For example, Scott (1977) defines violence as “aggression concentrated into a brief time” (p.128). Other researchers do not make that distinction and report on immediacy as precursor of the intent to harm. For instance, Bushman and Anderson (2001) define aggression as a behaviour that is undertaken with the “immediate intent to cause harm” (p.274). There appears to be no general agreement to differentiate aggression and violence and both terms seem to be used interchangeably. However, “violent crime” has been clearly defined. Violent
crime against a person has been defined as either a threat or as actual use of force against another (Heilbrun, 1982). Violent crimes include murder, manslaughter, sexual assault, physical assault and robbery with violence (Heilbrun, 1982).

Violent behaviour has been, and remains, a persistent problem. One reason for this is because many violent offenders are highly resistant to change. Many violent offenders are reluctant to admit to any offending behaviour or to take responsibility for their actions (Polaschek & Reynolds, 2000). In addition, violent offenders are particularly reluctant to make any firm commitment towards pro-social behaviour (Polaschek & Reynolds, 2000). There have been a variety of treatments suggested as strategies to reduce violent offending, with the most recent being the introduction of a focus on criminogenic needs (Andrews, Bonta, & Hoge, 1990).

Criminogenic needs are the anti-social, pro-criminal factors that are directly related to offending (Andrews, Bonta et al., 1990; Andrews, Zinger et al., 1990; McGuire, 2000). Criminogenic needs have been identified as dynamic factors that need to be addressed in offender treatment programs. In brief, there are three criteria required to qualify as a criminogenic need (Bonta, 1996). The first criterion is that a characteristic is amenable to change (Bonta, 1996). The second criterion is that the characteristic has the ability to distinguish non-criminal from criminal behaviour and the third criterion is that the characteristic must have the ability to be measured in order to assess treatment gains (Bonta, 1996). Criminogenic needs will be identified and discussed throughout this thesis.

Incarcerated violent offenders have been identified as a group more likely to suicide or self-harm than non-violent offenders (Liebling 1992; Dear, Thomson, Hall, & Howells, 1998a). Although many self-harming and suicidal offenders may exhibit classic symptom of depression, others may not. When reporting on self-harm
in prisons, Hall et al. (2006) speculated that there are four pathways to self-harm, one of which is “anger masking depression”. According to Hall et al. (2006) this outward expression is considered to be a cover-up because exhibiting the symptoms of classical depression symptoms is likely to be seen by others as “weak”. Being seen as weak in the prison setting is something violent offenders will avoid at all costs. Therefore, violent offenders may present with atypical symptoms (see the section on Learned Helplessness - 1.6.2 in this chapter, for a more comprehensive discussion on this topic).

One of the aims of this thesis is to demonstrate that an inflated sense of entitlement has the capacity to qualify as a criminogenic need that may also be used to assess treatment readiness for violent offenders. However, to understand the construct of an inflated sense of entitlement it is useful to trace its development.

1.3 Entitlement from Antiquity

In 360 B.C.E, Plato introduced the construct of an inflated sense of entitlement and most importantly, linked this concept with anti-social behaviour (Jowett, 2005: translator). Pappas (1995) considered Plato’s construct to be one of the first psychological theories of human motivation. Rowe (1984) and Lorenz (2006) subsequently commented that his theory was the most advanced at the time. Although Plato’s theory demonstrates acute psychological insight, it has been translated from the philosophical language of that era.

The concept of an inflated sense of entitlement was originally referred to in Book IV of Plato’s “The Republic” (360 B.C.E., Jowett, 2005: translator). Plato had devoted his life to the discovery of the values that would be necessary to provide and sustain a just society (Averill, 1982). A just society, and subsequently a just individual, was considered to be righteous, honourable and upright (Nettleship,
According to Plato, an inflated sense of entitlement was a characteristic which is inconsistent with a just individual.

Plato’s previous experience with the tyrant Dionysius appears to have played a significant part in the construction of an inflated sense of entitlement. Dionysius was a brutal army officer with an overblown sense of his own importance (Strathern, 1996). Following an argument with Dionysius, Plato insulted Dionysius and an incensed Dionysius had Plato imprisoned and shipped back to his birthplace to be sold as a slave (Strathern, 1996). The concept of an inflated sense of entitlement developed as a result of Plato’s philosophical reflections on the way he was treated by Dionysius.

Plato’s use of language is pre-scientific, yet lays the foundation to introduce the concept of an inflated sense of entitlement by reporting on the importance of the soul. Plato described the soul as comprising three interrelating parts (Strathern, 1996). The notion of a “just soul” was that it was viewed as the psyche, or spirituality, which was considered to be a pre-requisite of right living or morality (Rowe, 1984). Plato considered morality to be the core of human existence and morality could be achieved when spiritual concerns were given precedence over material gain (Rowe, 1984). Plato expanded on this notion by explaining that a “just-souled” individual is considered to act in a way that not only demonstrates ethical principles, but works to safeguard their moral standing in their community (Pappas, 1995). According to Plato, if one’s moral standing is not safeguarded an individual may sink to the lowest depths of humanity, which would then allow a tyrant personality to emerge (Nettleship, 1958, p.300). In considering violent behaviour, referred to as human evil, Plato noted the importance of an inflated sense of...
entitlement, among other factors that contribute to violence (Nettleship, 1958). Next, Plato’s tripartite theory for living a “just life” is introduced.

1.3.1 Plato’s Three Parts of the Soul

Plato suggested that the soul consisted of three parts, named the desiring, the spirited and the rational parts of the soul (Pappas, 1995). When each of these parts is working in harmony then justice or right living can prevail (Nettleship, 1958). An individual who is in harmony with his soul can expect to be wise, noble and satisfied (Pappas, 1995).

According to Plato’s theory, individuals’ experience an ongoing internal conflict that is underpinned by the competing impulses of desire, spirit and reason (Rowe, 1984). Plato described the “desiring” part of the soul to be one that is seeking to maintain temperate or self-disciplined behaviour (360 B.C.E., Jowett, 2005: translator). Should the desiring part become disengaged then the capacity for self-control and self-discipline will be compromised. The “spirited” part of the soul was described by Plato as the part that is seeking recognition and respect (360 B.C.E., Jowett, 2005: translator). Should the spirited part of the soul be thwarted in some way then feelings of shame, ridicule and humiliation may result. This may then impact on that which Plato calls the “rational” part of the soul. The rational part of the soul has the ability to make rational decisions and show good judgment. However, if the rational part of the soul is overwhelmed by the desiring and spirited parts, the rational part of the soul will be unable to make sound pro-social decisions. This would result in all three parts of the soul being compromised. It is at this point that the soul is said to sink to such dangerous depths of lawless that a man may commit any crime known to humanity (Nettleship, 1958).
A very simple, yet modern day, illustration put forward by Pappas (1995) is to consider the soul as analogous to parts of a car, as every part is required to work harmoniously for the car to run smoothly.

1.3.2 Freud’s Development of Plato’s Treatise

Plato’s original analysis strongly influenced Freud (Gaylin, 2003). According to Gaylin (2003), it was Freud who applied Plato’s philosophical treatises to scientific examination. In brief, Freud’s (1961a) personality constructs consist of the id that is said to consist of impulses that are modulated though the ego. The ego then provides direction to the super-ego (Freud, 1961b). A strong super-ego may then provide the motivation towards pro-social behaviour. However, if the impulses from the id are not modulated through the ego and the ego is unable to function effectively, then the super-ego is required to control the impulses from the id without the help of the ego. If the super-ego is strong then control of the id may be enacted. However, if the super-ego is weak, then the crude impulses of the id may overwhelm the super-ego resulting in anti-social behaviour.

The next section will explore Plato’s tripartite theory, which, notwithstanding the contemporary translation, remains somewhat philosophical rather than psychological. Each part of Plato’s tripartite theory will then be compared to Freud’s tripartite theory. The aim of these comparisons is to provide a comprehensive illustration of Plato’s pre-scientific tripartite theory, to demonstrate the influence Plato had on Freud and the continuing relevance of this theory more than 2000 years later.

Freud’s tripartite personality constructs of the id, ego and super ego are analogous to Plato’s three parts of the soul (Gaylin, 2003; Pappas, 1995; Rowe, 1984). Freud’s (1961a) “id” is analogous to Plato’s “desiring” part of the soul.
According to Freud (1961b), individuals said to have an inefficient or ineffective ego will have difficulty controlling the id. In Plato’s terms, difficulty controlling the id is considered to be difficulty in controlling desire. The desiring part of the soul is considered to be the pleasure loving part of the soul, with temperance (σωφροσύ) or self-mastery as the virtue of this part of the soul (Plato, 360 B.C.E., Jowett, 2005: translator; Nettleship, 1958). Self-mastery in contemporary language is equivalent to conforming to social boundaries or limits (Young, 1994). Self-mastery is considered to be lacking in individuals with impaired limits (Young, 1994) or impulsivity (Raskin & Terry, 1988). Impulsivity is seen as the direct opposite to that which Plato referred to as self-mastery. Impulsivity is considered to be one of the most robust predictors of offending behaviour (Farrington, 2002). According to Plato’s theory, if self-mastery becomes disengaged this may lead to the individual exhibiting excessive arrogance, pride, self-indulgence and self-deception (Nettleship, 1958). That is, self-interested behaviour. This may then result in some individuals treating others with disrespect, disdain and contempt that may easily escalate to violent behaviour (Lorenz, 2006).

Freud’s (1961a) ego is analogous to Plato’s spirited part of the soul. When explaining the functional importance of the ego, Freud (1961a) provided the analogy of a horse and its rider to illustrate his position.

Often a rider, if he is not to be parted from his horse, is obliged to guide it where it wants to go; so in the same way the ego is in the habit of transforming the id’s will into action as if it were its own. (p.25)

As previously stated, the function of the ego is to transform the id into action. It is the ego’s purpose to act as an ally to the super-ego and assist in any conflict that may arise between the super-ego and the id. In terms of Plato’s theory, the function
of the spirited part of the soul is to transform the desiring part of the soul into action. The spirited part of the soul’s purpose, using Freud’s (1961a) terminology, is to act as an ally to the rational part of the soul, in order to assist in any conflict that may arise between the rational part of the soul and the desiring part of the soul (Lorenz, 2006). The spirited part of the soul is considered to be the noble or honour-loving part of the soul, with courage (άνδρεία) as the virtue of this part of the soul (Plato, 360 B.C.E., Jowett, 2005: translator; Nettleship, 1958). The function of the spirited part of the soul is to maximise one’s own self-respect through seeking recognition and respect from others (Plato, 360 B.C.E., Jowett, 2005: translator; Nettleship, 1958). The spirited part of the soul is also referred to as the “warrior class” who seek both honour and status (Nettleship, 1958). If the spirited part of the soul does not transform the energy of the desiring part of the soul into pro-social action the result may be dysfunctional action.

Whilst this breakdown into dysfunctional behaviour describes Plato’s experience of Dionysius, it also appears analogous to the descriptions of an inflated sense of entitlement in the contemporary literature. For instance, in contemporary language an inflated sense of entitlement has been described as a right to receive undeserved respect (Beck, 2000), special treatment (American Psychiatric Association, 2000), special favours (Choca, 1998), privileges (Walters, 1995a, 1996), as well as being characterised by arrogance and power (Raskin & Terry, 1988) and status (Millon, 1981). Should any of these expectations or self-evaluations be thwarted or violated then dysfunctional behaviour may be the end result.

When an individual’s inflated sense of entitlement has been violated the spirited part of the soul is said to come into play (Nettleship, 1958). This would be particularly problematic for individuals with an inflated sense of entitlement. For
instance, if the expected recognition, honour and status have not been forthcoming, the spirited part may become dominant (Nettleship, 1958). This sets the scene for disintegration of the “just soul”, which may then result in a low level of moral functioning (Nettleship, 1958). Several contemporary researchers have reported that when such expectations are thwarted, shame and humiliation may be elicited that may then result in anti-social behaviour in order to restore status and honour (Felson & Tedeschi, 1993; Gilligan, 1996; Levi & Maguire, 2002; Polk, 1995). What happens when this inflated sense of entitlement is violated is the fundamental concern of this thesis.

Freud’s (1961b) super-ego is analogous to Plato’s rational part of the soul. Freud described the super-conscious mind as the “super-ego”. According to Freud (1961b), when an individual is acting impulsively, the id may dominate both the ego and the super-ego. Similarly, in Plato’s terms, when self-mastery is not upheld and self-control is abandoned, the desiring part of the soul may dominate both the spirited part and the reasoning part of the soul (Lorenz, 2006; Nettleship, 1958).

In Plato’s theory the rational part of the soul is considered to be the knowledge loving part of the soul with wisdom (σοφία) as the virtue of this part of the soul (360 B.C.E., Jowett, 2005: translator; Nettleship, 1958). Wisdom is described as having the ability to be discreet, to have good sense, to be able to make sound decisions and to show good judgment (Plato, 360 B.C.E., Jowett, 2005: translator; Nettleship, 1958).

In contemporary theory, poor decisions and poor judgment may quickly lead to anger (Beck, 2000), hostility (Raskin & Terry, 1988) and vengeance (Levin, 1993). Some individuals may harbour unrealistically favourable global self-evaluations which may result in justifications for their anti-social behaviour (Baumeister, Smart,
& Boden, 1996). These justifications can neutralise the pro-social values which may otherwise inhibit anti-social behaviour (Sykes & Matza, 1957). Thus, should an inflated sense of entitlement be violated, by goals being thwarted or the ego being threatened, good sense or good judgment is likely to be suspended and violent behaviour may then result.

In Plato’s terms, with the three virtues of temperance, courage and wisdom disengaged, the cardinal virtue of justice is abandoned, leaving only a tyrannical and insatiable soul that is impossible to satisfy (Lorenz, 2006; Nettleship, 1958).

The focus of this thesis will now move to exploring and defining the contemporary understanding of an inflated sense of entitlement; however, Plato’s original construct will be referred to from time to time throughout this thesis.

1.4 Defining an Inflated Sense of Entitlement in Contemporary Terms

These ideas on human motivation have continued to be developed; however, researchers have moved away from Freud’s original premise that conflict was underpinned by id drives. Researchers have moved toward an understanding that psychic distress is underpinned by conflict in regard to “power, aggression, authority, anger, guilt, humiliation, or pride” (Gaylin, 2003, p.99). A sense of entitlement may underpin each of these areas of psychic conflict; however, this may depend on precisely how an inflated sense of entitlement is defined.

1.4.1 Current Definitions of an Inflated Sense of Entitlement

A search of the current literature identified almost fifty different definitions of a sense of entitlement. These descriptions have been collated here into four loosely grouped areas in order to illustrate their wide and varied scope (see Table 1.1).
Table 1.1 *Definitions of Entitlement with References using Four Main Categories*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definitions</th>
<th>References</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expecting reverence</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aggression</td>
<td>Novaco (1997)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anger</td>
<td>Monahan (1981)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulties dealing with defeat</td>
<td>Young (1994)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Favourable global evaluation</td>
<td>Baumeister, Smart, &amp; Boden (1996)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low frustration tolerance</td>
<td>Jenkins (1990)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low impulse control and toughness</td>
<td>Raskin &amp; Terry (1988)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rage</td>
<td>Bishop &amp; Lane (2002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unworthiness of self</td>
<td>Raskin &amp; Terry (1988)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Control over others</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambitiousness and arrogance</td>
<td>Raskin &amp; Terry (1988)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deference</td>
<td>Beck (2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domination and need for power</td>
<td>Raskin &amp; Terry (1988)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generalised control</td>
<td>Gresswell (2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Success and influence</td>
<td>Jenkins (1990)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unrealistic expectations</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ending shame and guilt</td>
<td>Wilson &amp; Prabucki (1983)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excuse making and blame</td>
<td>Jenkins (1990)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expecting forgiveness</td>
<td>Jenkins (1990)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impaired limits</td>
<td>Young (1994)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sympathy &amp; support</td>
<td>Jenkins (1990)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thinking they are special</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A right to be compensated</td>
<td>Levin (1993)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expecting special privileges</td>
<td>American Psychiatric Association (2000)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
All this shows the significance, as well as the complexity of a concept that has been discussed since the time of Plato, but has yet to be thoroughly investigated or measured. Given the extensive diversity of these descriptions it has proved difficult to locate an overall concept to define a sense of entitlement and it will be argued that a sense of entitlement is not a single construct but a process that has the capacity to include many of these individual descriptions.

1.4.2 Semantic Confusion

One of the major sources of confusion is that the term “sense of entitlement” originally implied an inflated sense of entitlement. Later, theorists proposed models of entitlement that included inadequate, healthy and excessive senses of entitlement. For instance entitlement according to Young and Klosko (1994), involves an excessive expression of an individual’s needs. These authors maintain that there are three types of entitlement: spoiled entitlement, dependent entitlement and impulsivity. In spoiled entitlement, individuals consider themselves to be above the law and believe whilst others should be punished for violating social norms, they should not be punished. In dependent entitlement, individuals feel entitled to depend on others, placing themselves in a particularly needy role and expecting others to take care of them. Impulsivity was described as problems with impulse control, where individuals may have difficulty postponing short-term gratification and appear to experience difficulty expressing anger appropriately. They attributed this to not having been taught frustration tolerance as small children. According to Young and Klosko (1994), impulsive entitlement is quite likely to be expressed as explosive rage.

The American Psychiatric Association (1994) has a different interpretation of entitlement and explains a sense of entitlement as irrational expectations of
particularly positive treatment from others. This extends to an immediate compliance with one’s expectations.

Bishop and Lane (2002) argue for that which they define as “excessive entitlement” as simply a learned role from over indulgent parenting. Excessive entitlement is elicited in the defence against hurt, shame and fear. Excessive entitlement, according to Bishop and Lane (2002), has the capacity to reach dangerous homicidal proportions when demanding revenge.

Young (1994) categorises entitlement as entitlement/domination. According to Young (1994), entitlement/domination involves excessive demands and a complete lack of empathy for another individual. Power and control over others appears paramount in this stance as does attaining whatever one wants, when one wants it (Young 1994).

Moses and Moses-Hrushovski (1990) argue for a tripartite model and interpret entitlement to be realistic, excessive, or unconscious. In the first category a sense of entitlement is considered to be realistic or appropriate and described as the well established everyday practice of reciprocity. The second category is reported to be an excessive sense of entitlement, and thus, may be considered to be a pathological level of entitlement. The third category is unconscious entitlement and is considered to be out of an individual’s conscious awareness. This category appears similar to passive individuals who have difficulty asserting their needs and rights (Jakubowski & Lange, 1978). However, it is Moses and Moses-Hrushovski’s (1990) excessive entitlement that is most similar to the concept of an inflated sense of entitlement. Several other authors have given various titles to extreme levels of entitlement, which have been referred to as exaggerated (Grey, 1987), maladaptive (Emmons,
In this section on defining a contemporary understanding of an inflated sense of entitlement, early explanations and current definitions were discussed. These explanations also introduced the concept of an inflated sense of entitlement as a process. The next section will introduce the personality disorders and personality characteristics that appear to be related to an inflated sense of entitlement.

1.5 Perspectives of Entitlement

Both Plato and Freud described the outcome of an inflated sense of entitlement as a process. Plato’s premise described the disintegration of the just soul into human evil (Nettleship, 1958). Freud’s (1961b) premise described the weak super-ego being overwhelmed and being unable to function in a pro-social manner. The first part of the process presents in the form of an exaggerated or inflated sense of entitlement. Should an inflated sense of entitlement be violated it will most likely lead to negative emotions such as the individual feeling insulted, disrespected or humiliated. These negative emotions are then followed by negative thoughts. Individuals with an inflated sense of entitlement appear to be hypersensitive to threats to their sense of self, increasing the likelihood of retaliation compared with individuals without an inflated sense of entitlement. It is at this inflammatory junction of the social or interaction process that anti-social behaviours may be engaged. For those individuals who hold positive attitudes toward the use of violence, such as violent offenders, then retaliation is most likely to be of a serious and violent nature (see the section on the theoretical structure - 1.10 in this chapter, for a further discussion on the process and function of an inflated sense of entitlement).
An inflated sense of entitlement has continued to be discussed in the contemporary scientific literature; however, this inclusion in the literature seems to have been in the form of an “understudy” role to other psychological concepts (Grey, 1987). Entitlement has been mentioned as playing a somewhat minor role in a variety of personality disorders (Grey, 1987). To illustrate this observation, examples of personality disorders that have incorporated an inflated sense of entitlement will now be discussed.

1.5.1 Personality Disorders and Entitlement

For many years an inflated sense of entitlement was discussed and examined from a global personality perspective rather than at the level of individual traits (Exline, Baumeister, Bushman, Campbell, & Finkel, 2004). A personality disorder has been defined by Hart (1998) as a chronic difficulty with emotion regulation and integration of cognitive functions that ultimately result in disorderly and anti-social behaviour. Emotion regulation refers to the influence an individual has over what emotions they experience, as well as when, where and how they are expressed (Gross, 1998).

Personality disorders that have incorporated an inflated sense of entitlement include Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD) (American Psychiatric Association, 2000). Other personality disorders such as - Psychopathy (Hare, 1994), Anti-social Personality Disorder (APD) and Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) (American Psychiatric Association, 2000) - also include attitudes and behaviours that are consistent with an inflated sense of entitlement. Each of these personality disorders will be discussed briefly to illustrate their relationship with an inflated sense of entitlement.
1.5.1.1 Narcissistic Personality Disorder

The diagnostic criteria for a range of personality disorders, including NPD, has been included in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental disorders, DSM-IV-TR, (American Psychiatric Association, 2000). The DSM-IV-TR defines NPD as: a pervasive pattern of grandiosity (in fantasy or behaviour), need for admiration, lack of empathy, beginning by early adulthood and present in a variety of contexts. (p.717)

Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD) has been described as a “synthesis of descriptions from psychoanalytic, psychiatric, literary and mythology, sociologic and existential sources” (Akhtar & Thomson, 1982, p17). Early psychoanalytic theorists interpreted narcissism as either: an instinctual drive (Kernberg, 1975); arrested development and the need for revenge following psychological injury (Kohut, 1972); or an over-evaluation of their image that cannot be sustained in the real world (Greenberg & Pyszczynski, 1985; Millon, 1981). Nevertheless, NPD has been included as a separate personality disorder since the publication of the Statistical Manual of Mental disorders DSM-III (American Psychiatric Association, 1980).

According to Wilson and Prabucki (1983), the notion of an inflated sense of entitlement has emerged as a major factor underpinning the structure of pathological narcissism; however, this notion has been disputed by Ronningstam and Gunderson (1990). According to Ronningstam and Gunderson (1990), whilst an inflated sense of entitlement has been attributed to individuals with NPD, it has not been found to be one of the most distinguishing features. Entitlement has been defined by American Psychiatric Association (2000) as an unreasonable expectation of particularly favourable treatment by others that often results in a perplexed or infuriated response when this expectation is not met. For instance, entitlement is reported as the fifth
item in the list of diagnostic criteria for NPD (American Psychiatric Association, 2000). The definition in NPD is reported as:

(5) has a sense of entitlement, i.e., unreasonable expectations of especially favourable treatment or automatic compliance with his or her expectations.

(p.717)

Following a small study of individuals with NPD, Ronningstam, Gunderson, and Lyons (1995) questioned the construct validity of NPD, as well as the general construct of pathological narcissism. Participants in their study received treatment or supportive care at various times over a three year period. Notwithstanding their concerns with the overall diagnostic category of narcissism, they reported substantial changes in a number of individual characteristics of narcissism, including an inflated sense of entitlement. These findings support the notion that an inflated sense of entitlement may be a more pliable construct than was first thought. If it is a psychological state, rather than a more entrenched psychological trait, then it is more open to change. If it could be successfully changed in the Ronningstam et al. (1995) study, this suggests that an inflated sense of entitlement may also be successfully targeted as a treatment variable in offender treatment programs.

1.5.1.2 Psychopathy

The construct of psychopathy appears to have included the notion of an inflated sense of entitlement. Psychopathy has been described as an elusive and perplexing psychological construct by some researchers (Arrigo & Shipley, 2001). However, others have maintained that psychopathy is a robust construct with strong predictive validity for re-offending, particularly in violent re-offending (Gacono, 2000; Powis, 2002). The contemporary construct of psychopathy was first illustrated through the use of qualitative case studies by Cleckley (1988, original work published 1941).
later developed and empirically validated by Hare (1996, 1998), and more recently by Cooke and Michie (2001). When describing psychopaths, Hare (1994) depicts an extreme level of violent behaviour and provides a list of emotional, interpersonal and social deviance factors. Emotional and interpersonal factors of psychopathy include, but are not limited to, an inflated sense of entitlement and an attitude of complete indifference to the rights and suffering of others. The social deviance factors include hypersensitivity to perceived insults and frustration, to which the individual may respond with threats, verbal abuse and sudden violence. Taken together, the attitudes and behavioural outcomes of the emotional, interpersonal and social deviance factors of psychopathy seem consistent with the attitudes and behaviours expected of individuals with an inflated sense of entitlement that has been violated.

1.5.1.3 Anti-social Personality Disorder

Anti-social Personality Disorder (APD) also illustrates an inflated sense of entitlement in violent men. According to Kernberg (1975) the anti-social personality may be considered to be a subgroup of the narcissistic personality. The DSM-IV-TR (American Psychiatric Association, 2000), however, provides separate entries for both NPD and APD. Anti-social Personality Disorder is characterised by repetitive anti-social and criminal acts (American Psychiatric Association, 2000). The anti-social personality has been reported as being anchored in feelings of deep hostility and animosity, and these individuals will use aggression to insist on their rights (Millon, 1981). The resentment underpinning hostility may quite conceivably include a strong sense of entitlement. According to Shipley and Arrigo (2001) up to eighty percent of incarcerated offenders can be diagnosed with APD, with one third of this group also meeting the criteria for psychopathy. The characteristics used to illustrate APD, such as poor behavioural control and an elevated appraisal of themselves, are
also consistent with an inflated sense of entitlement that has been violated (Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994).

1.5.1.4 Borderline Personality Disorder

Another group linked to similar behaviours likely to be found in those with an inflated sense of entitlement includes individuals with Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD). This disorder is defined and published in the DSM-IV (American Psychiatric Association, 2000). Nevertheless, some years ago Gunderson and Singer (1975) described BPD as a “wastebasket diagnosis”. A number of researchers have described Borderline, or emotionally dependent offenders, as having high levels of interpersonal dependency, jealousy, stormy intense relationships and explosive anger (Farrington, 2002; LaTina, Wonderlich, Beatty, Cristie, & Staton, 1993). Individuals with these characteristics are considered most likely to have a strong measure of entitlement towards their partners (Marcus & Swett, 2002) particularly sexual entitlement and “ownership” of their partner’s body (Jenkins, 1990). In addition, individuals with Borderline personalities have been reported to use spiteful devaluation of others in order to keep their fury in check (Kernberg, 1975). This has been attributed to an extremely low tolerance to frustration, often resulting in violent behaviour towards others (Kernberg, 1975), although Rogers, Widiger, and Krupp (1995) argue that individuals with BPD are just as likely to direct their aggressive impulses towards themselves. This suggests that any investigation into an inflated sense of entitlement should include an examination of violence towards others as well as violence towards the self.

The feelings, thoughts and behaviours identified in individuals with NPD, Psychopathy, APD and BPD are consistent with the concept of an inflated sense of
entitlement. Notwithstanding the strength of personality disorders, there are also individual personality characteristics that should be taken into account.

1.5.2 Personality Characteristics and Entitlement

A global personality disorders approach does not make allowances for individual differences and does not account for those individuals who may have just failed to meet the criteria for clinical diagnosis. The following is a discussion of these individual personality characteristics which include weak super-ego, narcissistic traits and threatened egotism. Each of these characteristics that appear to include the presence of an inflated sense of entitlement will be discussed in turn.

1.5.2.1 Weak super ego

A weak super ego, according to Karson and O’Dell (1976), is akin to sociopathy and most likely to encompass an inflated sense of entitlement. According to Freudian theory (1961b), the development of the super-ego is contingent upon warmth and affection in combination with guidance and training. When discussing the psychology of criminal conduct, Andrews and Bonta (1998) noted that Freud identified various parenting styles, such as permissiveness or extreme neglect that may inhibit optimal development and lead to anti-social and/or pro-criminal behaviour. For instance, Andrews and Bonta (1998) noted that authoritarian parenting may result in a weak ego yet a strong super-ego, resulting in an individual having a strong inclination to follow the rules and mores of society. Permissive parenting, on the other hand, had the potential to result in a strong ego but weak super-ego, whilst extreme neglect, by the parents or caregivers may result in both a weak ego and a weak super-ego. Anti-social behaviour is said to occur in the presence of a weak super-ego.
Krug and Cattell (1980) refer to super-ego strength when describing the enduring behaviour of highly regarded, moral and law-abiding individuals. The direct opposite of which has been described as sociopathy (Karson & O’Dell, 1976). Thus, it may be stated that a weak or underdeveloped super-ego is related to an inflated sense of entitlement (Karson & O’Dell, 1976). A threatened ego would be unable to modulate the id, leaving a weak super-ego to attempt to keep the id in check. At this point the super-ego may be overwhelmed, giving way to the demands of the id which may result in dysfunctional, immoral and lawless behaviour.

1.5.2.2 Narcissistic traits

Whilst some individuals may not have met the criteria for a formal diagnosis of Narcissistic Personality Disorder (NPD) they may display narcissistic characteristics. Associations between narcissism, anger and violent behaviour have been made for many years and by various authors (McCann & Biaggio, 1989; Hart & Joubert, 1996; Bushman & Baumeister, 1998; Papps & O’Carroll, 1998; Rhodewalt & Morf, 1995, 1998). A sense of entitlement has been described as one of the key narcissistic traits.

To investigate the relationship between narcissistic traits and extreme violence, Twenge and Campbell (2003) conducted a series of four studies to examine the motivating factors of the killing spree at Columbine High School in the USA. They used a total of 203 student participants to examine the narcissistic traits that underpinned the event. They had predicted that rejection and narcissism were primary factors and they had realised that individuals may have a degree of narcissism and yet not meet the diagnostic criteria for NPD. In their first study, Twenge and Campbell (2003) administered a narrative mood measure to 56 students (30 males & 26 females) and found that participants with a high level of narcissism had higher levels of anger. Their second study of 55 students (33 males & 22
females) used manipulated stories indicating rejection and again found that participants with a high level of narcissism were more likely become angry following rejection. The third study of 31 students (16 male & 15 female) used a different mood measure and found that the links between high levels of narcissism and aggression were robust. In their final study they investigated 61 students (31 male & 30 female) to examine displaced aggression. High levels of narcissism were linked to aggression but this was not displaced to those available. Twenge and Campbell (2003) found that narcissists are low on need for affiliation but high on need for power. Further, it seems narcissists are not angry all the time, but only when their status is threatened. Individuals with an inflated sense of entitlement may become angry when their perceived entitlements have been violated.

1.5.2.3 Threatened egotism

A threatened ego is reported to be the central driving force towards enraged behaviour in violent men who have been humiliated (Katz, 1988). It is suggested that an inflated sense of entitlement is highly involved in the ego of violent men. According to Katz (1988), when individuals become enraged they are unlikely to consider the potential consequences of the actions and can only focus on the restoration of their honour or their social status. A range of theories have been purported to explain this driving force, including the restoration of self-image (Rhodewalt & Morf, 1995), wounded pride (Baumeister, Bushman, & Campbell, 2000), rejection or hurt feelings (Bushman & Baumeister, 1998), lack of status (Baumeister et al., 1996), honour contests (Brookman, 2003; Levi & Maguire, 2002) and conflict resolution (Polk, 1995).

Major theories relating to a threatened ego have also examined the level and stability of an individual’s self-esteem (Baumeister et al., 1996). According to
Donnellan, Trzesniewski, Robins, Moffit, and Caspi (2005), low self-esteem is related to aggression, anti-social and pro-criminal behaviour. However, in a study designed to investigate if low self-esteem contributed to anger and hostile behaviour, Kernis, Grannemann, and Barclay (1989) found that people with high self-esteem tended to cluster at both the hostile and non-hostile extremes, and found the mediating factor to be in the stability of an individual’s self-esteem. Individuals who demonstrated high yet unstable self-esteem scored highest on the hostility measure, whereas individuals with high and stable self-esteem scored the lowest (Kernis et al., 1989).

When one’s self-image is under threat, individuals with narcissistic traits are more likely to display extreme anger (Rhodewalt & Morf, 1998). Their self-image has been described as highly context-dependent and can be seen in regular patterns of anti-social behaviour (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001). This is consistent with the egotism model proposed by Baumeister et al. (1996). These researchers defined threatened egotism as a situation in which favourable, yet unstable, views of the self have been challenged in some way, which may quickly escalate to violent behaviour. Perpetrators of violence appear to become frustrated when they are not treated with the high regard they expect and may show aggression towards others, particularly those who may be much weaker than themselves (Baumeister et al., 1996).

According to Bushman and Baumeister (1998), the egotism model is where an individual with a threatened ego is unable to sustain inflated notions of their superiority. In a more recent study, Bushman and Baumeister (2002) found that narcissistic individuals are most likely to become violent when their ego has been threatened. In another study on ego stability, narcissistic individuals with an inflated sense of entitlement who had become violent towards others were reported to have
self-serving interpretations of ambiguous situations (Bushman, Bonacci, van Dijk, & Baumeister, 2003). This interpretation appeared to provide the impetus to appease their egos and restore their reputation.

Mecke (2004) partially agrees with the previous researchers but also speculates on how this instability of self-esteem emerges. According to Mecke (2004), rage and malevolence are considered to be at the very core of individuals with narcissistic traits. These individuals vacillate from being totally insensitive, such as being stubborn and defensive, to being hypersensitive, such as being vulnerable and exposed. It is during the transition from one state to the next that the instability emerges. According to Mecke (2004), it is during this time that the individual with narcissistic traits is most likely to commit violent acts against others and themselves. Sometimes the aggression is expressed overtly and at other times may be more covert and manifest as an angry withdrawal. Nevertheless, an angry withdrawal may see the individual seek some form of malevolent revenge at a later time (Mecke, 2004). This behaviour appears congruent with that of individuals with an inflated sense of entitlement. This attitude and type of behaviour has also been described in Plato’s era as evil (Nettleship, 1958).

In contemporary times some the most serious crimes in our society are murder-suicide (Peck, 1983) and domestic homicide (Mouzos & Rushforth, 2003). The perpetrators of these and other types of extreme violence have been referred to as “evil” and their actions as “heinous” and “brutal” (Hare, 1994; Peck, 1983). The word “evil” also seems to be reappearing in Australian legal forums when describing the perpetrators of extreme and pathological violence (Ruffles, 2004). Offenders with underlying personality traits, such as psychopathy and anti-social personality
disorders are among this group, with psychopaths being described as the “worst of the worst” (Ogloff & Lyon, 1998, p.408).

In the next section there will be a discussion on a range of theoretical perspectives that encompass “evil” or pathological violence. The relevance of these perspectives is that they appear to have a direct relationship with an inflated sense of entitlement.

1.6 Theoretical Perspectives Related to Entitlement and Violence

An inflated sense of entitlement, of itself, is not considered to lead to violence; however, should an inflated sense of entitlement be violated then the result is likely to be violent behaviour. There are a number of theoretical perspectives that appear to be closely related to an inflated sense of entitlement and its relationship to aggression and violence. The first of these theoretical standpoints is the Frustration Aggression Hypothesis by Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer, and Sears (1939; 1970) and the reformulation of this model by Berkowitz (1989). Next, is the Learned Helplessness model, which has been used to illustrate the underlying mechanisms of violent behaviour in men (Seligman, 1989). The third theoretical standpoint is the social interactionist perspective - the Theory of Coercive Actions - which explains how a situation can escalate to aggressive behaviour (Felson & Tedeschi, 1993). Other related theoretical perspectives include the Attribution of Hostile Intent (Ferguson & Rule, 1983) and Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964; Homans, 1958). Each of these perspectives will be discussed in turn.

1.6.1 Frustration-aggression Hypothesis

Whilst the Frustration aggression Hypothesis is independent of a sense of entitlement, if an individual has an inflated sense of entitlement that becomes violated then frustration, anger and violence are more likely to occur. In their
Frustration-aggression Hypothesis, Dollard et al. (1939) postulated the assumption that “aggressive behaviour always presupposes the existence of frustration and, contrariwise, that the existence of frustration always leads to some form of aggression” (p.1). However, when considering the second half of their premise, Miller (1941) concluded that this is not always the case. Berkowitz (1989) then reformulated this hypothesis.

Frustration has the propensity to escalate to anger, which may then predispose an individual to aggression and violent behaviour (Berkowitz, 1989, Dollard et al., 1939; 1970). This predisposition may be instigated from a range of cues, including strong emotions arising prior to the engagement of cognitive mediation (Berkowitz & LePage, 1970). In the reformulation of this hypothesis, Berkowitz (1983) claimed that frustration produces a propensity towards aggression because frustration is an aversive state and it is this aversive state, rather than the frustration, that leads to aggression. According to Berkowitz (1983), this aversive state, or psychological distress, may elicit hostility and violence towards an available target. The availability of a “suitable target” may seem somewhat insignificant until a prison environment is considered. In the prison environment an easy target may not be available. The lack of a suitable target may then substantially increase an individual’s level of frustration.

According to Katz (1988), individuals who experience frustration are more prone to aggression; however, it is the experience of humiliation, which is closer to rage, that is more likely to result in violent behaviour. An inflated sense of entitlement that is threatened has the capacity to lead to frustration and humiliation. Thus, an inflated sense of entitlement may then increase the likelihood of aggression. Patalano (1997) argues that the frustration-aggression model clearly explains the
behaviour of narcissistic individuals with a weak ego and poor sense-of-self who are likely to resort to aggressive and violent behaviours. Positive reinforcement of such aggressive behaviour may then lead to further aggression and further violent behaviour (Bandura & Walters, 1970a, 1970b). The violent crime that can result may then set an individual on a treadmill of violent recidivism (Bonta, Law, & Hanson, 1998). Maslow (1941) argues that frustration may lead to threats of physical conflict only when coupled with a perception of deprivation and a threat to one’s ego. Thus, frustration may, under certain conditions, be the precursor to violent behaviour. One response to frustration, according to Dor-shav and Mikulincer (1990), is learned helplessness.

1.6.2 Learned Helplessness Model

The next theoretical perspective to encompass the notion of an inflated sense of entitlement is the Learned Helplessness Model. Learned helplessness describes a situation in which failure causes a belief that the outcome of an event is independent of an individual’s own action (Seligman, 1989). This belief can then be generalised to other situations and undermine motivation, resulting in the withdrawal of any further effort (Seligman, 1989). Abramson, Seligman, and Teasdale (1978) maintain that self-blame, self-criticism and guilt underpin personal helplessness and depression. However, Huesmann (1978) questioned the adequacy of learned helplessness as a model for depression in humans and called for a multidimensional model to account for the different typologies of depression. Seligman (1975) defines depression as “the common cold of psychopathology”; nevertheless, he also concedes that the learned helplessness hypothesis does not cover all types of depression.
Learned helplessness is a psychological state that has been variously described as a state of perceived loss of power, maladaptive passivity and a pessimistic explanatory style (McKean, 1994). Learned helplessness is evident in affective, cognitive and behavioural domains (Cemalcilar, Canbeyli, & Sunar, 2003; Maier & Seligman, 1976). Examples of emotional affect typically include flat or depressed mood (Maier & Seligman 1976; Ozment & Lester 2001). Cognitive examples typically include difficulty in problem solving and decreased self-esteem, whereas behavioural examples typically include extreme passivity and withdrawal of effort (Maier & Seligman 1976). However, it is also noted by some researchers that, under certain conditions, individuals with these symptoms may use a sense of entitlement to propel them into violent and explosive anger (Berkowitz, 1983; Grey, 1987).

Various authors have argued about the details of the Learned Helplessness Model. For instance, some authors maintain performance deficits are consistent with Self-esteem Protection Theory rather than the Learned Helplessness Model (Witkowski & Stiensmeier-Pelster, 1998). Other authors have proposed that personality characteristics and personality traits, rather than full-blown personality disorders, have a considerable impact on learned helplessness (Cemalcilar et al., 2003). Nevertheless, according to Cemalcilar et al. (2003), there is a lack of research into the role of personality traits and learned helplessness and more research is needed in this area.

Flett, Blankstein and Kleinfeldt (1990) conducted a study on depression and causal attributions for unexpected stressful events on 242 students. They found males appeared to generalize helplessness to global proportions more so than females, leading them to conclude that males may be experiencing depression differently to
females. The differences in attribution responses appear to be related to the types of events with which an individual may need to cope (Flett et al., 1990).

According to Schill and Marcus (1998), long-term incarceration may lead to the development of a helpless attribution style. Seligman (1975) identified “institutionalized helplessness” as a condition to which individuals incarcerated in correctional facilities may succumb (p.168). Kankus and Cavalier (1995) also support the notion of institutionalised helplessness. These authors reported that individuals under repressive conditions such as incarceration, who are supervised by staff with indifferent management styles, may easily perceive a loss of personal power and succumb to a sense of organisational helplessness.

Berkowitz (1983); however, argues that some individuals with depressive symptoms also harbour high levels of hostility, which may result in violent and explosive anger. According to Grey’s (1987) explanation, a sense of entitlement may provide an illusion of power in an attempt to overcome a state of helplessness. For instance, an inflated sense of entitlement has the capacity to override one’s sense of helplessness and hopelessness. This may then elicit intense anger which provides the impetus to humiliate and destroy any perceived opponent (Grey, 1987).

Alternatively, an incarcerated offender may turn their anger in on themselves. Being incarcerated presents a unique event that may easily overwhelm the newly incarcerated male offender (Liebling, 1992). Some offenders may experience depression in a classic manner which neatly fits into the Learned Helplessness Model. Others may experience depression in an atypical manner similar to that which Berkowitz (1983) and Grey (1987) have reported. A hypothetical example will be used to illustrate how an inflated sense of entitlement may be related to learned helplessness. For instance, offenders have been reported to have a “higher-than-
average level of frustration or lower-than-average anticipation of punishment, or both” (Dollard et al., 1939, p.111-139). For example, an individual with an inflated sense of entitlement who has already been convicted of a particularly serious crime and is facing court sentencing, may actually believe that he will not be incarcerated for the crimes for which he is about to be sentenced. These individuals seem to hold the view that leniency and mercy should be forthcoming from others who sit in judgment of them, yet simultaneously hold the view that they are entitled to dispense their own rigid and unmerciful understanding of justice and retribution on others.

When sentenced, this individual may then go on to experience “depression” in a somewhat atypical manner. In addition to newly incarcerated offenders exhibiting classic symptoms of depression, others were identified as experiencing depression but also exhibiting high levels of hostility (Berkowitz, 1983; Grey, 1987). These offenders are likely to use violent and explosive anger to overcome the experience of powerlessness and helplessness (Berkowitz, 1983; Grey, 1987).

Offenders exhibiting classic symptoms of depression may go on to self-harm, as may some offenders who are exhibiting atypical depression. As stated earlier, when reporting on self-harm in prisons, Hall et al. (2006) speculated that there are four pathways to self-harm consisting of impulsive anger-in, nowhere to move, anger masking depression and manipulative self-harm. The first pathway is “impulsive anger-in” which is an anger based pathway underpinned by an inflated sense of entitlement. These individuals find it difficult to recognise, express and control anger when their perceived entitlements have been thwarted. Self-harming behaviour may be accompanied by statements such as “I’ll show them, they’ll be sorry”. This is supported by Felson and Tedeschi (1993), who reported that anger is linked to depression and learned helplessness. The second pathway is “nowhere to move”
which is not necessarily an anger based pathway, but is also underpinned by an inflated sense of entitlement. These individuals have poor consequential thinking, poor problems solving skills, are unable to take responsibility for their circumstances and blame others for curtailed entitlements. Self-harm is seen as their only option. These two pathways may illustrate classical depression and appear as learned helplessness. Another pathway is “manipulative self-harm” which may or may not include an inflated sense of entitlement.

The pathway of interest in this discussion is the “anger masking depression”. This pathway was reported by Hall et al. (2006) to begin in a similar manner to learned helplessness; however, it then manifests as general irritability and aggression. According to Hall et al. (2006), this outward expression is considered to function as a cover-up to avoid being seen by other prisoners as “weak”. This explanation sounds similar to Berkowitz (1983) and Grey (1987) who reported that some individuals will use explosive anger to overcome the experience of helplessness. So it seems that an inflated sense of entitlement may underpin learned helplessness by providing the energy needed for aggression, whether it is towards one’s self or towards others. This section, on learned helplessness, provides the justification to investigate the violation of an inflated sense of entitlement and self-harming behaviour.

1.6.3 Social Interactionist Perspective on Violence

In contrast to instinctual drive theories, such as the Frustration-aggression Hypothesis, Felson and Tedeschi (1993) proposed a social interactionist model of aggression and violence. This model introduces the notion of a violation of expectations, which is similar to a violation of an inflated sense of entitlement. Felson and Tedeschi (1993) based their theory on four core principles. The first
principle is that aggression and violence are instrumental behaviours and are seen as a means to an end. The second principle is that aggression is the normal consequence of conflict in human relations, which may be in response to a perceived violation of expectations or to gain the compliance of another. The third principle is that situational and interpersonal aspects of an individual’s life are viewed as extremely important in instigating aggression. The final principle is that values and beliefs of the person in a decision-making process are central to arriving at alternative behavioural options.

Blame and punishment may be elicited in an aggrieved individual. According to Felson and Tedeschi (1993), violent behaviour is likely to result when an individual believes that a “rule” has been violated. The perception of a violated sense of entitlement is strongly related to this rule-based premise. Retaliation is seen as an act of justice that can deter unwanted behaviour and maintain personal status.

As a grievance escalates it moves from being seen as unfair and is extrapolated to a generalised evaluation of being unjust (Gaylin, 2003). Such an evaluation may lead to frustration, dissatisfaction, aggression and ultimately to violence. The theoretical model of an inflated sense of entitlement can also provide an explanation for this position. For instance, an individual may hold an inflated sense of entitlement that when thwarted in some way is evaluated as unfair and unjust. This may be true for many individuals; however, in a violent offender it is more likely to be interpreted as being thwarted or violated. This evaluation may then lead to violent behaviour.

Felson and Tedeschi (1993) explained that their theory on the development and reactions to grievances is primarily an explanation of perceived injustices and the attribution of blame and punishment. This “perception” of injustice, rather than the
reality, is important as “a significant portion of any dispute exists only in the minds of the disputants” (Felstiner, Abel, & Sarat, 1980, p.632). Tedeschi and Nesler (1993a) identified four types of events that may lead to a grievance. These consist of: physical harm; loss or damage to goods, existing or expected; damage to social identity, including failure to show respect; and a violation of rights. Although Grievance Theory does not maintain that violence will always be the end result of these situations, it does suggest a predisposition towards violence (Tedeschi & Nesler, 1993a). Violent offenders with an inflated sense of entitlement are most likely to experience difficulty with two of these four types of events. These two events include damage to their social identity as well as a violation of their perceived rights, both of which may impact on their power or status (Tedeschi & Nesler, 1993b). In these instances, it is likely that violent men will resort to violent behaviour.

According to Felson and Tedeschi (1993), in Grievance Theory there are six likely reactions following a grievance. These reactions include: “do nothing; withdraw the grievance; forgive; accept restitution; argue the dispute and punish the harm-doer” (p.31-37). “Do nothing” implies holding in the anger and hostility and this reaction is considered to be associated with depression and learned helplessness. “Withdraw the grievance” is to “forgive” or “accept restitution” which implies dealing pro-socially, which in Freud’s terms is indicative of a strong super-ego. “Argue the dispute” and “punish the harm-doer” may result in a violent response. Reactions such as “argue the dispute” and “punish the harm-doer” are outcomes consistent with an inflated sense of entitlement. The major theoretical perspectives discussed in this section demonstrate a relationship with an inflated sense of entitlement.
1.6.4 Other Theoretical Perspectives

There are two other theoretical perspectives that are related to an inflated sense of entitlement. These include the Attribution of Hostile Intent (Ferguson & Rule, 1983) and Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964; Homans, 1958). Both of these perspectives will be discussed, in brief, in relation to an inflated sense of entitlement.

The Attribution of Hostile Intent (Ferguson & Rule, 1983; Weiner, 1986) is a cognitive style that has a negatively biased interpretation of neutral or ambiguous situations. There is some evidence that this attribution style is present to a greater degree in violent rather than non-violent offenders (Copello & Tata, 1990). This premise may also be theoretically related to an inflated sense of entitlement, especially if violent offenders are expecting exceedingly favourable responses. It may be that even neutral situations appear to them as an affront.

Social Exchange Theory has employed a debt metaphor to illustrate the expectation of repayment of debts owed (Blau, 1964; Homans, 1958). According to Exline et al. (2004), this expectation is particularly high in those individuals with “narcissistic entitlement”. Thus, both the Attribution of Hostile Intent and the Social Exchange Theory contribute to the theoretical perspective on an inflated sense of entitlement.

The major theoretical perspectives and their links to an inflated sense of entitlement were discussed in this section. Other secondary theoretical perspectives were also discussed. In the next section the link between an inflated sense of entitlement and self-harm will be examined.

1.7 Entitlement, Violence, Self-harm and Treatment

In this section there will be a brief discussion on extreme levels of violence towards others and the self. These include murder-suicide, as well as violence and
suicide. This then sets the scene for the discussion on violence and self-harm and the treatment options available for incarcerated offenders.

1.7.1 Murder-suicide

Murder-suicide has been described as the “lethal end of the continuum of coexisting aggression against others and aggression against self …” (Hilbrand, 2001, p.628). Whilst it is well established that aggression may be expressed overtly towards another, it may also manifest as an angry, vengeful withdrawal that provides the psychological space to formulate and develop brutal fantasies focused on the epitome of violent acts - murder-suicide. Researchers have experienced the difficulty with epidemiological categorisation of murder-suicide, or homicide-suicide, as this domain overlaps with suicide, homicide and mass murder. As a result of this difficulty in categorisation, there appears to be no standardised operational definitions (Coid, 1983; Marzuk, Tardiff, & Hirsch, 1992). Categorisation is also difficult as these cases do not result in a court case (as both the perpetrator and victim are deceased) and therefore no criminal finding is recorded (Felthous & Hempel, 1995).

The American Psychiatric Association (2005a) reports that individuals likely to harm others have an increased risk of self-harm. Conversely, they caution that suicidal individuals have an increased risk of harming others which may involve a potential murder-suicide (American Psychiatric Association, 2005b). The perpetrator of murder-suicide is most often an intimate partner, or close relation to the victim (Duncan & Duncan, 1971; Lund & Smorodinsky, 2001). According to Mulroney (2003), just over twenty percent of all homicides in Australia stem from intimate partner violence.
Mecke (2004) argues that the suicide part of the murder-suicide dyad is the result of the trauma suffered by the act of homicide. However, other researchers do not agree with such a basic proposition. For instance, some researchers report that murder-suicide may be a declaration of possession (Danto, 1978). It may also be the expression of deep and intense hostility (Duncan & Duncan, 1971). Murder-suicide has also been described as enforced mastery when control has been threatened (Easteal, 1994). According to Easteal (1994), murder-suicide may be either pre-planned or the suicide enacted as an afterthought. In some instances perpetrators may suicide after assaulting others, therefore in the next section violent behaviour and suicide will be discussed.

1.7.2 Violence and Suicide

Menninger (1938) defined suicide as “a wish to kill, a wish to be killed and a wish to die” (p.146). This early definition may be expanded to describe violent offending and suicidal behaviour in contemporary offenders. The association between violent and suicidal behaviour in prisons has been documented in many parts of the world in: Scotland (Backett, 1987; Bogue & Power, 1995); England and Wales (Dooley, 1990; Liebling, 1995; Sattar, 2004; Finland (Virkkunen, DeJong, Batko, Goodwin, & Linnoila, 1989a; 1989b; Virkkunen, Nuutila, Goodwin, & Linnoila, 1987); USA (Lund & Smorodinsky, 2001); and Canada (Wichmann, Serin, & Motiuk, 2000). In a British study, Wool and Ilbert (1994) noted that a large proportion of homicide offenders went on to suicide from the late eighties. They reported that “21.5% of all homicide offenders in 1990” went on to commit suicide (p.40). The correlation between violence and suicide has also been noted in Australia, in both public and private prisons (Biles, 1994; Biles & Dalton, 1999). Violent men are more likely to suicide than non-violent men, according to a range of
researchers (Apter et al., 1991; Klinge, 1995; Moffitt et al., 1998). Yet, there appears to be no investigations linking an inflated sense of entitlement to suicide.

Kaufman (1999) noted that violent offenders often target weaker and more vulnerable individuals. However, in prison there may not be such “suitable victims” which may then leave violence towards one’s self as appearing to be the only viable option. Self-harming incidents have been identified as precursors to suicide; therefore it is crucial that that the broader context of self-harming behaviour is investigated (Liebling, 1992). This area will be addressed in the next section.

1.7.3 Violence and Self-harm

Assessment of offenders at the beginning of a term of incarceration is designed to determine dangerousness to others and to establish the potential for self-harming or suicidal behaviour (Towl, 1996). Research findings have recognised that self-harming behaviour is an indicator that suicide is quite possibly part of an individual’s future plan (Harding, 1994). The self-harming behaviour of incarcerated violent offenders has been well documented, with studies on females (Cookson, 1977) and males (Favazza, 1989), as well as adolescents (Inch, Rowlands, & Soliman, 1995; Liebling, 1994a). Individuals who have experienced previous trauma have been identified as belonging to a population that is likely to violate others or self-harm (van der Kolk, Mc Farlane, & van der Hart, 1996). Green (2003a, 2003b) reported on the strong negative effect of pre-offence trauma in the lives of violent offenders. This strong negative effect can often be intensified when coupled with the perpetrator trauma that the offenders themselves experience following violent crime, particularly homicide (Green, 2003a, 2003b).

The incidence of self-harm is well documented as being far higher than the incidence of suicide. For instance, in an Australian study (Biles, 1994) found that
there was 16 times as many incidents of self-inflicted harm that did not result in death, as there were completed suicides.

Contemporary studies have found that incarcerated offenders have directed their anger and rage towards themselves. These researchers have found a variety of factors that underpin self-harm or suicidal behaviour, which include coping difficulties due to a low frustration threshold (Dooley, 1990), threatened status and an inflated sense of entitlement (Raskin, Novacek, & Hogan, 1991) and having an inflated sense of entitlement and being disrespected (Beck, 2000; Jenkins, 1990). Other factors reported to underpin self-harming behaviour include hopelessness (Danto, 1989; Holden, Mendonca, & Serin, 1989; Liebling, 1992), helplessness (Abramson et al., 1978), holding an inflated sense of entitlement and being rendered powerless (Falshaw, Browne, & Hollin, 1996; Ransford, 1970). Powerlessness has been defined by Ransford (1970) as a form of “alienation” due to a low expectation of control over events (p.149). At the opposite end of the powerlessness spectrum is manipulation, which is where offenders are actively seeking to improve their conditions. According to Dear, Thomson, and Hills (2000), these offenders are quite “prepared to die in the process” (p.172). Incarcerated offenders may have no means at their disposal to deal with what may be interpreted as an overwhelmingly stressful situation (Inch et al., 1995; Liebling, 1992). This may set the scene where overwhelming negative emotions may be directed inwards towards themselves (Dear, 2008).

Psychological distress is said to have a substantial affect on the frequency and intensity of negative emotions, as well as the direction in which these emotions may be expressed (Baumeister et al., 1996; Spielberger, 1999). When discussing the problems of aggression in individuals with depression, Berkowitz (1983) reported
that they may be compelled to turn their hostility inward. On the other hand, Plutchik and van Praag (1990) argue that only a very small proportion of self-destructive individuals also engage in violence. Most individuals affected with depressive symptoms may exhibit “typical” symptoms such as flat or negative feelings (Cemalcilar et al., 2003), intense sadness, ennui and disturbed sleeping patterns (Mills & Kroner, 2004), as well as changes in appetite (Willcox & Sattler, 1996). Self-harm is one possible behavioural outcome from these depressive symptoms.

As previously stated, suicidal prisoners do not always present as depressed individuals (Ronningstam & Maltsberger 1998). Similarly, violent offenders who suicide or self-harm in prison may not always present in a “typically” depressed manner (personal communication Manager Suicide Prevention, Department of Corrective Services, WA). Incarcerated violent offenders have been reported as being very disruptive in prison, by either “acting out” or turning their anger inwards towards themselves (Dear, Thomson, Hall, & Howells, 1998b; Garde, 2003). As previously stated, prisoners who have been convicted of violent crimes against others have been identified as a high-risk group, who are considered to be more likely to self-harm or suicide in prison (Dear et al., 1998a; Liebling, 1995). Many of these vulnerabilities have been identified as requiring intervention and treatment in the offender population. However, the notion of entitlement underpinning these vulnerabilities has yet to be adequately explored. Treatment may be more effective if an inflated sense of entitlement is understood and included in intervention strategies.

1.7.4 Treatment

Over the years there have been a variety of theoretical positions that have driven prison management policies. These positions have ranged from severe punishment regimes through to the psychiatric care and psychological treatment
programs that are currently provided (Hollin, 2000). The contemporary approach to
treatment for individuals with histories of violent offending and self-harming
behaviour has been to deal with each type independently of the other. It may be time
to combine the two into a program that deals with both the inward and outward
expression of negative emotions and cognitions. The purpose of this section is not to
present a detailed review of the treatment for violent offending or self-harming
behaviour, but rather to present a brief overview of the scope of treatment.

1.7.4.1 Treatment for violent offenders

According to Morgan and Winterowd (2002), violent offenders are thought to
be particularly resistant to treatment and yet, once engaged, may exhibit the greatest
capacity for personal growth. However, some researchers maintain that individuals
with life-course-persistent anti-social behaviours are difficult to treat (Moffitt, 1993).
The most salient of the personality disorders in relation to violent offending have
been identified as Anti-social Personality Disorder, Narcissistic Personality Disorder
and Borderline Personality Disorder (Moffitt, 1993). Similarly, some individuals
with psychopathy have been reported to be almost impossible to treat (Harris, Rice,
& Lalumière, 2001; Quinsey, Harris, Rice & Cormier, 1998). According to Lösel
(1998), it is not only individuals with psychopathy but offenders in general who are
considered to be difficult to change. However, a number of researchers argue that
whilst rehabilitating incarcerated psychopaths and other offenders may be
particularly challenging, successful treatment is possible in a supportive correctional
setting (Correctional Services of Canada, 1997; Harding, 2000; Salekin, 2002; Wang,
Owens, Long, Diamond, & Smith, 2000).

The wide range of anti-social, pro-criminal factors that have been addressed
in offender programs are far too numerous to discuss in this thesis; however, specific
interventions targeting an inflated sense of entitlement have yet to be included. The following is a brief overview of the factors that have been included in treatment programs. These factors include the dynamic factors of criminogenic needs (Andrews, Zinger et al., 1990; Bonta, 1996; McGuire, 2000), as well as pre-existing vulnerabilities and situational triggers (McSherry, 2004). Offender services in the western world and in Australia have used a range of evidenced-based programs incorporating a range of different treatment modalities for males (Howells, Watt, Hall, & Baldwin, 1997). Although at times women have been identified as perpetrators of violence (McFarlane, Willson, Malecha, & Lemmey, 2000; Shaw & Dubois, 1995), the majority of violent offenders are male (Kaufman, 1999).

Programs have been conducted to address the offending behaviours of males who injure other males (Kaufman, 1999), as well as males who assault females (Dobash, Dobash, Cavanagh, & Lewis, 1996; Dobash & Dobash, 2000; Indermaur, 2001).

In a major study undertaken on anger management programs conducted in WA and South Australia (SA), Howells et al. (2002) determined that anger management played a small, yet highly selective, role in the rehabilitation of violent behaviours. In their study, which comprised 200 male violent offenders, it was revealed that only violent offenders high in anger and low in anger control received any substantial benefit from the anger management program (Howells et al., 2002). This is similar to those that Megargee (1970) refers to as undercontrolled aggressive types. These findings indicate that programs need to be broadened in order to be effective. As well as the general content of programs, specific needs also need to be included in a comprehensive violent offending program in order to be successful (Howells, Day, & Thomas-Peter, 2004). Howells et al. (2004) recommended that as
well as participating in the general program, an individual functional analysis and tailored treatment plan should be specifically designed for each participant.

There are a variety of offender programs and self-help manuals dealing with: anti-social and pro-criminal thinking patterns (Robinson & Porporino, 2001); anger (Novaco, 1997; Novaco, Ramm, & Black, 2000); rage (Fisher, 2005); and violent behaviour (Howells, 1996, 2004; Howells et al., 1997). Nevertheless, whilst some do appear to have some successes, very few have mentioned addressing an inflated sense of entitlement.

1.7.4.2 Treatment for self-harming offenders

Prison-based psychologists see self-harming incarcerated offenders in WA on an individual basis (personal communication Manager Suicide Prevention, Department of Corrective Services, WA). Individual sessions target a range of factors identified in the research literature. These factors include: coping strategy training (Dear et al., 1998b); problem solving skills (Boyce, Carter, Penrose-Wall, Wilhelm, & Goldney, 2003); anger and stress management skills (Hillbrand, 2001); and skills to change destructive cognitions and emotions (Howells, Hall, & Day, 1999). However, whilst there seemed to be a comprehensive range of treatment strategies there did not appear to be any mention made of targeting an inflated sense of entitlement in these individual counselling sessions.

Very few researchers have proposed training programs to provide group support to incarcerated offenders vulnerable to self-harm and suicidal behaviour. Green (2003b) recommended establishing “trauma first aid” program to assist vulnerable offenders who have recently been incarcerated; however, this option does not appear to have been implemented to date. The only program that seems to be available to assist vulnerable offenders in Australia is the “Real Understanding of
Self-Help” or “RUSH” program (Eccleston & Sorbello, 2002). The RUSH program is a short program of twenty hours that reports targeting distress management before addressing any other issues (Eccleston & Sorbello, 2002). The program is said to use cognitive, behavioural and acceptance-based interventions including psycho-educational skills training, stress reduction techniques and relaxation exercises (Eccleston & Sorbello, 2002). Whilst the RUSH program seemed quite comprehensive in its approach, it was noted that there was no mention of targeting an inflated sense of entitlement as a criminogenic need. Targeting an inflated sense of entitlement in treatment programs may benefit self-harming offenders.

1.8 Criminogenic Needs, Violence and Entitlement

There is a wide variety of criminogenic needs that have been identified and included in treatment programs for incarcerated offenders. As mentioned previously, criminogenic needs are defined as anti-social risk factors that lead to pro-criminal behaviours (Bonta, 1996). These risk factors need to be addressed to effect successful and sustainable pro-social rehabilitation. In the next section, aggression, hostility and violence in the context of an inflated sense entitlement will be discussed. Plato’s concept of a just life will be used to provide a framework to illustrate those criminogenic needs that are associated with an inflated sense of entitlement. Each of these areas will be discussed in turn.

1.8.1 Aggression, Hostility and Violence in the Context of Entitlement

Contemporary theorists have identified links between an inflated sense of entitlement with anger, hostility and aggression, particularly in violent offenders (Hart & Joubert, 1996; Rhodewalt & Morf, 1995; Witte, Callahan, & Perez-Lopez, 2002). In addition, Skeem, Monahan, and Mulvey (2002) described an inflated sense of entitlement as a specific pro-criminal attitude. Whilst investigating this area it
became apparent that there were three main categories of criminogenic needs. This section will introduce Plato’s concept of a just and moral life to provide a framework to categorise these individual criminogenic needs. Using Plato’s concept these three categories may be referred to as the desiring, spirited and rational parts of the soul (Nettleship, 1958). Using contemporary language, these three categories may be referred to as: self-control or self-discipline; recognition and respect; and the ability to make sound decisions and show good judgement.

Issues of self-control or self-discipline include a range of what has been identified as antisocial attributes (Hirschi, 1969; Sutherland & Cressey, 1970). Antisocial attributes may include: cold affect; lack of reciprocity; self-absorption; high levels of frustration (Hart & Joubert, 1996); and high levels of narcissism (Twenge & Campbell, 2003). Other antisocial characteristics that have been identified by contemporary theorists include: impulsivity (Blackburn, 1993; Farrington, 2002); low tolerance threshold (Jenkins, 1990); impaired limits, which includes a deficiency in internalized responsibility to others; difficulty respecting the rights of others (Young, 1994); hostile attributions (Ferguson & Rule, 1983); and lack of consequential thinking (Polaschek & Reynolds, 2000). Many of these emotions, cognitions and behaviours have been directly linked with hostility, conflict and violent offending (Gendreau, Little, & Goggin, 1996; Young, 1994).

Expectations of recognition and respect include expectations of privilege (Walters, 1995a), arrogance and power (Raskin & Terry, 1988), status (Millon, 1981) and self-esteem (Baumeister et al., 1996). Shame, ridicule, disrespect and humiliation have been identified as some of the principal causes of violence, whether the violence is directed towards others or towards the self (Gilligan, 1996). According to Gilligan (1996) and Levi and Maguire (2002), the purpose of violence is said to
reduce the intensity of these emotions by replacing them with recognition, respect and pride.

A series of steps, however, are required to reinstate one’s position of privilege, power and status (Katz, 1988). Feelings of shame, ridicule, disrespect and humiliation are experienced as intolerable to violent men; therefore they must, as a matter of urgency, be transformed and extinguished. According to Katz (1988), humiliation is transformed into rage through self-righteousness, or an inflated sense of entitlement. This is required in order to regain social identity or status that is regarded by the individual as particularly valuable. Humiliation and rage are viewed as holistic experiences. Humiliation, according to Katz (1988), is said to “take over the soul”, that is, one’s “very being” is humiliated (p.25). Similar to humiliation is rage, which also encompasses a whole of body experience. However, humiliation threatens to be everlasting and diffuse whereas rage is said to have the ability to focus on a target to detonate, and then extinguish itself. Thus whilst humiliation drives one down towards shame, ridicule and disrespect, it is rage that has an upward trajectory. For some males it is a source of pride and honour to be the one who dispenses violence to others (Gilligan, 1996).

Nathanson (1992) had previously identified shame as a key factor motivating human behaviour. To illustrate his theory, Nathanson (1992) created the “Compass of Shame” in which he identifies four poles of a compass. The fist pole is Withdrawal, which is described as isolating one’s self, the second is Attack Self, which includes masochism. The third pole is Avoidance, which included denial and distraction, the fourth pole is Attack Others, which is described as externalising blame and attacking verbally or physically. According to Nathanson (1992) these behaviours can migrate from fairly mild to pathological within each category. In
addition, these poles can operate as pairs for instance “anger” may be shared by Attack Self and Attack Other (see Elison, Lennon, & Pulos, 2006). Nathanson (1992) also makes a link with shame and entitlement, proposing that entitlement stems from early experiences of shame.

In addition to humiliation and shame, the ability to make sound decisions and show good judgement is impaired by the use of justifications for anti-social attitudes (Sykes & Matza, 1957) and pro-criminal attitudes (Skeem et al., 2002). For instance, the neutralisation theory proposed by Sykes and Matza (1957) posits that individuals use reasoning in order to neutralise pro-social values in order to rationalise their pro-criminal sentiments and behaviour. In addition, disinhibition to aggression in which offenders learn processes that weaken pro-social sentiments and strengthen a pro-criminal stance can lead to poor judgment (Bandura, Underwood, & Fromson, 1975). Further, dehumanisation which can lead to a reduced sense of personal responsibility also has the propensity to lead to poor decision making (Zimbardo, 1973). The above literature suggests that an inflated sense of entitlement is multifaceted and it is likely therefore that it involves emotions, cognitions and behaviours.

1.9 Emotion, Cognition, Violence and Entitlement

This section will demonstrate how an inflated sense of entitlement elicits maladaptive emotions, provocative cognitions and violent behaviour. Difficulties arise, however, when attempting to define and measure emotions, cognition and anti-social behaviour due to the wide variety of descriptions in each of these areas. This is due, in part, to the location of the demarcation line of precisely when these areas become maladaptive, provocative and violent. There are many views from a variety of different disciplines. The following discussion will introduce some of these views.
1.9.1 Maladaptive Emotions

Researchers agree that emotions such as anger, shame and feelings of victimisation appear to be some of the most difficult feelings for violent men to process and regulate appropriately (Averill, 1982; Papps & O'Carroll, 1998). In this section there will be an overview of some of the difficulties identified in violent men and their interpretation, understanding and expression of the emotions that they experience. This section begins with what has been described by Averill (1982) as the most common of all human emotions.

Anger has often been defined as an emotive experience, coupled with physiological arousal, which has the propensity to elicit aggression towards another (Averill, 1982). Anger is known to range in intensity from mild annoyance to intense rage (Spielberger, 1999). Should an individual experience intense levels of rage, then the psychological defences supporting pro-social behaviour are likely to be overwhelmed and may subsequently break down (Davey, Day, & Howells, 2005; Kohut, 1972).

The relationship between anger and narcissism was investigated by Witte et al. (2002). They found that the entitlement and authority subscales of the Narcissistic Personality Inventory were positively correlated with anger in 130 adult male students. This is one of the few studies that specifically demonstrated the relationship between anger and an inflated sense of entitlement. According to the authors, this study also highlighted the value of identifying and targeting specific traits, rather than global measures of personality disorders. By targeting psychological traits, treatment options would be open to those individuals that did not meet the criteria for a formal diagnosis, yet possessed substantial anger issues. This study provided the groundwork to further examine the relationship between a sense of entitlement and
anger. In the current study violent men, rather than a student-only sample, was used to investigate this relationship.

Other authors have suggested emotions such as shame and frustration (Papps & O'Carroll, 1998) and a profound sense of victimisation or punishment (Beck, 2000) may also underpin aggression and violence. As described earlier, experiencing shame has the capacity to result in externalising blame and lashing out verbally and/or physically (Nathanson, 1992). Frustration can contribute to a disposition towards aggression in individuals who demonstrate overt hostility as well as individuals who demonstrate depressive characteristics (Berkowitz 1983). As previously stated, frustration can elicit an inclination towards aggressive behaviour, because frustration is an aversive state (Berkowitz, 1989). This aversive state may then activate a primordial predisposition to a “fight-or-flight” response (Finman & Berkowitz, 1989). Thus, according to Berkowitz (1989), the primordial occurrence of anger would be experienced before any cognitive processes can be mobilised.

Notwithstanding the strength of negative emotions experienced by individuals with an inflated sense of entitlement, some individuals may have also experienced difficulty in recognising and regulating emotions (Bar-On & Parker, 2000). Chronic deficits in regulating emotions have been noted as an important antecedent to violent offending (Howells & Day, 2006). Howells and Day (2006) defined emotion as: “brief, target-specific affective reactions”, which “often comprise conscious information about antecedents, consequences and reactions” (p.175). Peter Sifneos coined the term “alexithymia” in 1973 to identify a range of difficulties in emotional expression (Bar-On & Parker, 2000). According to Bar-On and Parker (2000), alexithymia has been defined as a personality trait that identified individuals who
have difficulty in recognising and describing emotions, as well as deficits in processing and regulating emotions.

Suppression of emotions may also be used to inhibit angry behaviour, indicating that some individuals may experience difficulty processing their emotional experiences (Davey et al., 2005). Salovey and Mayer (1989/1990) used the term “emotional intelligence” to identify individual differences in emotion processing. These processing differences include differentiating emotion and the capacity to monitor emotions, as well as differences in the ability to recognise the emotions in others during interpersonal interactions.

Recognising the facial display of emotions in others is also considered important in guiding one’s thinking and subsequent behaviour (Parker, Taylor, & Bagby, 2001). In a study investigating the relationship between emotional intelligence and alexithymia, Parker et al. (2001) examined 734 adults (329 men and 405 women) using the Toronto Alexithymia Scale (TAS-20) and the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i). They found a strong inversely-correlated relationship between alexithymia and emotional intelligence. Parker et al. (2001) also found that individuals with low emotional intelligence, and correspondingly high levels of alexithymia, not only have a limited capacity to enable their emotions to guide pro-social behaviour, but also have difficulties dealing with stress, as well as limited availability of behavioural options. Stress management training and the ability to generate pro-social behavioural options have been identified as deficits in violent offenders and have, for some years, been incorporated into treatment programs for serious violent offenders in the WA prison system (Howells et al., 1997).
“Emotional awareness” is another term that has been used in recent times to
describe emotion processing (Mallinckrodt & Wei, 2005). In their study on
emotional awareness and attachment styles, involving 430 students, Mallinckrodt and
Wei (2005) found that both attachment anxiety and avoidance anxiety were
positively correlated with psychological distress. They found attachment anxiety was
negatively correlated with emotional awareness and therefore positively correlated
with alexithymia. This led them to report that individuals with high attachment
anxiety would have difficulty differentiating their emotions. They also found
attachment avoidance was significant and negatively correlated with emotional
awareness. Mallinckrodt and Wei (2005) reported that these findings were consistent
with what they termed “attachment deactivation”. They defined attachment
deactivation as a situation in which an individual, with high attachment avoidance,
who may experience an actual or perceived threat, will hold in-check any emotion
and reject any notion of interpersonal interaction. Mallinckrodt and Wei (2005)
concluded that secure attachment styles in early childhood would facilitate pro-social
coping mechanisms, social competencies and helpful social supports. However,
attachment anxiety and attachment avoidance has the propensity to result in a wide
variety of maladaptive functioning.

This notion was supported by Schore (2002), who identified the presence of a
disorganized-disoriented-insecure attachment of traumatized infants that resulted in
poor emotional control and poor coping ability later on in life (attachment styles are
referred to throughout this theses; however, for a more in-depth discussion on the
origins and types of attachment see Chapter Six - 6.3.6 and 6.3.6.1).

Psychological distress encompasses the experience of a range of strong
negative emotions. Investigations into the difficulty in identifying and regulating
emotions may add to understanding the nature of the emotional component of an inflated sense of entitlement. Further investigations in this area may find a relationship between powerful emotions, an inflated sense of entitlement and attachment styles.

1.9.2 Provocative Cognitions

There are two major types of thinking patterns commonly used by violent offenders. One major type of thinking pattern is the neutralisation of pro-social values (Sykes & Matza, 1957) and the other is pro-criminal thoughts (Walters, 1995a, 1996). In this section, anti-social and pro-criminal thoughts and their relationship to an inflated sense of entitlement will be discussed.

Anti-social or provocative thoughts, in particular anti-social sentiments, are characterised by low-self control with individuals focusing their attention on short-term gratification at the expense of long-term consequences (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990; Hirschi, 1969). This premise is central to the control theories focusing on delinquent and deviant behaviour proposed by Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) and Hirschi (1969). There is substantial empirical data on the role of anti-social attitudes, or criminogenic needs, in offending behaviour (Andrews & Bonta, 1998; Andrews, Bonta et al., 1990; Gendreau et al., 1996). There is also the neutralisation theory proposed by Sykes and Matza (1957), which states that individuals use cognitive processes to neutralise pro-social values through such thoughts as: denial of responsibility, for example, “I just saw red”; denial of injury, for example, “no-one got hurt”; denial of the victim, for example “she shouldn’t have nagged me”; condemnation of the condemners, for examples, “don’t blame me, it’s the system’s fault”; and to appeal to higher loyalties, for example “I had to do it”. According to
Hall et al. (2006) offenders, particularly violent offenders, use these neutralisations to justify their anti-social and pro-criminal behaviour.

Individuals who indulge in provocative and pro-criminal thoughts and subsequent behaviours are, at some time, likely to be incarcerated for crimes against the society in which they live. Many researchers agree that the beginning of a prison term induces considerable psychological discomfort especially when coupled with the substantial coping deficits found in many incarcerated offenders (Dear et al., 1998a, 1998b; Garde, 2003; Liebling, 1995, 1999; Zamble, 1992; Zamble & Porporino, 1988, 1990). Coping has been defined as the effort to manage the demands that exceed an individual’s threshold (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). This situation is heightened, as the few coping resources available to violent offenders may not be accessible or attainable within the prison environment (Hall et al., 2006). The lack of control and the lack of favoured support systems whilst incarcerated may easily contribute to or exacerbate frustrated psychological needs (Mills, Green, & Reddon, 2005).

One specific study that investigated cognitive processes and a sense of entitlement is the criminal thinking styles as proposed by Walters (1995a). Following a study of 450 incarcerated offenders, Walters (1995a) devised what he termed “the lifestyle model of criminal conduct”. Underpinning this model were conditions, choice and cognition. According to Walters (1995a), if conditions and choice have led an individual into criminal involvement, then as a consequence, their cognitions would support the subsequent lifestyle.

Walters (1995a) went on to design the Psychological Inventory of Criminal Thinking Styles (PICTS) comprising eight overlapping thinking styles using an 80-item inventory (see Chapter Four - 4.2.1, for more information on the construction of
These eight thinking styles are mollification, cut-off, entitlement, power orientation, sentimentality, superoptimism, cognitive indolence and discontinuity. From these he reported a four-factor model. Entitlement was signified by an attitude of ownership or privilege, as opposed to considering another individual’s perspective. Entitlement also included a tendency to be unable to properly discriminate between wants and needs. Walters (1996) measured aggressiveness by the scores on the entitlement scale.

Walters (1996) later investigated the criminal thinking styles of 536 incarcerated offenders using the PICTS in order to predict disciplinary problems in prison, and then completed a two year follow up using disciplinary files. The results of this study were mixed, but appeared to highlight racial differences particularly in regard to an inflated sense of entitlement. For instance, laziness (cognitive indolence) and irresponsibility (discontinuity) appeared to lead to disciplinary problems for Caucasians. However, aggressiveness (entitlement) and exerting control over others (power orientation) appeared to lead to disciplinary problems for African American offenders. This study invites further research, particularly in order to further examine the nature of cognitive processes of entitlement on a sample of Caucasian males.

1.9.3 Violent Behaviour

Researchers have found that the media have used terms like “cruel” and “heinous” to describe serious violent offences that have been perpetrated on others by violent offenders (Carcach & James, 1998; Mouzos & Rushforth, 2003; Mouzos & Venditto, 2004). Many researchers have reported on violent crimes that range from mass murder and serial killings (Dietz, 1986; Gerberth, 1986; Gresswell, 2000; Gresswell & Hollin, 1994; Holmes & DeBurger, 1985; Holmes & Holmes, 1992) to
the unlawful killing of individuals by gangs (Hovland & Sears, 1970) or the unlawful killing of individuals (Mouzos, 2003; Nicol, Innes, Gee, & Feist, 2003).

Demographic information on the perpetrators of violence has been well examined by a wide range of researchers. For instance, perpetrators have been found to be heterosexual males (Finney, 2004a; Gilchrist et al., 2003; Kane, Staiger, & Ricciardelli, 2002; Richards, MacLachlan, Scott, & Gregory, 2004), homosexual males (Regan, Bartholomew, Oram, & Landolt, 2002), heterosexual females (Shaw & Dubois, 1995), lesbians (Coleman, 1994), as well as adolescents and children (Duncan & Duncan, 1971; Urquiza & Timmer, 2002).

The psychopathological and psychiatric profiles of violent behaviour have also been well documented in the literature (Swanson, Holzer, Ganju, & Jono, 1990; Valliant, Gristey, Pottier, & Kosmyna, 1999). As stated earlier, these profiles include APD (Wilson, 2003), BPD (Holtzworth-Munroe & Stuart, 1994; Kernberg, 1975), psychopathy (Hemphill, Templeman, Wong, & Hare, 1998; Vassileva, Kosson, Abramowitz, & Conrod, 2005) and NPD (Hart & Joubert, 1996; Patalano, 1997; Raskin & Hall, 1979; Stucke & Sporer, 2002).

Some researchers maintain that “violent behaviour is random and essentially beyond reliable prediction” (Piquero, 2000, p.411). However, other researchers argue that violent behaviour can be attributed to a range of other factors including genetic susceptibility (Morley & Hall, 2003), childhood environment and parental relationships (McCord, McCord, & Howard, 1970), as well as childhood cruelty to animals (Merz-Perez, Heide, & Silverman, 2001). Alcohol and drug use have also been strongly implicated in violent behaviour by a range of researchers (Backett 1987; Bogue & Power, 1995; Fishbein, 2000; Finney, 2004b; McMurrann, 2000a). Another view is that frustration actually underpins both alcohol consumption and
aggressive behaviour (Sherif & Sherif, 1970). However, Welte, Zhang, & Wieczorek (2001) argue that whilst alcohol or drugs may not be the causal factor for violence, the literature indicates that being under the influence increases the propensity for severe violent behaviour. Drug and alcohol use in the presence of a comorbid psychological diagnosis may further increase the risk of violence (Swanson et al., 1990). Furthermore, individuals with a personality disorder have been reported to be responsible for more crime than individuals with a psychiatric illness (McMurran, 2000b).

In a review of three studies on alcohol consumption and violence, involving a total of 500 male offenders, Walsh (1999) identified individuals he referred to as “psychopathic alcoholics”. According to Walsh (1999), psychopathic alcoholics are most likely to react violently to low levels of provocation and use their use of alcohol as a reason for their violent behaviour. These individuals have little empathy and remorse for their victim and report an increase in self-esteem following an assault. This increase in self-esteem following an assault may be that state which violent offenders refer to as being “pumped”. For instance, when examining motivation for violent crime Wood, Gove, and Cochran (2005) found that most violent offenders reported being unimpressed with conventional societal rewards, yet felt particularly rewarded by feeling exhilarated and energized, or "pumped", following a violent altercation.

Whilst some violent offenders may not appear to experience any psychological discomfort immediately prior to their violent behaviour, there are others who experience high levels of psychological distress (Dear et al., 1998b). In addition to experiencing psychological distress, negative ideas and bad memories may also be activated which may then increase the likelihood of aggressive behaviour (Finman &
Anecdotal evidence has suggested that violent offenders are more likely than non-violent individuals to unleash their aggression on others or, alternatively, hold their aggression in-check. Non-violent offenders use pro-social ways to discharge aggression. Of interest is whether violent offenders will chose anti-social interpersonal interactions such as confrontation or assaultive behaviours as suggested by McClellan and Killeen (2000) and Weisz, Tolman, & Saunders (2000) (see Chapter Six - 6.3.1 for a further discussion on this topic). Or, alternatively, if they would chose to deactivate their attachment and harbour anti-social thoughts whilst enacting rejecting behaviours as proposed by Mallinckrodt and Wei (2005). It is suggested that violent offenders with an inflated sense of entitlement will enact all three of these behaviours: assault, confrontation and rejection.

In this section, maladaptive emotions, provocative cognitions and a range of characteristics that have been linked to violent behaviour were discussed. In the next section the theoretical structure of an inflated sense of entitlement is introduced.

1.10 Theoretical Model

Whilst the range of theoretical perspectives discussed in the previous section provided sound theoretical knowledge, they do not specifically address the process of an inflated sense of entitlement in violent men. It may be that an inflated sense of entitlement is part of a long standing personality construct or simply a psychological state, both of which may be amenable to treatment intervention.

The theoretical model begins with an individual who holds an excessive or inflated sense of entitlement. The individual may hold a group of emotions and cognitions that appear quite benign until they are thwarted or violated in some important way, resulting in a rapid increase in the intensity of negative emotions. Thought processes may then mediate
these emotions either as self-soothing or, the situation may become inflamed through the activation of provocative anti-social cognitions. If the emotions are strong and the thoughts are provocative this may then lead to the sudden emergence of anti-social behaviours. This violent response may be directed towards others or towards the self. The following is a representation of the model (see Figure 1.1).

![Diagram](image)

*Figure 1.1 Theoretical model of a violated inflated sense of entitlement.*

1.11 The Four Studies

To investigate the theoretical model of an inflated sense of entitlement the study was divided into four individual, yet interrelated, investigations. The global purpose of this body of work is to determine that a sense of entitlement is related to harm to others and harm to the self. In addition, this thesis sets out to determine if an inflated sense of entitlement meets two of the criteria to qualify as a criminogenic need. As mentioned previously, there are three criteria needed to qualify as a
criminogenic need (Bonta, 1996). The first criterion is that the characteristic is amenable to change. The second criterion is that the characteristic has the ability to distinguish non-criminal from criminal behaviour. The third criterion is that the characteristic must have the ability to be measured (Bonta, 1996). Establishing the first criterion, that is, if an inflated sense of entitlement can be changed, is not the purpose of this thesis. It is the second and third criteria that will be investigated. Before introducing the first study, information will be provided on pre-existing differences, the research questions and how the research questions will be answered.

1.11.1 Pre-existing Differences

Previous research has found differences in demographic information between pro-social behaviour and anti-social behaviour (Wright, 1991). Researchers have found demographic differences between violent and non-violent offenders in age, race and marital status (Robinson, Muirhead, & Lefaive, 1997). Robinson et al. (1997) found that violent offenders in their study were slightly older, at an average of 35 years, than non-violent offenders. In addition, most violent offenders were not Caucasian and were unmarried. Other demographic differences include education level and previous convictions for violent behaviour (Toch & Adams, 1989; Wright, 1991). Toch and Adams (1989) found violent offenders had a lower level of education and were more likely to engage in intra-prison conflicts if they had previous convictions for violent behaviour. Variables such as race and previous violent convictions have been controlled for in this body of work. In this thesis only Australian-born, non-Indigenous men were included. An inflated sense of entitlement is a discrete theoretical construct, which has not been successfully assessed before. As this is exploratory research it was decided that the best way to obtain a clear idea of this construct was to restrict the sample to make it as homogenous as possible, as
the more homogenous the sample, the more reliable the results will be. When a reliable result is established with Australian-born, non-Indigenous males this construct may then be investigated using different populations.

The operational definition for violent offenders consists of individuals who have been incarcerated for serious crimes of violence (See Appendix A for inclusion list). Other demographics such as age, marital status and education level were collected as an integral part of each investigation.

1.11.2 The Purpose of this Study

Two major questions are addressed in this thesis. The first question asks - is an inflated sense of entitlement related to violent offending behaviour? The second question asks - is inflated sense of entitlement related to self-harming behaviour? Thus, the first global hypothesis for this body of work is that an inflated sense of entitlement is related to violent offending. The second global hypothesis is that an inflated sense of entitlement is related to self-harming behaviour. Four studies were designed to examine these hypotheses. These investigations are also expected to provide the evidence for two of the three criteria required for a characteristic to be identified as a criminogenic need. That is, that an inflated sense of entitlement can be measured and can distinguish offenders from non-offenders.

1.11.3 The Studies

Four individual sequential studies were designed to examine the research questions. The first of the four studies is a qualitative exploration of an inflated sense of entitlement using a semi-structured interview methodology on incarcerated male violent offenders and male members of the general public. The aims of this first study are to refine an inflated sense of entitlement for violent offenders and to determine if there is a qualitative difference between the two groups (see Chapter
Grounded theory was chosen as the most appropriate method of investigation as the analysis is “grounded” in the participants’ own quotes in order to provide a rich illustration of their experiences (Elliot, Fischer, & Rennie, 1999).

The second study is an empirical investigation using archival data to determine the extent of self-harm incidents in violent and non-violent incarcerated offenders. The aim of this second study is to determine whether violent offenders are more likely to self-harm than non-violent offenders (see Chapter Three). Although self-report studies have found that incarcerated violent offenders self-harm at a higher rate than non-violent offenders (Dear, Thomson & Hills, 2000; Liebling 1992), self report studies have been called into question (Kenny & Press, 2006). Therefore an examination of archival data of documented attempts would increase the accuracy and dependability of the results.

The first and second studies were also used to design the questions for the following two studies. The third study is the construction and validation of an inflated sense of entitlement scale using a student sample.

The aim of this third study is to enable the measurement of an inflated sense of entitlement (see Chapter Four). The rational for designing the scale was that there did not appear to be a comprehensive scale on a sense of entitlement specifically designed for violent offenders.

The fourth, and final study, is the examination of a sense of entitlement in both violent and non-violent incarcerated offenders. A quasi-experimental study was chosen as the optimal method for investigating this population. A true experimental design would have required random selection of the general population, however, as this study was investigating violent offenders, a random selection of violent offenders was required. This study was conducted to establish the level of
entitlement in violent men and to establish the level of entitlement in self-harming offenders (see Chapter Five). Chapter Six is the synthesis of each study followed by a general discussion. Each chapter in this thesis begins with an overview of the chapter. Most chapters then have a very brief interpretation of Plato’s original premise on each of the themes under investigation. While Plato used philosophical language, he nonetheless provides a fitting framework for the investigations undertaken in each study. The introduction of each chapter is followed by the specific study and concludes with a discussion on that particular study.
Chapter Two: A Sense of Entitlement in Violent Men: A Qualitative Analysis

2.1 Overview

The previous chapter provided a very broad outline on a sense of entitlement. A theoretical model of an inflated sense of entitlement was proposed whereby violent men with an inflated sense of entitlement are likely to respond with anti-social behaviour in a range of situations. This violent behaviour may be directed either towards others or towards the self. Therefore, due to a lack of information in this area, a qualitative investigation was chosen as an exploratory examination of an inflated sense of entitlement.

As a qualitative analysis works inductively, it can provide rich descriptive data that has the capacity to open this area for both current and future investigations. The aims of this study were to refine a sense of entitlement for violent offenders and to determine if there was a qualitative difference between violent men and members of the general public. Participants in this study included incarcerated offenders with entrenched violent lifestyles and members of the general public.

This study demonstrated that violent men endorsed anti-social behaviours towards others on each of the twelve domains under investigation. Violent men also directed their emotions inward towards themselves on eleven of the twelve domains.
2.2 A Sense of Entitlement and Violence

Plato’s original concept of entitlement was modelled on cruelty and violence and was described as the motivating force underpinning violent behaviour. In Plato’s conceptualisation, a pathological sense of entitlement is elicited when both honour and recognition have been thwarted (Pappas, 1995). This had the effect of losing respect from others and the self, which then resulted in anger and rage (Pappas, 1995). Plato also maintained that disharmony in the three parts of the soul would culminate in the disintegration of morality resulting in brutality and violent behaviour (Strathern, 1996).

A sense of entitlement has been proposed as a criminogenic need (Fisher et al., 2008), which indicates that this concept may have the capacity to be incorporated into violent offender treatment programs. However, this requires a detailed examination into the specific characteristics that underpin an inflated sense of entitlement so that they can be successfully targeted in treatment programs. To accomplish this, a range of domains was chosen for investigation.

2.2.1 The Domains

A number of descriptors found in the literature on a sense of entitlement were combined in order to simplify this complex area and to reduce the volume into a manageable number. The descriptors were combined by using the theoretical coding technique described by Glaser (1992). This resulted in twelve domains which effectively illustrated the theoretical structure. All twelve of the domains were given their labels from aggregated descriptors of a sense of entitlement from the literature. Each was chosen to explore an individual’s sense of a “right to” within each domain.
and, what happens in terms of feelings, thoughts and behaviours if this “right” is
contravened. Each of these domains will be described in turn.

2.2.1.1 Respect

Respect was reported by Beck (2000) and Jenkins (1990) to be an important
aspect in describing a sense of entitlement. Included in this domain was the
favourable self-evaluation reported by Baumeister et al. (1996). For the purpose of
this study, to be respected is defined as being admired, revered and honoured. Thus
the first domain to be included in this study is labelled the right to “respect”.

2.2.1.2 Forgiveness

Forgiveness is feelings of compassion and understanding associated with an
act, or acts, of pardon. Jenkins (1990) reported a number of descriptors which
included external blame, making excuses as well as being given permission. Beck
(2000) and Jenkins (1990) also described wanting to end the experience of shame or
guilt, as part of a sense of entitlement. These descriptors were aggregated to
conceptualise the right to “forgiveness”.

2.2.1.3 Anger

Anger is defined as an emotion ranging from minor irritation to intense rage.
Various levels of aggression (Novaco, 1997) anger (Monahan, 1981) and rage
(Bishop & Lane, 2002) have been used to describe a sense of entitlement.
Researchers have identified low impulse control, toughness (Raskin & Terry, 1988)
and hostility (Beck, 2000; Jenkins, 1990) to describe the entitlement to express anger
inappropriately. These descriptors were aggregated to conceptualise the right to
“anger” domain.
2.2.1.4 Frustration

For the purpose of this study frustration is understood as being thwarted, disgruntled and dissatisfied. Other descriptors and definitions, such as low tolerance (Jenkins, 1990), difficulties dealing with defeat (Young, 1994), low self-esteem (Wilson & Prabucki, 1983), unstable self-esteem (Baumeister et al., 1996) and unworthiness (Raskin & Terry, 1988) were pooled to conceptualise the right to “frustration” domain.

2.2.1.5 Sympathy and support

Sympathy is defined as disappointment and pity. Support is defined as an act of kindness, such as, psychological support and physical assistance. Jenkins (1990) identified expectations of sympathy and support when describing a sense of entitlement. Therefore this domain is labelled the right to “sympathy and support”

2.2.1.6 Special treatment

Special treatment is understood to be forthcoming in order to pay tribute to an exceptional and valued individual. Various researchers have described the expectation of special treatment in regard to a sense of entitlement, to include expecting special privileges and unreasonable expectations (American Psychiatric Association, 1994, 2000; Raskin & Terry, 1988). Descriptions such as expecting undeserved rights (Walters, 1995a, 1996; Young, 1994), egocentrism or thinking of themselves as special were also included (Beck, 2000; Jenkins, 1990; Millon, 1981). These descriptors were aggregated to be included in the right to “special treatment” domain.

2.2.1.7 Power

Power is defined as domination and generalised control over people or situations. Raskin and Terry (1988) and Gresswell (2000) also included the need for
power and dominance as a descriptor of a sense of entitlement. Ransford (1970) reported on the importance of power as an indicator of status. These descriptors were combined within the right to “power” domain.

2.2.1.8 Extra good times

Extra good times are defined as an expectation of reimbursement or compensation for not having what one desires. Having a right to be compensated for perceived deficits during one’s life course, and wanting revenge if this compensation was not forthcoming (Levin, 1993) and a general “chip-on-the-shoulder” attitude (Beck, 2000; Wilson & Prabucki, 1983) were aggregated to conceptualise the right to “extra good times” domain.

2.2.1.9 Obedience from family and friends

Individuals holding a high sense of entitlement have an expectation of submission and compliance to requests from family and friends. Expecting ownership of another (Jenkins, 1990), control and obedience by family members, friends and associates (Simourd & Olver, 2002; Walters, 1995a) also belong in this domain.

2.2.1.10 Obedience from subordinates

Similar to the previous domain, obedience in regard to subordinates is also defined as anticipating submission, agreement and compliance to requests from those who are perceived to be subordinate (Simourd & Olver, 2002; Walters, 1995a, 1996). In addition, the expectation of status, success and influence (Jenkins, 1990); ambitiousness (Raskin & Terry, 1988); and deference (Beck, 2000) contributed to this domain.
2.2.1.11 Pay back special favours

Pay back special favours is defined as understanding and acceptance of equal division and mutual exchange. Experiencing difficulty with empathy (Watson et al., 1984), sharing (Millon, 1981; Walters, 1995a) and reciprocity (Watson et al., 1984; Young, 1994) were aggregated to conceptualise the right not to “pay back special favours” domain.

2.2.1.12 Wishes

Wishes are defined as viewing one’s desires as necessities. Expecting wishes to materialise (Dear, 2005; Millon, 1981) misidentification of wants as needs (Shabad, 1993; Walters, 1995a) and impaired limits (Young, 1994) were included to conceptualise this domain as a right to have wishes granted.

Thus, a wide range of descriptors has been amalgamated into twelve composite domains in order to reduce the complexity of a sense of entitlement as presented in the literature.

2.3 Method

2.3.1 Participants

The study comprised 27 participants, consisting of 16 violent offenders incarcerated in maximum-security facilities in the WA criminal justice system, and 11 members of the general public. All violent offender participants were sentenced prisoners at various stages of their term of incarceration. Australian-born, non-Indigenous males were included in this study, with an age range from 25 years through to 40 years.

Demographic data included age, marital status and education. The participants were evenly matched in regard to age. The mean age for the violent offender group was 30.6 years with an age range from 25 to 38 years, whilst the
mean age for members of the general public was 30 years with an age range from 25 to 39 years. Most participants were single. In the violent offender group, four were in defacto relationships, one was married and one was divorced. In the group comprising members of the general public, one was in a defacto relationship and three were married. The educational background for the violent offender group was generally at a much lower level than members of the general public. The education level of offenders ranged from year seven through to year ten, with two participants in this group having completed two years each of a tertiary degree. Most members of the general public had a post-secondary education, ranging from completion of year eleven, trade certificates, through to tertiary diplomas and university degrees.

Demographic information on marital status and education, between the violent offenders and members of the general public, in this study provided support for the previous research. Most members of the general public and violent offenders in this study were single. This finding does not show support for the premise put forward by Robinson et al. (1997) who maintained that violent offenders were more likely to be single as there was no marked difference in this sample. The marked difference in education levels shows support for the premise by Davies, Lewis, Byatt, Purvis, and Cole (2004) who reported that offenders have lower levels of education than members of the general community. In addition, Toch and Adams (1989) found violent offenders to have a lower level of education than non-violent offenders.

As this investigation was on violent men an operational definition of “violent” offender was required. Therefore the inclusion criteria consisted of an index offence of violent crimes against a person, rather than property crime (See Appendix A for a full list of crimes included in this study). Non-inclusion criteria for the violent offender group comprised individuals with active psychiatric disturbances
such as schizophrenia, individuals with substantial intellectual impairment, sexual offenders and offenders deemed to be a threat to prison staff. Incarcerated offenders who were identified as a threat to prison staff due to their extreme violent behaviour would have been representative of violent offenders for this study. However, university field-work policies prohibit researchers from including members of this group due to the high risk of physical assault.

Participants for the violent offender group were also selected on an additional parameter. That is, that they were incarcerated in either a maximum or a medium security facility, as previous studies on violent offenders had also used this criterion (Kelln, Dozois, & McKenzie, 1998).

Purposeful selection was carried out for the inclusion in the violent offender category in order to generate a prospective participant list from official prison database at the Department of Corrective Services in WA. Participants were selected on the basis of an entrenched lifestyle of violent offending which was determined by two criteria. The first criterion was that the offender’s current index offence was a serious violent offence and that there had been at least one prior term of incarceration for a serious crime of violence. The second criterion was age, with an age range of 25 to 40 years. The rationale for the selection of this particular minimum age was that participants less than 25 years would be unlikely to have a demonstrable lifestyle of violent offending. The rationale for the higher age limit of 40 years was that this age has been suggested as an age when offenders, especially violent offenders, slow down or cease their offending behaviour (Hare, 1999). This is contrary to that which Harris, Rice and Cormier (1991) reported following a study conducted on 169 adult males in a psychiatric facility. They found that the notion of ‘burn out” does not hold
for violent offenders. However, it was decided to use the age of 40 years, as suggested by Hare (1999), as the upper age limit to be examined.

Members of the general public were recruited using a snowball technique (de Vaus, 1995). This technique consisted of asking participants to nominate other possible participants. This technique was continued until saturation of the subject matter was obtained. The age range was the same as for the violent offenders. No incentives or rewards were given and participation was voluntary.

2.3.2 Materials and Equipment

Materials consisted of a semi-structured interview questionnaire (Appendix B) an information sheet (Appendix C) and consent form (Appendix D). Expert review and feedback was obtained from forensic and general psychologists working in the criminal justice system during the design and development stage of the interview questionnaire. The questionnaire and interview format was designed and preliminary versions of the questionnaire were used with members of the general public prior to conducting the interviews with incarcerated offenders. An information sheet and consent form was designed for the participants from the general public (Appendix C.1 & D.1), which was modified to include extra information for the incarcerated offenders. The modified version of the information sheet and the consent form (Appendix C.2 & D.2) was produced for the incarcerated offenders to incorporate additional information to comply with section seven of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans on ethical considerations particular to dependent groups, such as incarcerated offenders. Both the information sheet and the consent form for the incarcerated offenders included an additional statement to the effect that “participation in this research will have no impact on your parole eligibility or your release date.” A participant register was
created to document personal information with each participant’s details being encrypted with an alphanumeric code to maintain confidentiality. All interviews were audiotape-recorded to accurately capture the data.

2.3.4 Procedure

The Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) of Murdoch University and the Research Application and Review Committee (RARC) of the Department of Corrective Services approved the study. A list of violent offenders was then generated from official prison records and offenders were randomly selected from within this list. A list of participants from the general public was generated using the snowball technique (de Vaus, 1995) mentioned earlier. That is, prospective participants were approached and each, in turn, provided contact details of others who may be interested in participating. A list was generated and prospective participants were randomly selected from the list.

Prospective participants were then approached to take part in the study. There was a seventy six percent response rate from the violent offenders and a one hundred percent response rate from members of the general public. Those who agreed to participate were then given a very brief verbal outline about the study, the reason for tape-recording the session and the opportunity to read the information sheet and ask questions. Informed signed consent was then obtained. As participants were asked a series of open-ended questions on each of the 12 domains used to represent a sense of entitlement, their responses were audio-taped. Each domain was presented in the same order as they were listed earlier in this section, and explored in a similar manner with similar language being used in posing the questions for each of the twelve domains.
To begin with, an initial closed-ended question was posed for each of the 12 domains designed to elicit a yes/no response (Appendix B). For example, “Do you think that you have a right to be treated with more respect?” If a negative response was given, no further questions would be asked for that particular domain. If a positive response was given this would be followed by a second question to examine what their response may be if their expectations were violated. For example “What happens if people don’t treat you with a lot of respect?” If required, a series of open-ended prompts was employed to elicit emotional, cognitive and behavioural responses.

At the conclusion of the interview, further information about the study was given and a debriefing session was conducted. Completed interview tapes were immediately given an alphanumeric code to ensure confidentiality. Referrals for additional support were available for all participants. The Murdoch University Counselling Service was available to students and members of the general public in this study. The Prison Counselling Service was available to incarcerated offenders. However, this service was not required by any of the participants.

2.4 Analysis

The qualitative data was analysed inductively to elicit descriptive ideas and themes according to qualitative study guidelines (Smith, 1995). Each of the domains was examined independently using grounded theory. The responses were analysed to elicit ideas, themes and major themes. Grounded theory was used to illustrate both the experience described by the participants, and to appreciate the process of that experience (Morse, 1994). To illustrate their experiences, the analysis was grounded in examples of quotes from the participants (Elliot et al., 1999).
To ensure rigor, a range of reliability and validity checks were conducted. To ensure that adequacy of the data was met, a rich amount of data was obtained until saturation occurred (Glaser & Strauss, 1968). According to these researchers, saturation is said to occur when one is consistently hearing the same themes emerging from the participants’ narratives with no additional themes being introduced. Targeting men with a substantial history of violent behaviour ensured that appropriateness of the data was met though purposeful, rather than random, selection (Glaser & Strauss, 1968). Purposeful selection ensures that all participants have had experience in the area under investigation. An audit trail has also been provided in the verbatim transcripts, which includes the raw data, as well as the thematic analyses of action and experiential themes elicited from each of the twelve domains (Pidgeon & Henwood, 1997). Testimonial validity, or verification in quantitative terms, was conducted by taking the transcripts back to a selection of violent offenders and members of the general public who participated in this study (Elliot et al., 1999). This is to confirm the accuracy and validity of the transcribed data with what the participants had disclosed (Pidgeon & Henwood, 1997). Consistent with qualitative analysis, common themes (experiential and action themes) were elicited from the data (Pidgeon & Henwood, 1997).

2.4.1 A Sense of Entitlement

The initial analysis of a sense of entitlement yielded somewhat interesting yet mixed results. At this point most violent offenders endorsed only half of the domains under examination. Violent offenders reported that they expected: more respect; more power; extra good times; obedience from family and friends; obedience from subordinates; and to have what they wished, whereas members of the general public did not. Violent offenders expected a right to both anger and support, which was
similar to the expectations of the members of the general public. However, the entitlement-attitudes result seemed unclear and difficult to interpret until an investigation on a violation of entitlement was conducted.

2.4.2 Violation of a Sense of Entitlement

It was not until the investigation on the violation of a sense of entitlement, that particularly interesting information emerged. It is here that a clear and unequivocal difference became evident between violent offenders and members of the general public. Of those violent offenders who initially reported an expectation of entitlement, most reported that they would respond in an anti-social manner in nine of the twelve domains, should their sense of entitlement be violated. Five of these domains elicited particularly strong anti-social endorsement. These domains, in descending order, consisted of anger, respect, power, obedience from subordinates and obedience from family and friends. Approximately one third of the violent offenders endorsed anti-social behavioural outcomes for each of these domains, which initially suggested the presence of a subgroup within this cohort. On further investigation it was discovered that these endorsements were random throughout the violent offender group indicating that there was no identifiable subgroup. However, in the responses from the members of the general public there was one response that was consistently at odds with all of the other responses from this group. In this case it was found to be the same individual dissenter.

Whilst members of the general public appeared to have similar emotions, when their expectations were violated, they did not give examples of provocative thoughts or anti-social behaviours. The violent offenders, on the other hand, reported negative emotions, provocative thoughts and anti-social behaviours when their expectations were violated. This suggested that an inflated sense of entitlement was
not a single dimension, but rather a more complex construct involving negative emotions, provocative thoughts and anti-social behaviours.

The qualitative analysis revealed major themes that explained what was occurring when an inflated sense of entitlement was violated. Two major themes were identified. The first major theme was labelled the “action” theme and the second major theme was labelled the “experiential”. Both of these themes are presented next.

2.4.3 Action Theme

A substantial difference in behavioural outcomes was evident between the responses of the violent offender and members of the general public. This was labelled the action theme and consisted of three subordinate themes, which were labelled assault, confrontation and rejection. These subordinate themes were based on the anti-social behavioural outcomes reported by the violent offenders should their sense of entitlement be violated. Participants in the violent offender group were prepared to respond swiftly with violent physical aggression, verbal confrontation or alternatively, demonstrate rejection by simply walking away. The following provides examples of quotes illustrating each of the three subordinate action themes.

2.4.3.1 Assault

Assault was the strongest subordinate action theme in this analysis and was reported almost twice the amount of times than the confrontation or rejection themes. This theme included various and escalating violent behaviours. These behaviours ranged from mild body contact to severe assault and the use of weapons. The following excerpts highlight this theme. The first example is from the “anger” domain and the second is from the “obedience from subordinates” domain.

…violence, I thought was the answer, it’s the only thing people understand
…I want respect and I’ll bash it out of you. [“Rod” 3.103-3.106]

If you bash them it will make sure they get it right next time…Sometimes if you bash them they think “Oh well I won’t do that again otherwise I’ll get myself in that situation.” Sometimes, sometimes if you show a bit of violence towards some people they will learn their lesson real quick.
[“Vic” 10.293-10.300]

2.4.3.2 Confrontation

Confrontation consisted of various and escalating levels of verbal aggression. The verbal aggression ranged from intimidating words, humiliating the other individual, raising one’s voice, yelling and shouting abuse. The following excerpts are illustrations of this theme. The first example is from the “respect” domain and the second is from the “frustration” domain.

Um, I’d confront them and say “well what are you treating me like a dickhead for?” [“Tom” 1.23-1.24]

…try to enforce it….by overpowering them, by intimidating them.
[“Uri” 4.77- 4.80]

2.4.3.3 Rejection

Rejection was the third subordinate action theme. Rejection involved instances where an individual would walk away from a situation, yet harbour strong negative emotions. This theme included various ways individuals would cut contact with others, such as, wipe them off, withdraw and shut down. The following excerpts are examples of this theme. The first example is from the “forgiveness” domain and the second is from the “obedience from family and friends” domain.

I would ignore them; I would have nothing to do with them. [Otis 2.16-2.17]
…they would end up losing my company or my approval [“Quinn” 9.184-9.185]

2.4.4 Experiential Theme

Where the action themes related to the behavioural outcomes when a sense of entitlement is violated, the experiential themes related to the experience of the violation. Experiential themes consisted of emotions, cognition and the direction of behavioural expression. Each subordinate experiential theme will be discussed in turn.

2.4.4.1 Emotion

The first subordinate experiential theme comprised a wide range of emotional responses given by participants when their expectations of entitlement were violated. The emotional responses appeared similar in the violent offenders and members of the general public, with both groups easily articulating their emotions. Emotional responses ranged from positive feelings, which were mostly from the members of the general public, to the hostile and aggressive feelings which were mostly reported by the violent offenders. The first example is from a member of the general public from the “respect” domain and the second example is from a violent offender from the “power” domain.

You feel a bit disparaged and belittled I guess and a bit hurt and angry
[“Adam” 1.10-1.11]

I would be feeling pretty nervous and anxious and angry and that’s the time when it happens, when I explode [“Jack” 4.77-4.80]

2.4.4.2 Cognition

The second subordinate experiential theme comprised the cognitive responses reported by the participants. When expressing their thoughts, the violent offenders
had somewhat more difficulty than members of the general public. On occasions, violent offenders stated simply that they “didn’t think”, when disclosing examples of cognitive antecedents to their violent behaviour. This acting-without-thinking response appeared to be a somewhat typical response from violent offenders when they attempted to explain the rationale underpinning their anti-social behaviour. This is consistent with the substantial body of literature which links anti-social behaviour and impulsivity (see Farrington (2002) for a review). Schwartz and Smith (2002) offer an explanation for this and proposed that following an angry experience an individual’s sense of self-worth may falter, it is then that the cognitive processes may not be activated immediately. This is supported by the responses reported by the violent offenders in this study regarding a time-lapse in cognitive processes prior to violent behaviour. Pro-social cognitive responses such as self-soothing strategies were mostly reported on by members of the general public. These included using self-talk to respond in a pro-social manner as opposed to provocative thoughts that had the capacity to escalate into anti-social behaviour. The first is example is from a member of the general public and the second is from a violent offender, both examples are from the “anger” domain.

I try to step back and see the full picture. Now, I try to get on their side and see why they have chosen to do that so that I can relate with them. [“Fred” 3.36-3.39]

I’d just want to belt them. [“Steve” 3.106]

2.4.4.3 Direction of expression

The third subordinate experiential theme consisted of the choice in the direction of the behavioural expression made by the participants, particularly the violent offenders. When violent offenders believed that their sense of entitlement had been violated, they then chose to direct their emotions in either an outward direction
towards others or an inward direction towards themselves. This was the case for eleven of the twelve domains; however, it was only in the “obedience from subordinates” domain that violent offenders used only an outward, towards others, direction of expression. In this domain there was no indication from violent offenders that any responses were likely to be held in-check should subordinates not demonstrate obedience. Violent offenders were most likely to react with confrontation and violent physical assault. Examples of outward expression included the following examples from the power and anger domains:

I would probably psych myself up and do what I had to do to, to the best of my ability. [Otis 7.217-7.218]

Then generally you lash out….throw punches [“Uri” 1.25-1.27]

The subordinate action themes such as assault and confrontation are outward expressions, whereas the rejection theme may represent both an outward and inward expression of emotional and cognitive experiences. For instance, an individual may reject another by walking away which is considered to be an outward expression, yet simultaneously hold in-check their negative emotions which is an inward expression (Spielberger, 1999). This behaviour may well be similar to that which Spielberger (1999) refers to as suppressed anger, where individuals may be boiling on the inside but not showing it in their outward behaviour. Holding one’s anger “in-check” does not necessarily suggest that some form of self-harming behaviour will follow. However, it is suggested that some instances of self-harm may be unexpressed hostility turned inward (Hokanson, 1970). Nevertheless, at this point it is unclear if the individual who rejecting another will discharge these negative emotions towards themselves or towards others at a later time. Another perspective, that may help to illustrate these subordinate themes, is Nathanson’s (1992) theory of shame. Three of
Nathanson’s (1992) four motivating factors, Withdrawal, Attack Self and Attack Other seem clearly evident. Examples of holding emotions in-check include the following. The first example is from a member of the general public and is from the special treatment domain. The second example is from a violent offender and is from the forgiveness domain

I think I would just struggle on because I don’t think it’s up to me to say anything. [“Carl” 6.102- 6.103]

I could despise them if I was in a very negative space... I would just have to walk away. [“Ivan” 2.17-2.23]

Holding one’s anger in-check may be a way to attempt to deal with intense psychological pain. Shneidman (1998) reported that frustrated or thwarted psychological needs can lead to intense psychological pain. Even the anticipation of psychological pain has the capacity to exceed an individual’s threshold, which may then lead to self-harm or suicide (Motto, 1999).

The overarching themes of the qualitative analysis were reported on in the previous section. Next, the analysis of each of the specific domains will be presented. This will be followed by a discussion of this study.

2.5 Analysis of the Twelve Individual Domains

Each of the twelve domains was analysed independently. Each of these domains is presented in order of their importance to the violent offenders interviewed for this study. The salience of each domain was illustrated by the number and depth of the responses. The five most salient domains with regard to a violation of entitlement, in descending order of importance to violent offenders, are anger, respect, power, obedience from subordinates and obedience from family and friends. Each of these domains elicited particularly strong responses. These domains were
followed by the other domains, in descending order, which consisted of forgiveness, frustration, sympathy and support, expecting what one wishes, pay back special favours, extra good times and special treatment. Information on each of these domains will be presented in order of salience to the violent offenders in this study. Each domain will start with a brief overview of the literature presented earlier. This will be followed by a flow chart illustrating the emotional, cognitive and behavioural responses for each domain by members of the general public and the violent offenders. The major themes can be identified in the flowcharts. The action theme is evident in the behavioural outcomes such as assault, confrontation and rejection. The experiential theme is evident in the emotion and cognition sections, with the direction of expression embedded in the behavioural section of the flow chart. In accordance with qualitative research methods, verbatim quotes from both violent offenders and members of the general public will be included to illustrate their personal viewpoints. Each individual domain will then conclude with a summary.

The first of the twelve domains is the anger domain.

2.5.1 Anger Domain

*Do you think that you have the right to be angry when people don’t do what you ask?*

Anger has been consistently identified in the literature as a forerunner of violent behaviour (Averill, 1982; Beck, 2000, 2002; Berkowitz, 1989; Dollard et al., 1939, 1970; Novaco, 1997; Novaco et al., 2000). Therefore it is reasonable to assume that many violent offenders would have anger management issues (Megargee, 1970). Thus, it would be expected that there would be a particularly strong endorsement of the anger domain from violent offenders in relation to a sense of entitlement. The following is a flow chart illustrating the anger domain (see Figure 2.1).
The emotional experiences in the anger domain included neutral or hurt feelings and aggressive feelings. The neutral or hurt feelings comprised not being angry, feeling let down and feeling upset. The aggressive emotions were more powerful and ranged from feeling angry to feeling enraged. The cognitive experience for some participants included self-soothing thoughts, which consisted of positive self-talk used to calm themselves down. Other participants used provocative thoughts to ruminate and build themselves self up in order to retaliate. The direction of expression was either inward towards the self or outward towards others. The behavioural outcome included pro-social skills and anti-social reactions. Pro-social skills involved talking through the issue or simply disregarding the matter as too trivial to act upon. Anti-social behaviour included all three of the subordinate action themes, such as assault, confrontation and rejection.

The majority of participants from both groups reported that they have the right to express their anger when people don’t do what they ask. Interestingly, none of the participants from the violent offender group initially agreed that they had the
right to be angry. Most of the violent offender participants began by responding “no”
then later changed their response to “yes” to indicate that they agreed that they had
the right to be angry. No prompt was given and the change of response appeared to
follow a short reflection on the question. There appeared to be a secondary objective
to asking someone to complete a set task, which seemed to be the ability to maintain
and reinforce personal status. Non-compliance was reported as a direct challenge to
their status. For example:

   I’d make him comply. Um, I’d give him a bit of a whack maybe. You
know, just to let him know. I always give them a chance. You know, to
change their minds. [“Will” 3.68-3.74]

   Approximately half of the members of the general public reported that they
did indeed have a right to be angry when people did not do what they had requested.
Their responses regarding their feelings were somewhat similar to those of the
violent offenders. However, their thoughts and behaviour were pro-social rather than
anti-social. The following example is indicative of responses from the general public
participants who agreed that they had the right to be angry which appears to be in
direct contrast to the responses from the violent offenders. For example:

   Yeah you probably do, to a certain degree…you would be disappointed
that they didn’t do what you asked but everything depends on what you
asked them to do. If it was within what they felt comfortable in doing
and um whether it was something you freely asked them to do. I would
just let them know that I wasn’t really happy that they didn’t do what
I had asked them to do. [“Greg” 3.34-3.46]
2.5.1.1 Anger summary

The findings indicated that a right-to-anger was considered to be the most salient of the twelve domains according to the violent offenders. Beck (2000, 2002), Jenkins (1990) as well as Raskin and Terry (1988) highlighted anger as a particularly noteworthy domain of entitlement. The examination of anger indicated some initial similarities between the responses of the violent offenders and members of the general public. The cognitive processes were quite different, however, with only the violent offender participants opting for provocative strategies. Members of the general public understood their right to experience the emotion of anger, but also had the ability to discharge their emotions in a pro-social manner. Violent offenders, however, did not seem to have the ability to separate the emotion from an anti-social response. Whilst some violent offenders appeared to hold their anger expression in-check, most were likely to express themselves outwardly towards others.

2.5.2 Respect Domain

*Do you think that you have a right to be treated with more respect?*

Respect, or perhaps more precisely disrespect, has been identified in the literature as a precursor to aggressive and violent behaviour particularly in order to restore satisfaction and pride (Gilligan, 1996; Levi & Maguire, 2002). Violent offenders would be most likely to insist on respect from others (Pappas, 1995). Thus, it would be expected that there would be a particularly strong endorsement of the respect domain by violent offenders. The following flow chart illustrates this domain (see Figure 2.2).
The emotional experience from the respect domain included feelings that ranged from “stay happy” to angry. The cognitive experience included self-soothing strategies such as positive self-talk, which were used mostly by members of the general public. The cognitive experience also included provocative thoughts, which were used by violent offenders; this included stirring themselves up in preparation for some form of anti-social reaction. Both inward and outward responses were evident in the analysis. The action theme included pro-social skills as well as the anti-social reactions such as rejection, confrontation and assault.

Although the responses varied widely from both groups, most violent offenders reported that they should be treated with more respect than they currently receive. Some participants from the violent offender group considered that they did not need any more respect and suggested that they were already highly revered. For example:

I’m pretty big, I’m tough, generally, no [I don’t get disrespected]. [“Ken” 1.5]

I don’t really get disrespected. I’m pretty well respected throughout the gaol
However, most of the violent offender group believed otherwise and recounted their experiences when disrespected. For example:

Oh, shamed! Shamed, you know, frustrated, um. You’d feel like you’re put on show. If you’re put on show, if someone’s got you on show, they are making, mocking you…I’d smack them in the mouth, fuck em.

[“Yves” 1.18-1.30]

Most of the participants from the general public considered that they already received a more than adequate measure of respect from others. For example:

I think I have a right to be treated respectfully, more respect would tell me that I put myself above others which I don’t. So I think I deserve equal respect. [“Bill”1.7-1.9]

No. I think I’m treated with, in some ways I’m treated with more respect than maybe I’m due. [“Ivan” 1.3-1.4]

2.5.2.1 Respect summary

The findings in regard to a right-to-respect were found to be of particular importance to the violent offenders. Beck (2000) and Jenkins (1990) found this domain to be particularly salient in regard to entitlement. Respect was far more important to violent offenders than it was to members of the general public. Personal standing and importance were paramount in maintaining status for the violent offender and any perceived violation of respect would be swiftly rectified. Both violent offenders and members of the general public expressed similar emotions in regard to their expectation of respect being violated. The violent offender group,
however, reported more provocative cognitive processes than members of the general public who endorsed self-soothing strategies. Members of the general public chose pro-social responses, whereas violent offenders chose anti-social reactions such as assault, confrontation or rejection. Violent offenders appear to express themselves in either one of two ways if they are not treated with respect. They may express themselves outwardly, targeting the person who has thwarted their expectation of respectful behaviour or, alternatively, may hold their expression in-check. Holding their expression in-check consisted of walking away from the individual yet harbouring a high level of resentment. Alternatively, they may feel being “dissed” or disrespected in the prison subculture which may be interpreted as shame and humiliation. As reported by a number of researchers, any perceived form of humiliation is acted upon immediately and with sufficient force to reinstate one’s status and to serve as a deterrent to others (Baumeister et al., 1996; Indermaur, 1995; Katz, 1988; Levi & Maguire, 2002; Nathanson, 1992).

2.5.3 Power Domain

*Do you think that you should have more power than you have right now?*

Power has been identified in the literature as a precursor to aggressive and violent behaviour, for the most part in regard to the acquisition and maintenance of domination and control over others (Raskin & Terry, 1988). Power and control issues have been identified in serious violent offenders by a number of researchers (Gresswell, 2000; Gresswell & Hollin, 1994; Holmes & Holmes, 1992; Levi & Maguire, 2002; Wood et al., 2005). Thus, it would be expected that there would be particularly strong endorsement of the power domain in relation to a sense of entitlement in violent offenders. The following is a flow chart illustrating the power domain (see Figure 2.3).
The emotional experiences from the power domain ranged from stay happy, through to neutral and aggressive feelings. The cognitive experiences included calming self-talk strategies as well provocative thinking that what is “desired” is in fact “deserved” or alternatively, the other is to be totally renounced. The direction of expression was either towards others or towards themselves. The action theme, whilst including similar anti-social reactions elicited in the other domains, also included the notion of recruiting others to assist in some form of pre-meditated retribution.

The responses for the participants were divided on this question. Almost half of the participants in the violent offender group stated that they did not think that they should have more power. Nevertheless, a number of the violent offenders in this group were of the opinion that they should have more power than they did at the present time. For example:

If you are a powerful person and you can convince people in your beliefs
or what you believe in or what your cause is, then you will always get
followers. There is always someone who will follow. [“Ken” 7.93-7.97]

…go in and get it [the power]… stick an ice pick in someone’s neck…I was
very angry at the time and I thought I’ll just teach this bloke a lesson…[he]
made me look stupid, or tried to, come in the wing [of the gaol] and just
take over the show and run the show in the wing…I just walked into his
cell and stuck the ice pick in him. [“Vic” 7.160 -7.188]

The following is further example from a participant in the violent offender
group who recounted his previous efforts to gain power over others and the futility of
his quest.

I would always think of a way of getting that power and I would always
get to where I want to go and once I got there, I’d say “right I want to go to
the next step”. But once I got to the next, I couldn’t get any higher but
I always found another step and just as quick as you get up there, you get
knocked back down. [“Steve” 7.211-7.218]

The participants from the general public stated that they did not think that
they should have more power. Most of the participants in this group did not provide
further information in regard to their responses; however, the following is an
example of one of the few who did elaborate.

Um not really, I guess with power comes responsibility, so I am aware
of that. It’s nice to be the boss and have power but then again, with that
comes a lot of responsibility. Maybe I’m not, where I am in my position
in life, well it equates to responsibility I can handle. [“Eric” 7.89-7.94]
2.5.3.1 Power summary

Violent offenders also found this domain particularly salient if their sense of entitlement was violated. Almost half of the violent offenders reported that they have a right to more power. Raskin and Terry (1988) also highlighted power over others as a central domain in regard to entitlement. Violent offenders reported negative feelings and provocative thoughts. Members of the general public reported more self-soothing thoughts such as positive self-talk, as well as acknowledging and validating their own personal power. This suggests that members of the general public interpret power quite differently than the violent offenders (see Chapter Six - 6.3.1, for a more in-depth discussion on these different perceptions of power). Violent offenders endorsed negative thinking and provocative strategies to acquire and maintain power over others. If violent offenders considered that they were able to comfortably overpower another then that seemed to be the course of action chosen. One reason for this, put forward by Warren et al. (2003), is that violent behaviour is admired by other prisoners. If violent offenders thought that they would be unable to overpower their perceived opponent then the recruitment of supporters was considered a viable option. This option is consistent with the notion that violent men usually choose an opponent who is physically weaker or more vulnerable than themselves (Kaufman, 1999). If the opponent appeared stronger then reinforcements may be needed to restore the violent offenders’ reputation of power (Stillwell, Baumeister, & Del Priore, 2008).

2.5.4 Obedience from Subordinates Domain

Do you think that you deserve greater obedience from people that you think are less important than you?

Expecting obedience from individuals that are considered subordinate has been well documented in the literature as a forerunner of violent behaviour,
particularly when one’s status and pride is called into question (Jenkins, 1990). This expectation may be present both in the community and within the confines of prison walls (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1993). Violent offenders with an inflated sense of entitlement would be most likely to endorse this domain (see Figure 2.4).

Figure 2.4 Flow Chart - Obedience from Subordinates: Illustrating the experiential theme (emotion, cognition and direction of expression) and the action theme (rejection, confrontation and assault).

The emotional experiences in regard to obedience from subordinates domain ranged from feeling frustrated to feeling quite angry. Cognitive experiences ranged from accepting the situation through to interpreting another’s action as insulting and subsequently planning retaliation. Interestingly, the direction of expression from violent offenders, in regard to this domain was in an outward direction only. The behavioural outcomes ranged from pro-social discussion to anti-social humiliation and assault.

The responses from the violent offender group were mixed. Almost one third of the violent offenders not only agreed that they deserved greater obedience from people that they thought were less important than them, but they reported on an
unequivocal hierarchical command. The following examples provide a graphic illustration of their thoughts in regard to those they considered subordinate.

They will be told to and if they don’t, the pecking order if you know what I mean? If they don’t do what I say, because I am further up than them, I would fuck them up…I would feel insulted because I’m someone and he’s not and I deserve to be obeyed from a person who is not at that level.[“Jack” 10.269-10.282]

…if it’s a very important thing I probably would give the bloke a bashing for it. [“Vic” 10.280-10.282]

…it’s they obviously know what the rules are and if they wish to challenge those rules, then they have to be prepared to take the consequences…Oh, um, hypothetically um, in the block where there’s cameras, probably get, somebody has to stand at the end of the thing with cardboard and then get someone to signal, and then move that cardboard up there and then some people are on guard and go into the bloke’s cell and belt him around the head with something, probably. [“Will” 10.220-10.233]

Approximately two thirds of the violent offender group did not agree. The next quote is indicative of those violent offenders who reported that they did not think of themselves as superior to others.

Everyone is equal to me whether you’re a sex offender in there or you’re an axe murderer or you’re a burglar or just in for driving, everyone is created equal to me and I treat everyone the way I want to be treated and if they don’t treat me like that; well too bad. [“Steve” 10.76-10.282]
Almost all of the participants from the general public reported that they did not think that they deserved greater obedience from people that they thought were of less importance than themselves. The first example is from a participant who did not expect obedience from subordinates.

I have been known to champion the underdog. So people I believe are less fortunate than me I am probably more likely to be more protective of. I wouldn’t expect more obedience. I wouldn’t expect less obedience.

[“Ivan” 10.163-10.167]

This quote is from one member of the general public who reported that he deserves greater obedience from subordinates, particularly at work.

…depending if it is a work environment or something like that…

I am not being valued as highly as I should be. [“Dan” 10.141-10.148]

2.5.4.1 Obedience from subordinates summary

There was a substantial difference in the expectation of obedience from subordinates between some violent offenders and members of the general public. More than one third of the violent offenders believed that they deserved obedience from subordinates and were prepared to back that belief with physical aggression. Only a small minority of the members of the general public reported that they deserved obedience from subordinates; however, none were prepared to enforce their expectations. This supports previous research from a number of researchers who suggested a strong relationship between entitlement and the expectation of obedience (Beck, 2000; Jenkins, 1990; Raskin & Terry, 1988; Simourd & Olver, 2002; Walters, 1995a, 1996). Violent offenders reported negative feelings such as hostility and provocative thoughts which included planning reprisals. This was the only domain
where violent offenders reported that they would not hold back on any anti-social responses. An unequivocal anti-social reaction such as confrontation and physical assault would be unleashed to demonstrate that such a violation would not be tolerated. This action would also be expected to serve as a general deterrent to others.

2.5.5 Obedience from Family and Friends Domain

Do you expect greater obedience from family members and friends?

Expecting obedience from family members and friends is another domain which has been identified in the literature as a forerunner to violent behaviour (Jenkins, 1990; Simord & Olver, 2002; Walters, 1995a, 1996). A large proportion of incarcerated offenders have been convicted of violence in the home: against their partners, children, family members and friends (Easteal, 1994; Kane et al., 2002; Weisz et al., 2000). Thus, it would be expected that there would be a very strong endorsement of this domain from violent offenders. The following is a flow chart illustrating the “obedience from family and friends domain” (see Figure 2.5).

Figure 2.5 Flow Chart - Obedience from Family and Friends: Illustrating the experiential theme (emotion, cognition and direction of expression) and the action theme (rejection, confrontation and assault).
The emotions experienced in this domain ranged from feelings of hurt to strong feelings of betrayal. Pro-social self-soothing strategies were endorsed, as were provocative thoughts such as disowning the family member or friend and generating ideas to extract revenge. The direction of expression for this domain was either inward toward the self or outward toward others. The anti-social actions followed on from the provocative cognitive strategies that were employed.

Responses from the participants in the violent offender group were mixed, with one third of the group indicating that they expect greater obedience from family and friends. The first quote illustrates one violent offender’s expectation of compliance.

I’d take it, I would um, take the obedience…Well, in the past I have cut, stabbed, bashed, hit. I haven’t tried any other strategies besides that, but yeah, that’s basically what I have done in the past. [“Jack” 9.243-9.250]

However, this example is from another violent offender who did not expect obedience from family or friends.

I don’t expect it but I would appreciate it, when I’m right.

[“Quinn” 9.180-9.181]

Almost all of the participants from the general public indicated that they did not expect greater obedience from family members and friends. The following example is the response by the only participant who did have an expectation of acquiescence.

I expect a great level of trust from family members and friends, which I guess could equate to obedience…willing to listen and to act on my advice.

[“Dan” 9.101-9.106]
The next example illustrates a different point of view, in this example from a member of the general public who did not expect obedience from family and friends.

No, quite the opposite… So I would actually say, I would give them more latitude, yes because it is supposed to be from a position of love as opposed to material things. [“Ivan” 9.151-9.157]

2.5.5.1 Obedience from family and friends summary

Almost a third of violent offenders reported that they deserved obedience from family and friends and most of this group was prepared to respond in an anti-social manner if they were not obeyed. Jenkins (1990), Simourd and Olver (2002) and Walters (1995a, 1996) have highlighted the right-to-obedience from family and friends as being a particularly important domain in regard to entitlement. Only a very small proportion of members of the general public expected obedience and none were prepared to respond in an anti-social manner. The majority of violent offenders appeared to disregard the situation or hold their responses in-check. However, others were prepared to unleash reprisals and physically assault the person who thwarted their expectation of obedience.

2.5.6 Sympathy and Support Domain

Do you think that you should get sympathy and support when you have a hard time?

Expecting sympathy and support has been recognised as an expectation that, if thwarted, can elicit strong negative emotions (Jenkins, 1990). Therefore, it would be expected that violent offenders would have high expectations to preferential treatment, which would include sympathy and support (American Psychiatric Association, 2000). Sympathy is defined as disappointment and pity and support is
defined as kindness and psychological or physical assistance. The following is a flow chart illustrating the sympathy and support domain (see Figure 2.6).

![Flow Chart - Sympathy and Support](chart.png)

*Figure 2.6 Flow Chart - Sympathy and Support: Illustrating the experiential theme (emotion, cognition and direction of expression) and the action theme (rejection, confrontation and assault).*

The emotional experiences from the sympathy and support domain ranged from feeling okay to feeling hurt and angry. The cognitive experiences ranged from distancing one’s self from the problem to renouncing the other for lack of support. The direction of expression was inward towards themselves and outward towards others. The action theme included pro-social responses and - even though there were anti-social reactions of rejection and confrontation - there were no reports of assaulting another who had not shown sympathy or support.

Most of the participants from both groups agreed that they should get sympathy and support when they were having a hard time. One violent offender appeared to shun attempts at sympathy and support. For example:

I don’t expect nothin from no one [sic]. Plain and fucking simple, the only person in the world I expect anything from is myself, besides that,
the rest of the world can get fucked. [“Yves” 5.95-5.98]

However, almost half of the participants in the violent offender group wanted support but not sympathy. For example:

Support yes, sympathy no. I’m not a big believer in sympathy.
[“Jack” 5.116-5.117]

Yeah support, even in my situation, huh, I don’t want anyone to feel sorry for me or give me any sympathy. [“Vic” 5.113-5.118]

Other violent offenders agreed that they should get sympathy and support. The following is indicative of the responses. For example

Um, yeah, yeah, I’d go and say “well what’s the story, you know, I’ve been there for you and you’re not there for me?” [“Tom” 5.101-5.103]

Almost all of the participants from the general public agreed that they should get sympathy and support. Next is one such example.

It’s nice to get sympathy and support whether you deserve it or not but it is definitely comforting, yeah, definitely. [“Fred” 5.68-5.70]

This next example is from one of the very few members of the general public who did not agree that they deserved sympathy and support.

I think that my hard times are my problems. I don’t expect anything from other people just because I am having a hard time. [“Dan” 5.66-5.68]

2.5.6.1 Sympathy and support summary

Entitlement interpreted as a right to sympathy and support did not appear to support previous research by Jenkins (1990). Initial responses by violent offenders in
this domain were similar to those of the general public. However, some violent offenders quickly interpreted “sympathy” as pity and took immediate exception to this word. Nevertheless, violent offenders reported that if their expectations of support were violated then they were likely to feel hurt or aggressive. Violent offenders also reported provocative thoughts such as believing they deserved support and wanting to disown the individual who had not met with their expectations of entitlement. Some violent offenders appeared to use anti-social reactions, but did there were no reports of any violent assaults in this domain. There was a two-way direction of emotional expression for this domain. Some violent offenders chose pro-social strategies such as isolating themselves in order to process the situation or alternatively, would seek others to discuss the situation. Other violent offenders used anti-social reactions, which comprised rejecting the other person or confronting them in an aggressive manner.

2.5.7 Wishes Domain

Do you think that you should have whatever you wish?

Misinterpreting wishes as needs has been well documented in the literature particularly in regard to violent offenders believing that they have the right to take what they “wish” from others (Dear, 2005; Millon, 1981; Shabad, 1993; Walters, 1995a, 1996; Young, 1994). Therefore it is reasonable to assume that this group of violent offenders would have experiences of misinterpreting wishes as needs. However, it is unclear whether or not they would endorse this domain. For instance, if they already view wishes as needs then they may not be able to tell the difference between the two constructs. The following is a flow chart illustrating the wishes domain (see Figure 2.7).
The emotional experiences from the wishes domain included a mixture of feelings ranging from anxiety through to jealousy and anger. The cognitive experiences included using self-soothing strategies to placate one’s self and provocative thinking strategies in order to bring about what one had wished. Both inward and outward expressions of emotion were evident for this domain. The action theme included pro-social actions as well as particularly anti-social reactions such as aggressive confrontation, assault, and then simply taking what was desired.

Responses were mixed for the participants in the violent-offender group. Approximately half of the participants in the violent-offender group agreed that they should have whatever they wished for. The following examples illustrate the range of responses from wishful thinking.

I know I couldn’t have it but I believe that I deserve it.

[“Quinn” 12.242-12.243]

If there was a way I could take it [what was wished for] I’d probably take it. [“Vic” 12.341-12.342]
This next example illustrates the futility of wishful thinking.

That would be living like I was when I was 17…Back to where I started.
I’d go back to where I started. [“Rod” 12.280-12.282]

Most of the participants from the general public did not agree that they should have whatever that they wished for and made no further comment. However, one participant from the general public who reported that having what one wished for could lead to rather harmful consequences.

…I know that that’s not possible, to have everything you wished for.
Actually I think that it could be the ruin of a lot people to have everything they wished for. The more you desire the more disappointment you would have in life. [“Eric” 12.149-12.152]

2.5.7.1 Wishes summary

Almost half of the violent offenders reported that they expected their wishes to be granted. Thus, the findings did not provide strong support for previous research (Dear, 2005; Millon, 1981; Shabad, 1993; Walters, 1995a, 1996; Young, 1994) who reported that wishes were converted to needs by those with a strong sense of entitlement. Only six violent offenders and one member of the general public provided further information in this category. This may have been because the violent offenders may have already interpreted that what they had wished for was in fact an essential requirement. Three of these violent offenders reported that they would respond in a particularly anti-social manner and just simply take what they wanted. Two members of the general public reported that they expected their wishes to be granted; however, neither was prepared to obtain it through anti-social means. Violent offenders reported negative emotions and provocative thoughts. Some were
prepared to just take what they desired, whereas others held their emotion in-check. One interesting point was where violent offenders who reported being able to let it go had disclosed that they had previously experienced very strong expectations of obtaining what they wished for and had interpreted those wishes as needs. These particular offenders had substantial offence histories, which included robbery with violence and armed robbery. Prison time may have helped them to mature into thinking that they would endorse more pro-social responses (Zamble, 1992).

2.5.8 Pay back Special Favours Domain

*Do you feel that you ought to pay back others for special favours they have done for you?*

Not considering the need to pay back special favours has consistently been identified in the literature when discussing entitlement. For instance, when explaining different characteristics of a narcissistic sense of entitlement, a number of researchers have identified how some individuals do not consider the need to pay back special favours (Millon, 1981; Raskin & Terry, 1988; Walters, 1996, 1995a). These individuals are also said to experience difficulty with empathy (Watson, et al., 1984) as well as sharing and reciprocity (Young, 1994). Therefore, as a result of the literature, it would be reasonable to assume that violent offenders would endorse this domain. This question is the only item in this study that requires the individual to give to another, whereas the focus of the other domains is where the individual could be said to be in receipt from others. The following chart illustrates this domain (see Figure 2.8).
The emotions experienced in the pay back special favours domain ranged from feeling ok to quite negative feelings such as shame and guilt. The cognitive experience included self-soothing strategies as well as being suspicious of the other individual’s motives in granting the special favour in the first place. The direction of expression was both inward and outward. The behavioural outcome in this regard was pro-social ranging from doing nothing to paying up. Hiding-out was the only anti-social example.

The vast majority of participants from both groups reported that they ought to pay back others for special favours they have received. Most violent offenders were particularly adamant that they should pay back special favours as soon as possible. The following quotes illustrate examples of these perspectives.

I’ll always do the righty back and if I see them, even if it’s in the future. I’ll always have it in my mind. [“Rod” 11.262-11.264]

I feel like I owe something to that person and that maybe they’re doing more for me than I am doing for them…hide from them…basically just disassociate myself from them because I’d feel guilty. [“Uri” 11.177-11.186]
Some of the violent offenders were suspicious in regard to the motives of the individual who were granting the special favour. For example:

But people give you stuff, to get stuff in return. [“Jack” 11.288-11.289]

The participants from the general public considered that they ought to pay back others or pay-it-forward to someone else in the future. For example:

I have this running total in my head who I owe favours to and who I don’t.

Yes, yes, I mean everything. [“Ivan” 11.180-11.182]

For me paying someone back doesn’t mean directly, it could be to pay it forward …I definitely feel the need to pay that forward, not necessarily back to them but to another person or whatever. [“Bill” 11.311-11.316]

2.5.8.1 Pay back special favours summary

Violent offenders seemed particularly concerned to pay back special favours as soon as possible. A number of researchers in the field (Millon, 1981; Raskin & Terry, 1988; Walters, 1996, 1995a; Watson et al., 1984; Young, 1994) had identified the right-to-not-pay-back-special-favours as an important part of entitlement; however, this notion was not supported by this study. Most violent offenders expressed their emotions outwardly by recognising the debt and paying up. This finding may be due to the prison ethos of returning favours as soon as possible to ensure an outstanding debt is not incurred. Owing favours to another prisoner has the capacity to lead to problems when the obligation is called upon (personal communication Superintendent, Casuarina Prison, Department of Corrective Services, WA).

2.5.9 Extra Good Times Domain

Do you think that you deserve extra good times to make up for bad times in your past?
A compensatory attitude has been identified in the literature by various researchers, in regard to a sense of entitlement. For instance, a number of researchers have stated that some individuals hold an overall attitude that the “world owes” them and that they deserve to be compensated (Beck, 2000; Levin, 1993; Wilson & Prabucki, 1983). Individuals with this attitude believe that some type of special compensation should be bestowed upon them in order for them to live the lifestyle that they desire (Levin, 1993). It would be reasonable to assume that many violent offenders, particularly those involved in robbery with violence and armed robbery, would have a compensatory attitude. Therefore it would be expected that there would be endorsement in this domain by the violent offenders in this study. The following is a flow chart illustrating the extra good times domain (see Figure 2.9).

**Figure 2.9 Flow Chart - Extra Good Times: Illustrating the experiential theme (emotion, cognition and direction of expression) and the action theme (rejection, confrontation and assault).**

The positive emotions experienced in the extra good times domain is mixed, yet the negative emotions appear more consistent. Negative emotions ranged from feeling anxious to feeling angry. The cognitive experience moved from self-soothing
to attributing responsibility to internal or external control. Internal control suggested that extra good times were up to their own efforts, whereas circumstances not to their liking were considered to be under external control. The direction of expression was inward and outward towards others. The behavioural outcomes ranged from positive thinking, putting in more effort, through to physical attack in order to secure what was desired.

The responses to this question were mixed for the participants in the violent offender group. Almost one third of the violent offenders reported that they deserved extra good times to make up for the bad times in their past. The following is one such example.

…I feel like that, whether I deserve it or not. [“Mick” 8.98-8.99]

The following is an example by a participant who agreed that they deserved extra good times, at an earlier point in their lives.

Well it used to make me pissed off and angry and that’s why I done so much crime to get more money and have more better times but in the end it doesn’t weigh out. I get a year’s good times out there and then I do three or four years in prison… When you expect good times all the time you’re expecting too much and you end up in the shit like I am now. [“Rod” 8.232- 8.242]

Almost all of the participants from the general public did not agree that they deserve extra good times to try to make up for bad times in their past. For example:

Deserve? I don’t think I deserve it. I would like it more times but I don’t think it comes down to deserving, because then you start, you think you deserve something you start to, expecting it and then it get, you start to
get ego problems and start to expect things that you should not, that you
don’t deserve. [“Zorba” 8.124-8.130]

2.5.9.1 Extra good times summary

Almost a third of violent offenders reported that they deserved good times, whereas only a very small number of participants from the general public agreed with them. Although Beck (2000), Levin (1993) and Wilson and Prabucki (1983) highlighted the right-to-good-times to compensate for life’s perceived deficits as a particularly important domain of entitlement. This was consistent for a relatively small proportion of participants. Violent offenders reported negative emotions such as frustration and anger, and negative feelings associated with thoughts of external control. They reported a certain level of external control because they labelled the treatment as “unfair” and beyond their personal control. Most violent offenders refrained from outward expression in this domain, some did not. Information on this domain suggested that an expectation of a right to good times had indeed been the case prior to incarceration for some of the violent offenders.

2.5.10 Forgiveness Domain

Do you think that you deserve to be forgiven for mistakes you may make?

The expectation of forgiveness has been reported by Jenkins (1990) as an expectation to make excuses, in an effort not to accept responsibility for one’s inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour. Some individuals believe that being forgiven can lead to an end of any intrapsychic experience of shame or guilt (Jenkins, 1990). Incarcerated offenders have shown that they have difficulties accepting responsibility for their actions (Hatch-Maillette, Scalora, Huss, & Baumgartner, 2001). Thus, it would be reasonable to assume that violent offenders would be likely
to endorse this domain. The following is a flow chart illustrating the forgiveness domain (see Figure 2.10).

![Flow Chart - Forgiveness](image)

*Figure 2.10 Flow Chart - Forgiveness: Illustrating the experiential theme (emotion, cognition and direction of expression) and the action theme (rejection, confrontation and assault).*

The emotions expressed in the forgiveness domain ranged from being unconcerned to being upset and guilty. The cognitive experience seems to accept responsibility on one hand and recoil from it on the other hand, as well as thinking of disowning others or having thoughts of revenge. The direction of expression was inward towards the self and outward towards others. In the behavioural domain, behaviours ranged from disregarding the desire for forgiveness to blaming the other and enacting reprisals.

The majority of participants from both groups reported that they should be forgiven for mistakes that they may make. Responses from the violent offenders were mixed and ranged from being affronted by the lack of forgiveness, being prepared to reject the other if forgiveness was not forthcoming, qualifying the extent of the mistake, as well as taking it on as an unrelenting personal attack. The following is an example of being affronted by the lack of forgiveness. For example:
Well I didn’t get any fucking forgiveness for what I did...no one forgives me for nothing. [“Yves” 2.48 – 2.50]

The next is an example of being prepared to reject the other if forgiveness was not forthcoming. This is followed by an example of qualifying the extent of the mistake.

I’d feel that I’d need a second chance because I believe that everyone deserves a second chance but if they’re not going to give me that, I don’t want to know them anyway. [“Jack” 2.25-228]

Depends, depends on what mistakes they are ...little things, than probably major things. [“Ned”2.17-2.19]

This is an example of taking on the lack of forgiveness as an unrelenting personal attack.

I take it personally and like, take it on board, like they are going to hold it against me forever...to keep on being judged for something that I have served prison for…withdraw emotionally and isolate myself so I can’t be judged. [“Tom” 2.33-2.40]

Almost all of the participants from the general public considered that they deserve to be forgiven for their mistakes. The first example is indicative of the overall responses for the participants from the general public. For example:

Well you can’t change people. The only thing you can do is try and perhaps make them understand how it is that the mistake has come about…maybe you can lead them in forgiving you for the mistake that you have done.

[“Aaron” 2.29-2.34]
The following is the only example from the members of the general public that did not agree that they deserved forgiveness. In this response there appeared to be compassion toward others but a punitive approach towards the self. For example:

As a Christian I believe we should forgive people but generally…I don’t expect people to forgive me if I have made a mistake. [“Harry” 2.33-2.37]

2.5.10.1 Forgiveness summary

Jenkins (1990) and Hatch-Maillette et al. (2001) had previously reported that the relationship between entitlement and the right-to-forgiveness was an important association; however, support for this premise is mixed. Some violent offenders believed that they deserved forgiveness. The emotional responses appeared similar for both violent offenders and members of the general public. Emotions ranged from neutral to negative feelings. Similarly, cognitive responses appeared similar for violent offenders and members of the general public. Both groups used a range of either self-soothing strategies or provocative strategies. Few violent offenders reported that they would respond in an anti-social manner if they were not forgiven for their mistakes. The anti-social reactions comprised rejection, not accepting responsibility for their own actions, as well as enacting reprisals towards others.

2.5.11 Frustration Domain

Do you think that you have a right to be frustrated when people don’t do what you ask?

Frustration has been identified in the literature, as well by the offenders themselves, as a strong precursor of aggressive and violent behaviour (Berkowitz, 1989; Dollard et al., 1939; Megargee & Hokanson, 1970). Violent offenders would also be expected to have low levels of tolerance (Jenkins, 1990), as well as difficulties dealing with defeat (Young, 1994). Therefore it would be reasonable to
assume that violent offenders would have a high level of endorsement of the frustration domain. The following is a flow chart illustrating the frustration domain (see Figure 2.11).

The emotional experiences from the frustration domain ranged from sadness to hatred. The cognitive experiences included the use of calming self-talk strategies as well as provocative thinking towards what they considered to be deserved through to making plans for reprisals. The direction of expression was inward towards the self and outward towards others. The behavioural outcomes ranged from pro-social behaviours to the main action themes, which included rejection, confrontation and assault.

Almost all participants from the general public agreed that that they did have a right to be frustrated when people didn’t do what they had asked of them. Over half of the violent offender group did not agree and responded with a definite “no” and did not elaborate further. Violent offenders seemed to have difficulty understanding the concept of frustration and appeared to see it as something to be avoided, as noted in the first example.
I did get frustrated but now I don’t. I see everything differently.

[“Les” 4.109-4.110]

Next is the response from one of the violent offenders who agreed that they did in fact have the right to be frustrated, when people didn’t do what was asked of them.

…you become a bit agitated I suppose, a bit angry…try to enforce it into them that they must help you…by overpowering them, by intimidating them.

[“Uri” 4.73-4.80]

Both groups considered that frustration could easily escalate to anger. This was demonstrated in the violent offender group; “Frustration turns to anger doesn’t it?” [“Otis” 4.128] as well as the general public group; “Frustration can lead to anger very quickly” [“Adam” 4.126-4.144].

As most of the participants from the general public agreed that they had the right to be frustrated and the following is an example indicative of the responses.

If it keeps going, if you ask them for a second time and they still don’t do it… I would think that they are useless…you’d feel frustrated. [“Carl” 4.44-4.66]

The following is a response by a member of the general public that did not agree that they had the right to be frustrated. For example:

I don’t think that I have the right to get frustrated. If you are on top of your game you can sort of be aware of your emotions and control them a bit better.

[“Eric” 4.44-4.48]
2.5.11.1 Frustration summary

An examination of frustration revealed that violent offenders seemed to believe that they should not become frustrated. Frustration appeared to be seen only as a precursor to anger, which had the propensity to swiftly escalate to aggression. A range of researchers (Jenkins, 1990; Raskin & Terry, 1988; Wilson & Prabucki, 1983; Young, 1994) had previously highlighted a particularly salient association between entitlement and frustration. Violent offenders, as reported by Howells and Day (2006), seemed to be aware of their difficulties regulating their emotions and reported “frustration” purely as an antecedent to violent behaviour rather than as an independent, yet related, experience. The emotional responses appeared similar to both groups and ranged from hurt to aggressive feelings. Again, violent offenders entertained more provocative thoughts rather than the self-soothing strategies employed by members of the general public. Apart from two examples consisting of assault from the participants in the violent offender group, both groups appeared somewhat similar in their choices of behavioural responses. There was also evidence of a two-way direction of anger expression, which suggests that whilst a few violent offenders may express themselves outwardly toward the person who has frustrated them, most would hold their expression in-check. The decision to hold their expression in-check seems quite congruent with their belief that they should not become frustrated. However, many seem unable to then discharge this negative energy in a pro-social manner, which may end up being released at a later time and in an anti-social manner (Megargee & Hokanson, 1970).


2.5.12 Special Treatment Domain

Do you think that you deserve special treatment?

Having an expectation that one warrants special treatment has been identified in the literature as a precursor to violent behaviour, particularly when individuals think of themselves as special (Millon, 1981) and hold high expectations of undeserved rights (American Psychiatric Association, 1994, 2000). Therefore, it would be reasonable to assume that many violent offenders would hold these expectations and, as a result, would mostly likely endorse this domain. The following is a flow chart illustrating the special treatment domain (see Figure 2.12).

![Flow Chart - Special Treatment: Illustrating the experiential theme (emotion, cognition and direction of expression) and the action theme (rejection, confrontation and assault).](chart.png)

*Figure 2.12 Flow Chart - Special Treatment: Illustrating the experiential theme (emotion, cognition and direction of expression) and the action theme (rejection, confrontation and assault).*

The emotional experience in regard to the special treatment domain ranged from being unconcerned if special treatment was not forthcoming to feeling hurt. The cognitive experiences included thinking of themselves as special, even if others did not acknowledge this. They also believed that they were deserving of special treatment and would be affronted if this was not forthcoming. The direction of
expression was difficult to determine; however, the overall behaviour in the action theme was to work harder to achieve recognition.

An overwhelming majority of participants from both groups stated that they did not think that they deserved special treatment. The entire violent offender group responded that they did not think that they deserved special treatment and were equivocal in their responses. The majority did not provide any further information; however, one participant did provide some further information. He stated:

No! You make life what you make it. [“Ned” 6.75]

Some participants explained that they thought equal treatment was sought after far more than special treatment. The following example is a comment from a participant in the violent offender group, followed by a participant from the general public.

I don’t think I deserve anything more than the next man. [“Yves” 6.101-6.102]

No! I don’t think anyone one deserves special treatment. Everyone deserves equal treatment, or equitable treatment, I should say. [“Bill” 6.227-6.229]

Most of the participants from the general public did not think that they deserved special treatment and were quite equivocal in their responses, not providing any further information. The following is one of only two responses that stated that they did in fact think that everyone deserved special treatment.

Yes! Everyone is special. You need to take into account their special circumstances. [“Carl” 6.84-6.85]
2.5.12.1 Special treatment summary

The findings on this domain did not appear to support previous research. Although the American Psychiatric Association (1994, 2000) and Millon (1981) had already identified special treatment as a vital part of entitlement, this notion was not replicated in this study. No violent offender endorsed this domain. Few members of the general public reported that they believed that they did indeed have a right to special treatment. Most violent offenders insisted that what they wanted was equal treatment. Violent offenders reported that they were not being treated in the same manner as prison officers and ancillary staff in the prison system. This comment was somewhat surprising, as the violent offenders did not appear to fully appreciate the power differential regarding their prisoner status. Violent offenders did not report any emotional, cognitive, or behavioural responses for this domain. The findings for this domain seemed at odds with the literature and therefore it is suspected the findings in this domain may be an artefact of being incarcerated.

2.6 Discussion

The thematic analysis demonstrated that a sense of entitlement is experienced in a qualitatively different manner in male violent offenders when compared with male members of the general public. In this study it was found that a sense of entitlement operates on two levels: that is, attitudes and behaviour. These findings provide support to other researchers who reported that when an inflated sense of entitlement is violated, violent offenders are likely to respond with anger, hostility and aggression (Hart & Joubert, 1996; Rhodewalt & Morf, 1995; Witte et al., 2002). This then supports the notion by Hall et al. (2006) that an inflated sense of entitlement in violent male offenders, in some of the domains under investigation, has the capacity to result in anti-social behaviour. Investigation of the twelve
domains chosen to represent a wide range of descriptions and definitions of entitlement yielded a large range of rich data, which was then used to design a questionnaire to measure a sense of entitlement empirically. Domains of entitlement such as the right to anger, respect, power, obedience from subordinates and obedience from family and friends were particularly salient to the violent offenders in this study and are most likely to elicit anti-social responses such as assault, confrontation and rejection.

2.6.1 Major Themes

The two major themes were identified in this analysis. The following is a discussion on the action and experiential themes. This will be followed by a discussion on the individual domains, limitations of this study and future directions.

2.6.1.1 Action theme

When their inflated sense of entitlement was violated, violent offenders reported that they were likely to assault, confront, or reject the individual responsible for thwarting their expectations. A small proportion of violent offenders were most likely to react with an assault in the first instance. Of those violent offenders who did not choose assault in the first instance, then there appeared to be an equal chance that either confrontation or rejection would ensue. This finding provides support for previous research in violent behaviour such as anti-social sentiments (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990; Hirschi, 1969; Sutherland & Cressey, 1970) and anti-social attitudes, or criminogenic needs (Andrews & Bonta, 1998; Gendreau et al., 1996). Anti-social sentiments were used in the same way that more contemporary researchers are referring to as criminogenic needs. In addition, coping deficits (Zamble & Porporino, 1988, 1990), and the use of neutralization to cognitively disengage pro-social values (Sykes & Matza, 1957) are also implicated in the anti-social behaviours that result
from an inflated sense of entitlement. For instance, when entitlements have been violated, poor coping mechanisms are employed followed by a disengagement of pro-social values in order to act in an anti-social manner. Attachment theorists have reported that attachment style may also underpin a range of violent offending (Baker & Beech, 2004), from dysfunctional expression of anger (Mikulincer, 1998) through to homicidal behaviour (Weisz et al, 2000).

Confrontation was the second most common strategy employed by violent offenders to deal with a situation when their entitlements appeared under threat. The anti-social and pro-criminal sentiments (Kroner & Mills, 1998), as previously reported, which may underpin physical assaults, are also salient for confrontational outcomes. However, it was noted that any verbal confrontation engaged in by a violent offender has a strong likelihood of escalating into a physical assault (Tedeschi & Nesler, 1993a, 1993b).

Rejection was also a strategy employed by violent offenders to suppress hostile emotions when their entitlements appeared under threat. According to Kaufman (1999), however, violent offenders often prefer to express their rage at a target that is physically weaker and more vulnerable than themselves. Therefore it is unclear if this forms the basis of the rejection strategy. It is difficult to ascertain whether they are leaving the situation as their opponent may be stronger than them or, in order to plan retaliation and enlist the help of others. The findings of this study supports attachment style proponents, Mallinckrodt and Wei (2005), who suggested that attachment avoidance would harbour anti-social thoughts and rejection behaviours. The results of this action theme are consistent with the avoidant or anxious-ambivalent attachment style (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978; Bowlby, 1979), as well as the dismissive-avoidant attachment style (Bartholomew &
Horowitz, 1991; McClellan & Killeen, 2000; Mikulincer, 1997, 1998). The responses from members of the general public appeared to be consistent with the secure infant (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Bowlby, 1979) and secure adult (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991) attachment styles (see Chapter Six - 6.3.4 for more information on attachment styles).

2.6.1.2 Experiential theme

The experiential theme, consisting of the three subordinate themes labelled emotions, cognitions and direction of expression, provided valuable information on the violation of an inflated sense of entitlement. The analysis of the first subordinate theme, which was emotion, indicated that the emotions reported by most of the members of the general public and the violent offenders in this study were similar. This suggested that a measure of emotional intelligence (Bar-On & Parker, 2000; Salovey & Mayer, 1989/1990) or emotional awareness (Mallinckrodt & Wei, 2005) was available to both groups of participants. This implies that both groups have a similar level of ability in expressing themselves and, as a result, may be considered to have low levels on this criterion for alexithymia. As defined earlier, alexithymia is where individuals have difficulty in recognising, processing, regulating and describing emotions (Bar-On & Parker, 2000). The ability to recognise the emotions in others, which is also regarded as indicative of individuals with alexithymia, (Parker et al., 2001), was not targeted in this study. It is unclear how the violent offenders came to have such a level of emotional expression. One suggestion is that the violent offenders who had been interviewed for this study may have completed treatment programs and had learned how to identify and articulate their emotions.

Cognition was the second subordinate experiential theme identified in this analysis. Whilst the emotions that were experienced appeared similar, the cognitive
processes reported by the participants differed markedly. Some violent offenders reported that they “didn’t think” prior to a violent incident. This is consistent with what Davey et al. (2005) reported on in regard to cognitive regulatory mechanisms such as cognitive avoidance, which they suggested may not operate at the conscious level. This is also consistent with the characteristic of impulsivity - acting without thinking (Farrington, 2002). Violent offenders who did report on their thoughts reported provocative thinking strategies. This is consistent with attributions of hostile intent from neutral or ambiguous situations (Ferguson & Rule, 1983). This study suggested that an inflated sense of entitlement in violent offenders is a complex construct, which comprised similarities between violent offenders and members of the general public in emotional experience, yet differences in cognition. These differences in cognition seem to range between “not thinking” at all and experiencing very provocative thoughts.

The direction of expression was the third subordinate theme identified in this analysis. When investigating this subordinate theme it was revealed that apart from the pro-social results for the “special treatment” domain, obedience from subordinates was the one domain that elicited an outward only direction of expression. These outward and inward behavioural options were supported in the scientific literature. For instance, it is well established that violent offenders discharge their anger outwardly through anti-social behaviour (McClellan & Killeen, 2000). However, the processes that take place when the emotion is not discharged are of equal interest. This may result in deleterious effects from holding one’s strong negative emotions in-check, as previously reported by Davey et al. (2005) and Mallinckrodt and Wei (2005). Obedience from subordinates was the solitary domain that elicited only an outward anti-social response. This response, of aggressing only
in an outward direction, may support previous studies on violent males and the pursuit of personal status to anyone not supportive of the violent offenders’ perceived status (Baumeister et al., 1996; Indermaur, 1995; Levi & Maguire, 2002).

2.6.2 Individual Domains

When an inflated sense of entitlement was violated, five of the twelve domains under investigation emerged as the most likely to elicit strong anti-social reactions such as assault, confrontation, or rejection. These action domains were well supported by the literature and consisted of anger (Beck, 2000), respect (Jenkins, 1990), power (Raskin & Terry, 1988), obedience from subordinates (Millon, 1981) and obedience from family and friends (Simourd & Olver, 2002; Walters, 1995a, 1996). The strength of the responses in these five domains supports the notion that an inflated sense of entitlement in violent men has the capacity to rapidly escalate into violent behaviour in these specific domains (Dear, 2005; Fisher et al., 2008).

This investigation elicited somewhat unexpected responses in a range of domains, which have been included for further discussion. These domains included obedience from subordinates, obedience from family and friends, sympathy and support, paying back of special favours, a right to good times, forgiveness, frustration and special treatment. Each of these domains will be discussed in turn.

When comparing the two domains on obedience, obedience from subordinates and obedience from family and friends, most violent offenders reported a difference in their behaviour depending on whether subordinates or family and friends were involved. As discussed earlier, violent offenders chose only an outward expression of their emotions in regard to subordinates. However, this was not the case with family and friends. According to McClellan and Killeen (2000) and Weisz et al. (2000) violent offenders in both interpersonal relationships and intimate partner
relationships may confront or assault the other. They may alternatively hold their emotions in-check and use rejection behaviours (Mallinckrodt & Wei, 2005).

Responses in the sympathy and support domain appeared to be at odds with the full description of alexithymia given by Bar-On and Parker (2000), which included difficulty in recognising and describing emotions. It was notable that violent offenders were able to recognise, differentiate and discuss their emotions in this domain. It was also notable that the violent offenders took offence to the suggestion that they may expect “sympathy” yet fully expected to receive “support”. To admit feeling hurt was to render themselves quite vulnerable, which seemed to be a surprising admission for serious violent offenders in a prison environment. This was especially so given that other researchers have found that male violent offenders may be unwilling to express their emotions in a group setting, due to gender-role stereotypes and the maintenance of their status (Howells & Day, 2006). It is interesting to note that the violent offenders in this study were particularly straight forward and candid and discussed their feelings without any obvious need to maintain their perceived status. This may be because - as reported anecdotally - violent offenders relate well to small, softly spoken women interviewers, as they do not have to “save face” and as a result, can be far more candid than they a likely to be in front of other males (personal communication Superintendent Casuarina Prison, Department of Corrective Services, WA). The strength of openness from the violent offenders provided validation for the findings of this study.

Violent offenders in this study reported a strong expectation to pay back special favours. This finding did not support previous research when describing individuals with a sense of entitlement (Millon, 1981; Raskin & Terry, 1988; Walters, 1995a, 1996; Watson et al., 1984; Young, 1994). It is unclear why this
notion was not supported. The prison ethos of not wanting to be indebted to a fellow prisoner may explain this finding. For instance, prisoners indebted to another prisoner may be called upon, at any time, to perform particularly undesirable actions in order to repay the debt. These actions may, and have in the past, result in further prison time (personal communication Superintendent, Casuarina Prison, Department of Corrective Services, WA).

Violent offenders in this study did not seem to expect extra good times as a form of compensation, which did not support the literature (Levin, 1993; Wilson & Prabucki, 1983). Some violent offenders reported that prior to this term of incarceration they expected to be compensated for the perceived deficits in their life. However, they also reported considering their actions and resolved that this expectation had led them to receive unwanted consequences. This response supports Zamble’s (1992) notion of prison providing a measure of maturity for incarcerated offenders.

Forgiveness was not considered particularly salient for violent offenders in this study. Although Jenkins (1990) reported that forgiveness could facilitate the end of the experience of shame and guilt, this did not appear to be the case in this cohort. Violent offenders indicated that they were not deserving of forgiveness due to the extreme nature of their offences. Some appeared to have accepted the mantle of shame and guilt due to their index offence and their subsequent incarceration.

There appeared to be some difficulty in the understanding of “frustration” by the violent offenders as well as by a few members of the general public. Frustration appeared to be interpreted as a precursor to anger rather than an emotion in its own right. This may provide some support for Bar-On and Parker (2000) who noted that individuals with low emotional intelligence may have difficulties in a number of
areas, including the processing and regulating of emotions. This notion is supported by Herpertz and Sass (1997) in their report, explaining brain imaging and the differences in cerebral blood flow of individuals with psychopathy when compared to non-psychopaths. Their study found that psychopaths had difficulty processing emotional words. Responses in the sympathy and support domain suggested a high level of emotional intelligence, yet in regard to frustration this may not be the case. For instance, the violent offenders were able to identify and express their emotions when discussing sympathy and support. However, at the same time they appear incapable of distinguishing between frustration and anger. The male members of the general public also had problems understanding frustration. It is difficult to speculate on this. Although it is possibly a gender-based or sex-based phenomenon, a study that includes females would be required to investigate this notion.

Violent offenders in this study did not expect special treatment. These findings did not appear to support the literature (American Psychiatric Association, 1994, 2000; Millon, 1981). Incarcerated offenders in this study often remarked that they wanted equal rather than special treatment. It is difficult to speculate on the results in regard to special treatment. This finding may have been due to how the question was worded, an artefact of being incarcerated or simply due to the sample used in this study.

2.6.3 Limitations and Future Directions

Some limitations were experienced during the course of this study. The first limitation was that responses to some of the domains may have been confounded by the very experience of incarceration and the time spent being incarcerated. Violent offenders in this study have had time to reflect on their situation and come to view their earlier attitudes, which led them to engage in anti-social practices, as somewhat
flawed. Responses to the interview questions may have been quite different had they been interviewed when they had first arrived at the prison reception centre or prior to sentencing.

The second limitation was with the wording of the initial questions. In retrospect the use of the word “more” in the questions was problematic. For instance, some violent offenders stated that they had already attained “respect”. Thus, answering that they did not need any more respect may have compromised their ability to provide more in-depth answers to the contingency questions.

A third limitation in this study may have been the narrow inclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria comprised: only Caucasian males; in a limited age range of 25 years to 40 years; and who had been incarcerated on at least two separate occasions for serious violent crimes. The inclusion criteria could be broadened somewhat for future studies.

A qualitative study on an inflated sense of entitlement could be investigated in other populations of violent offenders. These investigations could include female, juvenile and Indigenous offenders. Further qualitative investigations of an inflated sense of entitlement will have the capacity to inform treatment strategies.

2.6.4 Conclusion

Violent offenders and members of the general public reported an overall sense of entitlement in the various domains under investigation. However, it appeared that violent men hold an inflated sense of entitlement that, when violated, can lead to anti-social behaviour. When an inflated sense of entitlement was violated, it was the violent offenders who reported negative emotions, provocative thinking strategies and anti-social behaviours. This study identified different aspects of entitlement such as desiring power, admiration and status - as well as a profound aversion to feelings
of shame, disrespect and humiliation. The extent of anti-social behaviour that violent offenders were prepared to engage in supports the premise that violent offenders have an inflated sense of entitlement in particular domains (Dear, 2005; Fisher et al., 2008; Hall et al., 2006). Further studies are needed to explore the nature of an inflated sense of entitlement in violent men in order to reduce the incidence of violence.
Chapter Three: Self-harming in Violent and Non-violent Offenders

3.1 Overview

As demonstrated in the previous study, when an inflated sense of entitlement is violated in certain domains, violent men are likely to respond with assault, confrontation or rejection. The first two responses are assault and confrontation, which are immediate and in an outward direction. However, rejection is interpreted as leaving a situation full of angst. What is unclear at this point is what the “rejecting” individual is going to do next. Amongst a range of options is to recruit assistance for retaliation or, alternatively, to turn their anger in on themselves.

The purpose of this second study was to determine if there was any rationale to include self-harming behaviour in the final study. Consequently, this particular study did not target a sense of entitlement. In this study the data on violent offenders who self-harm was investigated. This was to test assumptions, in a current cohort, that violent offenders are vulnerable to self-harming behaviour. Some offenders vulnerable to self-harm may present in such an atypical manner that prison staff may not identify them as “at risk”. Therefore, data on the prison alert system was also examined in this study to determine if violent offenders vulnerable to self-harm are being identified by prison staff.

This chapter includes a brief overview of suicide and self-harm in incarcerated offenders as well as difficulties involved in researching these areas. This study found that violent offenders self-harm at a higher rate than non-violent offenders and that they are not always identified as potential self-harmers. First, however, there is a very brief return to Plato’s thoughts on self-harm and suicide.
3.2 A Sense of Entitlement and Self-harm

Plato was the first to suggest an inflated sense of entitlement underpins brutality and violence (360 B.C.E.; Jowett, 2005: translator). However, it is unclear if this premise included violence enacted upon the self. Mecke (2004), claims that Plato believed that man was merely the property of the gods and to suicide would be considered particularly disrespectful to them. However, there was one exception to Plato’s principle, which was when an individual’s life had become intolerable through pain. This pain included the pain of incurable illness, extreme poverty, or shame (Mecke, 2004). According to Plato’s conceptualisation, if harmony and justice were to disintegrate there was the propensity for an individual to become their own worst enemy (Nettleship, 1958). Thus, it would seem quite feasible that the prevailing psychological distress that may result from an inflated sense of entitlement would have the capacity to result in self-harm.

In this chapter the notion of suicide and self-harming behaviour in incarcerated offenders will be addressed, followed by information on the difficulties involved in defining self-harm and obtaining data on those who have self-harmed. Next will be a discussion on the issues encountered in the prediction, identification and intervention in self-harming behaviour. The archival study will then be reported.

3.2.1 Suicide, Self-harm and Incarcerated Offenders

Suicide is the most serious outcome of self-harming behaviour and whilst the focus of this study is on self-harm, it is considered important to include a brief discussion on suicide. Suicide has been viewed as a crime, or as a sin against religious doctrine in many cultures (Liebling, 1999; Mecke, 2004). To add to the pain and suffering of the surviving relatives, the law, at times, has stated that the next of kin could not claim any inheritance rights (Mecke, 2004). Surviving relatives
would be consumed with shame and distress as, after the death had been identified as a suicide, the individual’s body was often mutilated and refused a proper religious burial (Mecke, 2004). Even in contemporary times, full religious burials may be denied to some who have taken their own lives. In some religions the funeral service may only be conducted at the graveside as the deceased, who is deemed to have committed a mortal sin, is likely to be denied entry into the church (Mecke, 2004).

Many individuals with suicidal ideation do not actually want to die but are troubled individuals who are “submerged in their own despair” (Shneidman & Mandelkorn, 1994, p. 87). As mentioned previously, frustrated or thwarted psychological needs may lead to intense psychological pain or “psychache” (Shneidman, 1998). Psychache, or even the anticipation of psychological pain, may exceed an individual’s pain threshold, which may then lead to suicidal behaviour (Motto, 1999). Exceeding one’s psychological pain threshold has been identified as particularly relevant in regard to incarcerated offenders (Dear, 2005; Liebling, 1999).

Morgan (1994) firmly states “suicide is ultimately an individual’s right” (p. 219). However, this notion is not be upheld in the criminal justice system. In regard to offenders in the Western world and Australia, it is the duty of the state to ensure the care and well-being of all incarcerated offenders. International studies of prison suicide have found that suicide rates for incarcerated offenders are at least four times higher than suicides for the general community (Bogue & Power, 1995; Hayes, 1995; Liebling, 1999). It follows that if suicides are higher in prison than in the community, then it is most likely that self-harming rates in prison would also be higher than in the general community. The association between self-harming and suicidal behaviour is well known and it is for this reason that all self-harming incidents must be are taken seriously in the prisons system and accurately recorded (Harding, 1994). For
instance, in a study of 136 self-harming adult male incarcerated offenders Griffiths (1990) found that almost half had made previous attempts on their lives.

A range of reasons for self-harming behaviour has been proposed over the years, including psychobiological deficits within the individual, difficulties faced in the correctional facility and the negative influence of others. One psychobiological deficit, apart from brain injury (Powis, 2002), has been low serotonin levels (Moffitt et al., 1998). Serotonin is a neurotransmitter in the brain that operates as a mood stabilizer. Some individuals have been found to have defective or deficient levels of serotonin, which may result in anger and aggression and have the potential to lead towards suicidal behaviour (Brown et al., 1982). Virkkunen et al. (1987) also reported on an association between low serotonin levels and suicide attempts, completed suicides and homicides. However, they cautioned that the low level of serotonin appeared to be independent of any psychiatric diagnosis and speculated that this biological marker be related to a personality variable or perhaps stress. In later studies, Virkkunen, et al. (1989a, 1989b) found that hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar) was correlated with the low serotonin levels of violent offenders who had attempted suicide. An interesting point is that low serotonin levels have also been linked with impulsivity and the strong emotional states that precede violent behaviour towards others (Krakowski, 2003). So it seems that psychobiological deficits may also contribute to violent behaviour directed towards others and the self.

Psychological theories of self-harm have also been proposed, such as Nathanson’s (1992) theory on shame. As stated earlier, the first pole noted in the Compass of Shame was Withdrawal, which can lead to isolating one’s self. Isolation may then become a fertile ground for negative thinking, which, according to Nathanson (1992), has the capacity to lead to self-destructive behaviour. A more
Direct route towards self-destructive behaviours is the second pole in the Compass of Shame, Attack Self, which has the capacity to include a range of masochistic behaviours. As Nathanson (1992) suggested, behaviours on any of the four poles, which include Withdrawal and Attack Self, can migrate to pathological proportions.

Other reasons underpinning self-harming behaviours include the difficulties encountered with enforced detention in correctional facilities (Dooley, 1990). Correctional facilities have been identified as having a negative impact on the vulnerable offender (Dooley, 1990). For instance, there are often sudden and unexplained changes to everyday schedules within these institutions (Liebling, 1999). In addition, there is often a pervasive atmosphere of pressure and intimidation from other offenders (Liebling, 1994a). At times it may be difficult for the offender to communicate with family and friends and a late or postponed visit may trigger an extreme negative response such as self-harm or suicidal behaviour (Liebling, 1994a; Wool & Dooley, 1987).

The negative influence of others, such as the media or “toxic” friends, family members and associates, has also been identified as having a harmful impact on incarcerated offenders. The term “toxic” has been used by Mecke (2004) to describe individuals who are systematically destructive and harmful to others. The media has shown to be directly involved in triggering copycat self-harm or suicidal behaviour in the general community (Bourget, Gagné, & Turmel, 2002). This copycat behaviour is known as the Werther Effect and hails from a romantic story published in Europe in 1774, entitled The Sorrows of Young Werther, which was about a young man who shot himself (Bourget et al., 2002). Following the publication of this story, there were reports of a substantial number of young men who committed suicide in the same manner (Bourget et al., 2002). This copycat behaviour has continued into
contemporary times, and has been enacted in correctional facilities. Although this is
not media driven *per se*, the information is quickly disseminated through the prison
“grapevine”, which has resulted in prison staff having a heightened awareness for the
safety of incarcerated offenders following any death in custody (personal
communication Superintendent Casuarina prison, Department of Corrective Services,
WA). Some individuals, often partners or parents, have actually instigated others to
self-harm or to suicide (Mecke, 2004). Liebling (1994a) has noted that some
incarcerated offenders have instigated their cellmates to kill themselves.

Incarcerated offenders have used a variety of methods to suicide or self-harm.
Methods of suicidal behaviour in correctional facilities include hanging (McKee,
1998), drug overdosing (Biles, 1994), jumping from high places and the deliberate
in correctional facilities include cutting (Favazza, 1989; Reiger, 1971) and self-
mutilation (Risk Management Advisory Committee, 1996; Shea, 1993).

Specific groups of incarcerated offenders have been identified as vulnerable to
self-harm or suicide. Liebling and Krarup (1993) identified six different groups that
they considered were vulnerable to suicide. Those groups comprised offenders on
pre-trial detention, sex offenders, short sentence prisoners, young prisoners, first
timers and offenders sentenced to long terms of incarceration. Long-term offenders
are often violent offenders, and violent offenders have been identified as more likely
to suicide or self-harm than non-violent offenders (Dear et al., 1998b; Hillbrand,
1995).

Self-harm in Australian prisons has been reported as endemic according to
McArthur, Camilleri and Webb (1999). Suicide has been cited as the leading cause of
death in prisons in general (Department of Mental Health, 2000) and Australian
prisons are no exception (McArthur et al., 1999). The high incidence of suicide has also been reported as a leading cause of death in post-prison mortality (Graham, 2003). According to McArthur et al. (1999), self-harming behaviour is considered to be a particularly strong predictor of suicide, therefore the rates of self-harm need to be closely monitored.

Prison management is guided by four cornerstones of offender management in WA (Department of Corrective Services, 2006). These cornerstones comprise custody and containment, care and well-being, reparation and rehabilitation and reintegration. The second cornerstone, care and well-being, is to ensure that offenders can be returned to the general community unharmed. Care and well-being encompasses physical, spiritual and emotional health. Therefore, preventing self-harm or suicide by incarcerated offenders is paramount.

In a Western Australian study on self-inflicted injury and coping behaviours in prison, Dear et al. (1998b) investigated 142 male incarcerated offenders (71 self-harmers and 71 comparison offenders) using self-reports. By means of qualitative and quantitative methods, they examined the significance of stressors, levels of distress, coping strategies and the effectiveness of the strategies in reducing stress. They found that the two groups employed different coping methods. Self-harming offenders rated their overall coping response as less effective than the comparison group. The self-harmers did not appear to activate effective and adaptive strategies.

This may also be true for violent offenders. Violent offenders appear to behave in an atypical manner and do not seem to engage effective coping strategies (Ronningstam & Maltzberger, 1998). For instance, violent offenders may be outwardly aggressive immediately prior to self-harming behaviour, which may preclude or at least obscure identification and subsequent intervention (Ronningstam...
& Maltsberger, 1998). Identifying the antecedent behaviour of self-harming offenders is problematic, as is providing clear definitions of self-harming behaviour.

3.2.2 Difficulties in Defining Self-harm

Difficulties are evident when defining either suicide or self-harm, particularly in prisons. According to Harding (1994) the issue of what constitutes self-harm or a suicide attempt has yet to be satisfactorily resolved, as definitions continue to differ. Some researchers have viewed self-harm and suicides as separate phenomena (Hillbrand, 1995; Winchell & Stanley, 1991). However, Liebling (1992) argues that suicide and self-harm are part of the same continuum. Regardless of any theoretical debate, individuals who self-harm in prison are also considered to be at a high risk of suicide (Dooley, 1990; Harding, 1994). Liebling (1999) has also reported that a consensus is yet to be reached on what may constitute a genuine suicide attempt. A number of researchers caution against ignoring so called “attention seeking behaviour” as this is often the precursor to actual suicide (Liebling, 1999; Mecke, 2004; Rogers, Sewell, & Goldstein, 1994). Suicide has been defined as an intentional act to kill one’s self (Brown, Henriques, Sosdjun, & Beck, 2004; Felthous & Hempel, 1995). As noted earlier, Shneidman (1993) reported that one of the basic elements underpinning suicide is frustrated or thwarted psychological needs. Similarly, thwarted psychological needs may also play a part in self-harming behaviour.

A wide range of terms has been used to describe self-harming behaviour and the following is a small sample of the definitions found in the literature. For instance, Favazza and Rosenthal (1993) described self-harm as self-mutilation, auto-aggression, intentional injury and symbolic wounding. Hillbrand (1995) used the term “self-destructiveness” to define a deliberate attempt to inflict physical harm to

Dear et al. (1998b) put forward a specific definition of self-harm in prisons, proposing that self-harm of an incarcerated offender is “any occasion in which a prisoner intentionally engaged in behaviour which either resulted in injuries, or was likely to have resulted in self-inflicted injury” (p.191). However, an Australian study of prison officers’ beliefs found their definition of self-harming behaviour somewhat more basic and succinct (Pannell, Howells, & Day, 2003). In a study on prison officer’s beliefs regarding self-harm these researchers found that prison officers viewed self-harm as merely an attempt to communicate. In this study 76 prison officers (61 male and 15 female) rank ordered the perceived functions of self-harming behaviour and determined that most offenders self-harmed as a “cry for help”. Next were those offenders who self-harmed to gain attention. Ranked third were those who self-harmed as a release and outlet for pent up emotions. The prison officers did not interpret self-harm to be a suicidal act unless the severity of injuries was particularly high.

Although a range of descriptions and definitions of self-harm have been outlined in this section, none fitted the specific purpose of this study. Therefore a definition of self-harm was devised for the purpose of this study, which is as follows:
“deliberate self-injury which required the attention of prison medical staff or came to
the attention of either psychological staff or prison administration”.

In this section a range of definitions from the literature were introduced to
describe self-harming behaviour in the community and in prisons. As well as the
difficulties encountered when attempting to define self-harm, difficulties also arose
in collecting accurate and relevant data.

3.2.4 Difficulties in Obtaining Data

Many researchers claim that a substantial amount of information on suicides
and self-harm in prisons is considered to be flawed (Liebling, 1992; O’Connor,
Warby, Raphael, & Vassallo, 2004). One of the reasons for this is that previous
research methods are difficult to replicate or to compare with contemporary studies
(Liebling, 1992). In addition, there has been a wide range of operational definitions
within the criminal justice system (Liebling, 1999).

Inherent factors may also discourage accurate reporting. For instance, prison
staff may be encouraged to keep self-harming incidents out of the official figures in
order to present a positive image to the general public (Liebling, 1999). Another
example of difficulties in obtaining data may be the lack of effective record keeping
by prison staff (Liebling, 1999). Information may be incomplete (Dooley 1990),
inaccurate (Dooley, 1994; Simon, 2002) or selective (Zamble & Porporino, 1988).
Liebling (1994b) maintains that prison researchers differ in “how to count, who to
count…and how to make meaningful comparisons with the general population”
(p.11-13). Liebling (1994b) argues that particularly serious self-harm incidents that
were identified in time to prevent a death would not, of course, be included in the
statistics on the rate of deaths in custody. Therefore it seems to be of particular
importance that the number and rate of self-harm attempts, regardless of the level of
seriousness, are recorded and reported upon to provide a more comprehensive illustration of self-injury in the criminal justice system. Efficient record keeping and accurate statistical information may then lead to high levels of prediction, which is the next section’s topic.

3.2.5 Prediction

Prediction of self-harm and suicide of offenders has also proved difficult (Department of Justice, 2002). As Liebling (1992) reported, prediction in many instances over-identifies incarcerated offenders who may not be contemplating self-harm. Tracking “false positives” may be an expensive and labour-intensive exercise. Similarly, prediction may under-predict offenders with the potential to self-harm and who may ultimately go on to commit suicide (Liebling, 1992). That is, the “false negatives”: offenders who appear to go unnoticed until after a self-harming incident have taken place. It is this group that researchers and prison staff have been attempting to identify through a range of protective measures, such as those outlined in the next section.

3.2.6 Identification and Intervention

A number of researchers from western countries have reported on a range of attempts to identify and intervene in the self-harming behaviour of incarcerated offenders (Hall & Gabor, 2004; Hayes, 1994; Liebling, 1992). In the United Kingdom, Hayes (1994) reported on six core elements required for a comprehensive suicide prevention policy for incarcerated offenders: staff training; intake screening and assessment; accommodation; intervention; supervision; and administrative review (Hayes, 1994). According to Liebling (1992), training and intervention by prison staff has been identified as the principal approach to suicide prevention. However, Canadian researchers Hall and Gabor (2004) argue that it is quite
unrealistic to expect staff to carry out their daily duties and also ensure that they identify offenders who may be at risk of self-harm or suicide. These authors recommended the concept of “peer support”, that is, engaging other incarcerated offenders to support their vulnerable peers.

Self-report data has been the preferred method of information gathering on the self-harming behaviour by many researchers (Liebling, 1992; Dear et al., 1998b; Hayes, 1995). Self-report data of self-harming incidents from incarcerated offenders are considered to be generally honest and forthcoming according to Correia (2000). However, others have questioned the reliability of the participant responses. For instance, Mallinckrodt and Wei (2005) argue that self-reports may be dependent on participants’ mood or test taking attitudes, which may be susceptible to bias and inflated results. Kenny and Press (2006) also call into question the reliability of self-report data from offenders in general and from violent offenders in particular.

As previously stated, various international researchers have warned that violent offenders have the propensity to turn their anger inwards towards themselves (Backett, 1987; Menninger, 1938; Ransford, 1970; Wichmann et al., 2000). If this were the case, then violent offenders would be more likely to self-harm than non-violent offenders.

Violent offenders about to self-harm may present in such an atypical manner that prevents prison staff from accurately assessing the situation (Ronningstam & Maltsberger, 1998; Ward & Coles, 1994). This notion is supported anecdotally with examples of incarcerated offenders engaging in fights with other offenders that they appeared to “win” and then retiring to their cell prior to engaging in serious self-harm (personal communication Superintendent, Casuarina Prison, Department of Corrective Services, WA). If these offenders presented in an atypical manner then it
would be feasible that prison staff would not consider them to be in imminent danger of self-harm.

As noted previously, self-report studies have found that incarcerated violent offenders self-harm at a higher rate than non-violent offenders (Dear et al., 2000; Liebling 1992). Therefore, it would be of interest to investigate the self-harming status of the current sample of incarcerated violent offenders in WA. However, as the reliability of self-report data from violent offenders has been called into question (Kenny & Press, 2006) a different methodology will be employed in this investigation.

To begin the investigation it is necessary to first identify the magnitude of self-harming behaviour in violent offenders in WA prisons, as the results of this study will determine if self-harming should be included in study number four. As there were some concerns regarding the accuracy of self-report data from violent offenders, the use of archival data will be employed. The purpose of this study is to determine if there is a relationship with violent offenders and self-harming behaviour. If this is so, then this will provide the rationale for investigating the relationship between an inflated sense of entitlement, violent offending and self-harming behaviour as proposed for study four (see Chapter Five). The major research question for this study is: do violent offenders harm themselves at a higher rate than non-violent offenders? The first hypothesis is that incarcerated violent offenders self-harm at a higher rate than incarcerated non-violent offenders. The second hypothesis is that violent offenders are less accurately identified as potential self-harmers than non-violent offenders.
3.3 Method

This study was designed to investigate the self-harming behaviour of violent and non-violent incarcerated offenders using electronic archival data from the prison database.

3.3.1 Cases

The self-harming behaviour of 230 incarcerated male offenders (122 violent offenders and 108 non-violent offenders) was examined across three maximum and medium security prisons in Perth, WA. All cases were sentenced prisoners at various stages of their terms of incarceration. Similar selection criteria to that used in the qualitative study were used in this study, that is, random selection from the prison muster sheets. These criteria consisted of being Australian-born, non-Indigenous males aged between 25 years to 40 years, which resulted in cases with an average age of 22 years (\(\bar{X} = 22.44, \bar{S} = 7.7\)). The violent offender cases comprised individuals with entrenched violent lifestyles, which included a previous and current term of incarceration for a serious crime of violence against a person (see Appendix A). Offenders in the non-violent category included those incarcerated for a wide range of crimes, with no history of violent offending. Exclusion criteria were similar to that in the qualitative study: offenders with psychiatric disturbances or intellectual impairment and sexual offenders.

3.3.2 Procedure

The Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) of Murdoch University and the Research Application and Review Committee (RARC) of the Department of Corrective Services approved the study. Daily census data from the prison database was initially scanned for exclusion criteria. The first step was to determine violent
and non-violent offender status which was conducted in accordance with the inclusion criteria for violent offender. The next step was to discern the potential for self-harm as well as actual self-harm. The term “self-harm potential” was documented if there was a possibility that the offender may self-harm. This may have been from staff observations, reports from family and friends, or alternatively from the offender themselves. The term “self-harm actual” was documented if there was substantiated evidence that the offender had self-harmed either during their current term of incarceration, a previous term of incarceration, or when living in the community. In all cases the most serious status was recorded, for instance, if an offender had “self-harm potential” as well as “self-harm actual” then the actual incident of self-harm was recorded.

The categories of “self-harm” and “self-harm potential” as recorded on the prison database initially appeared as two distinct categories; however, upon investigation, both categories were interchangeable. In addition, on some occasions, self-harm was recorded when no actual harm had taken place but there was a potential risk for that particular individual. Therefore, all information and each individual’s status were checked on each of the three separate data entry points on the prison database (See Appendix B).

3.4 Results

The results of this study demonstrated support for the assumption that violent offenders are vulnerable to self-harming behaviour. In this section the results on the self-harming incidents of violent offenders will be presented first. This will be followed by the results on the alert system that identifies incarcerated offenders who may be vulnerable to self-harming behaviour.
3.4.1 Violent Offenders and Self-harm

When examining the overall self-harming incidents of the offenders in this study it appeared that almost 20 percent of the violent offender sample had self-harmed. When examining those who had previously self-harmed, it appeared that almost 90 percent were violent offenders, so in order to test the distribution of self-harm between violent and non-violent offender groups a Chi Square was conducted. The results of the Chi Square was significant indicating that self-harm was dependent upon the offenders’ status as either violent or non-violent ($\chi^2 (1) = 15.781, p<.000$) (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1 Incidents of Self-harm in Violent and Non-violent Offenders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-harm Status</th>
<th>Violent offender</th>
<th>Non-violent offender</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-harm</td>
<td>24 (88.9%)</td>
<td>3 (11.1%)</td>
<td>27 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Self-harm</td>
<td>98 (48%)</td>
<td>105 (52%)</td>
<td>203 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>122 (53%)</td>
<td>108 (47%)</td>
<td>230 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.4.2 Recorded Alerts

When examining the prison alert system it appeared that there were some issues, given that so many violent offenders self-harmed when compared with the self-harming incidents of their non-violent counterparts. In order to test this, on the self-harmers in both violent and non-violent offender groups, a Chi Square was conducted. The results of the Chi Square were significant with less violent offenders identified as vulnerable to self-harm than non-violent offenders ($\chi^2 (1) = 8.292, p<.004$). Of the group of violent offenders identified in this study who did self-harm,
almost 38 percent of them did so without any caution or alert on the electronic system. In other words, nearly two out of five violent offenders who self-harmed did so without being identified as being at risk (see Table 3.2).

Table 3.2 Recorded Alerts for Self-harm in Violent and Non-violent Offenders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Violent Offender Status</th>
<th>Violent offender</th>
<th>Non-violent offender</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alert</td>
<td>15 (62.5%)</td>
<td>3 (100%)</td>
<td>18 (66.66%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Alert</td>
<td>9 (37.5%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
<td>9 (33.33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>24 (100%)</td>
<td>3 (100%)</td>
<td>27 (99.99%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus prisons accurately identified two-thirds of the violent offenders in this sample as potential self-harmers. However, approximately one third of the original group of violent offenders in this study who did go on to self-harm were not identified as being at risk. That is, there was no alert documented on the warning system.

3.5 Discussion

The first hypothesis - that incarcerated violent offenders self-harm at a higher rate than incarcerated non-violent offenders - was confirmed, with violent offenders self-harming at a far higher rate than non-violent offenders. This study found that when only self-harming offenders were examined almost nine out of ten were violent offenders.
The second hypothesis - that violent offenders are less accurately identified as potential self-harmers than non-violent offenders - was partially confirmed. This study found that although most of the violent offenders had been identified as vulnerable, there was a substantial proportion that was not identified. Just over one-third of the violent offenders had no alert on the computer system to warn prison staff of the potential for self-harming behaviour. The findings of this study provide support for previous national and international research that identified violent offenders as a group at high risk of self-harming or suicidal behaviour (Bogue & Power, 1995; Dear et al., 1998b; Dear & Allan, 1998; Liebling, 1992).

One suggestion for this finding may be that unmet psychological needs may be acted-out in demanding and seemingly unreasonable behaviour (Hall et al., 2006). This behaviour would do little to bring about the cooperation and assistance of prison staff, thus opening the pathway to self-harming behaviour (Hall et al., 2006). This supports previous research that has found that violent males express their anger inwards through self-harming behaviour (Hillbrand, 1995; Plutchik & van Praag, 1990; Winchell & Stanley, 1991). There is also some broader conceptual support for Apter et al. (1991), Klinge (1995) and Moffitt et al. (1998) that violent men are more likely to suicide. This study also provides some support for the qualitative study on the nature of entitlement, where violent offenders reported that they express their anger and rage in both an outward and inward direction.

The Australian Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody (RCIADIC) was established in 1989 to investigate the deaths in custody of Indigenous prisoners (Williams, 2001). The outcome of the RCIADIC has had a profound effect on prison management for all incarcerated offenders, not just Indigenous prisoners, resulting in the highest level of duty of care (Howells & Hall,
The WA prison system has maintained best practice in regard to suicide prevention policies for incarcerated offenders (Howells et al., 1999; McArthur et al., 1999). In addition, each prison in WA conducts its own peer support team entirely staffed by offenders (personal communication Manager Suicide Prevention, Department of Corrective Services, WA), as suggested by Hall and Gabor (2004). Even though the WA prison staff have maintained a standard of best practice, the results of this study indicate that incarcerated violent offenders continue to self-harm.

3.5.1 Database Anomalies

Difficulties experienced by other researchers in obtaining data - such as incomplete and incorrect data (Dooley, 1990, 1994; Liebling, 1999), as well as inconsistent definitions and poor record keeping (Hall & Gabor, 2004) - were also encountered in this study. To reduce the impact of these difficulties, confirmatory information was sought across three data sources. A number of difficulties were also encountered in locating and interpreting the archival data. The most problematic areas included the practical problems in documenting information as well as obtaining access to appropriate definitions. Each of these areas will be discussed in turn.

Information was not consistent across the three major areas where information on the vulnerability of self-harming behaviour is recorded on the official prison database. The definitions of self-harm and self-harm-potential were unclear. Recording of information under these categories appeared interchangeable and haphazard. For instance, entries under the heading of “self-harm-potential” included actual instances of previous self-harm as well as concerns and threats. A second example of unclear definitions included the term “self-harm”, which could indicate
either a current incident or a previous self-harm incident related to a prior term of incarceration.

Staff access to formal categorisation information was limited. When recording information on two of the three data sources used in this study, prison officers are expected to recall information from lectures in their intake-training course, which may have been many years previous. Alternatively, they may consult a colleague’s recollection for the definitions in each category. Often the prison officer have little time to spend documenting this information as other incidents taking place in the prison take priority. This results in incomplete and inaccurate recording of information.

Access to definitions for the third data source was particularly problematic. Most staff that were required to enter self-harming information on this file were unable to access the formal definitions for self-harm and attempted suicide. These definitions were imbedded in restricted-access documents. Only a particularly small selection of senior staff has access to the electronic documents that include the written definitions on the prison database. In this file there are four categories, which include “risk-to-self”, “self-harm”, “serious-self-harm” and “attempted suicide”. Risk-to-self does not appear to have any formal definition but seems commensurate with the term “self-harm potential” found in the other two data sources. The verbatim definitions have been included.

Self-harm:

A prisoner who has deliberately harmed him/herself, e.g. lacerated inner arms, banged his head on the wall causing blood loss, or pulled out sutures.
Serious self-harm:

An act defined above which: requires medical treatment and assessment by a medical practitioner resulting in overnight hospitalisation in a medical facility (e.g. prison clinic/infirmary/hospital or a public hospital); requires ongoing medical treatment.

Attempted suicide:

A non-habitual act of self-harm, which the prisoner intends to lead to his/her death. A non-habitual act with a non-fatal outcome; that is deliberately initiated and performed by the individual involved; that causes self-harm or without intervention by others will do so; or consists of ingesting a substance in excess of its generally therapeutic dosage.

Notwithstanding the documented definitions appearing to be informative at first glance, they have the potential to be problematic as they have a particularly narrow scope. For instance as mentioned earlier, “risk-to-self” did not have any specific definition. Another example included the definition for “self-harm” that appeared to define deliberate harm as causing blood loss when offenders have often used a range of self-harming methods that do not involving the loss of blood. The definition of “attempted suicide” was reported as “a non-habitual act”; however, some offenders have made very serious attempts on their lives on a number of occasions (Personal Communication Manager Suicide Prevention, Department of Corrective Services, WA). It would appear that more comprehensive explanations for self-harm are required, and these explanations need to be accessible to prison staff. A more simplified system would also increase the transparency of such events and provide accurate data for internally generated reports as well as a sound data base for research.
3.5.2 Limitations and Future Directions

A number of limitations were identified in this study. The first of which was the stringent inclusion criteria. It may be of interest to broaden the inclusion criteria for future studies. The second limitation was that false positives for the violent offender group were not investigated. The salient point in this study was those self-harmers who were not identified. It is also noted that there may have been some instances in which the same individual may have self-harmed on more than one occasion. However, specific attention was not given to identifying repeated instances of self-harm.

The practical implication of this study is the overall protection of incarcerated offenders. From a policy perspective specific areas such as data recording of self-harm incidents has been highlighted as an area of concern. That is, the classification of self-harm, the narrow scope of the self-harm definitions and the difficulty of access to definitions that were identified during the course of the study. The electronic records of self-harming behaviour in the WA criminal justice system would benefit from a more accessible and well-defined category system. It would be of substantial advantage for prison staff to have easy access to comprehensive data, which could be obtained should the data in these three databases be corrected and kept up to date.

The WA prison system was found to have incorporated the entire six core elements required for a comprehensive suicide prevention policy (Hayes, 1994). This policy also includes self-harming behaviour. In addition, the WA prison system had incorporated the “peer support teams” as recommended by Hall and Gabor (2004). Thus, if the WA prison system is providing a “gold standard” of care in suicide and self-harm policies and procedures for incarcerated offenders, then it would seem that
something else, as yet unidentified, may be operating for this self-destructive behaviour to continue.

Violent offenders with an inflated sense of entitlement who find themselves unable to elicit their usual anti-social coping strategies may be left with frustration, hopelessness and anger (Hall et al., 2006). This state then has propensity to result in self-harming behaviour. Should an incarcerated offender have an underlying inflated sense of entitlement, they may be more likely to behave in a manner that would obscure their vulnerable status. Further studies are needed to explore an inflated sense of entitlement as a factor that may assist in the reduction of the incidence of self-harm.

3.5.3 Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that incarcerated violent offenders continue to self-harm at a substantially higher rate than incarcerated non-violent offenders. This chapter also demonstrated that prison staff did not correctly identify a considerable proportion of these cases as “at risk”. The self-harming behaviour in this sample of prisoners appears to have continued unabated. It may be that an inflated sense of entitlement is implicated in self-harming behaviour (Fisher et al., 2008; Hall et al., 2006). This study has provided the justification for an investigation of self-harming behaviour to be included in further studies in this series on violent offenders and an inflated sense of entitlement. What is needed now is a psychometric scale on a sense of entitlement specifically designed for violent offenders in order to investigate this theoretical profile. In the next chapter the design, construction and validation of a new scale titled the Sense of Entitlement Questionnaire (SOEQ) is presented.
Chapter Four: The Sense of Entitlement Scale: Construction and Validation

4.1 Overview

The qualitative analysis in Chapter Two clarified that an inflated sense of entitlement is a multifaceted construct that encompassed thoughts, feelings and behaviours. To further investigate an inflated sense of entitlement a questionnaire with sound psychometric properties was needed. Thus, the purpose of this study was to design and develop a questionnaire to specifically capture the scope of these multifaceted characteristics. The scale needed to be sensitive to indicate the presence or absence of negative emotions, provocative thoughts and anti-social behaviour when an inflated sense of entitlement was violated. The design of this scale is based on the responses of the violent offenders in the qualitative study, as this was the population under investigation.

The SOEQ was administered to a student sample to test the measure. A high score on the SOEQ represents an inflated level of entitlement. This study demonstrated that the SOEQ is reliable and is comprehensive enough to enable the successful measurement of a sense of entitlement.

An exploratory analysis was conducted to determine how a sense of entitlement functions with sex and age, as there appeared to be no specific information in the literature. This analysis demonstrated that males have a higher level of entitlement than females. It also demonstrated that a sense of entitlement decreases with age.
4.2 Measuring a Sense of Entitlement

Narrative format was used in Book IV of The Republic by Plato to convey the conceptual understanding of a just soul and the disintegration of harmony (360 B.C.E., Jowett, 2005: translator). Even though a few studies have continued using a narrative format, contemporary research now relies heavily on empirical data. For this reason quantitative measures are now needed to further investigate the concept of an inflated sense of entitlement. To determine the most appropriate measure to investigate this concept, this chapter begins with an examination of currently available measures. This is followed by information on the construction of a new scale, which is specific to violent offenders and focuses exclusively on an inflated sense of entitlement.

4.2.1 Current Measures of Entitlement

Although a search of the literature revealed that a sense of entitlement has many different descriptions, very few psychometric measures that have been designed to specifically investigate this construct. Of the few of the psychometric measures that do assess a sense of entitlement, only a small proportion of the questions are devoted to this construct. Three examples are listed. The first is the Schema Questionnaire (Young, 1994) that was designed to identify treatment options for personality disordered individuals; however, only 11 of the 205 questions target entitlement. The second example is the Basic Adlerian Scales for Interpersonal Success- Adult (BASIS-A) (Wheeler, Kern, & Curlette, 1993). The HELPS (Harshness, Entitlement, Liked by all, striving for Perfection and Softness) is a subscale of the BASIS-A which comprises 65 questions in five major areas including entitlement. This sub-scale was designed to understand an individual’s lifestyle based on beliefs which developed at an early age. The third example is the Schedule for
Nonadaptive and Adaptive Personality (SNAP) (See Clark, 1993; Waller, 2001) which was designed to assess trait dimensions in the domain of personality disorders and comprises 375 questions on 34 scales (Also see DeStefano & Heck, 2001).

There are a further two questionnaires that have linked a sense of entitlement to anti-social behaviour; however, only a small number of questions specifically target a sense of entitlement. These questionnaires include the Narcissistic Personality Questionnaire by Raskin and Hall (1979) and the Psychological Inventory of Criminal Thinking by Walters (1995a).

The Narcissistic Personality Questionnaire (NPI) by Raskin and Hall (1979) is a scale which includes questions on entitlement and has captured the attention of contemporary researchers investigating anti-social behaviour. This scale was designed to determine an overall narcissistic response and consists of 40 dyads with seven subscales, although within one of these subscales there is only a total of six questions on entitlement. Researchers have administered the NPI in a number of contemporary studies, including investigations on: entitlement and anger (Witte et al., 2002); hostility (Hart & Joubert, 1996; Patalano, 1997); self-esteem and forgiveness (Exline et al., 2004); self-esteem and aggression (Bushman & Baumeister, 1998); self-aggrandizement (Rhodewalt & Morf, 1998); and self-regulation (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001). However, there is some concern about using this measure to investigate a sense of entitlement. For instance, the NPI was found to have an overall internal consistency of .82; however, the alpha level for the six item entitlement scale yielded only .44 (Exline et al., 2004).

The Psychological Inventory of Criminal Thinking (PICTS) (Walters, 1995a, 1995b, 1996), as reported on earlier, is one scale that was specifically designed to identify criminal thinking styles in incarcerated offenders with entrenched criminal
life styles. The PICTS questionnaire comprises 80 questions; however, only eight questions target entitlement. Nonetheless, there are some other concerns about using this measure to investigate a sense of entitlement. The first concern is the interpretation of aggressiveness as measured by the scores on the entitlement scale (Walters, 1996). Aggressiveness may be just one of many interpretations of what entitlement actually encompasses. The second concern is that power was considered by Walters (1996) to be a measure separate to entitlement (Walters, 1996). Power has been mentioned in the literature as a descriptor of entitlement (Raskin & Terry, 1988; Young, 1994), therefore it was considered that power is a feature of entitlement rather than a separate element.

Walters (1995a; 1995b; 1996) also reported three other limitations of the PICTS. The first of these limitations was that the internal validity of the scales did not reach an acceptable level. The second limitation was that the factor analysis failed to clearly identify the four factors proposed by Walters. The third limitation was the complexity of the third factor labelled “self deception”. This third factor included the entitlement scale as well as two other thinking scales. In addition, there appeared to be difficulty matching the third factor to any particular behavioural style. Nevertheless, the suggestion was that this third factor comprised breaking social mores and activating distorted thinking before, during and after pro-criminal behaviour (Walters, 1996). These limitations appeared to reduce both the simplicity and the clarity of the PICTS.

Since then, Walters (2006, 2007 & 2009) has radically modified the PICTS. For instance, he has changed the names of some scales to the descriptors he had previously used to explain his factors. He has added to, and pooled, various combinations of these scales to further investigate criminal thinking styles. For
example, he combined entitlement, self-assertion/deception and historical scales into a “proactive composite scale” (Walters, 2006). He then appeared to briefly revert to his original PICTS (2007), before combining his new scales and changing the overall name from PICTS to General Criminal Thinking (GCT) Walters, 2009). It seems that Walters (2006, 2007 & 2009) has continued to include entitlement, however this factor has become more obscured.

The Entitlement Attitudes Scale (EAS) by Nadkarni (1995) is one scale that focused solely on a sense of entitlement (Nadkarni, 1995). However, the EAS was not originally designed to investigate anti-social behaviours per se. The EAS has 27 items that were designed to investigate entitlement and social inequalities (Nadkarni, 1995). The EAS has been used to investigate decision making in relationships such as male and female contributions to household chores (Newman, Steil, & Novak, 2003). This scale had also been used to investigate gender roles, sexual entitlement and rape related variables (Hill & Fischer, 2001). Notwithstanding the number and range of investigations using this measure, the EAS appears to have a substantial problem with the factor analysis, which rendered the factor structure unfeasible (Barnette, 2000; Knight, Chisholm, March, & Godfrey, 1988) (See the section on positively worded items - 4.2.5.4 in this chapter, for more information on the problem encountered with this analysis). The EAS has yet to be formally published.

To date there does not appear to be any published tests or test manuals to examine an inflated sense of entitlement in violent men. Whilst a sense of entitlement may be termed an “attitude” by Nadkarni (1995), it would be expected that a violation of an inflated sense of entitlement, would also be matched to strong and specific anti-social “behavioural” outcomes.
Theoretically it has been proposed that when an inflated sense of entitlement has been violated in violent men, strong negative behavioural outcomes are likely (Dear, 2005; Fisher et al., 2008). However, there appears to be no quantitative measure available that specifically targets violent offenders and incorporates the complexity of this model. Therefore a new scale is required for this research.

### 4.2.2 Measuring the Model of Entitlement

A comprehensive questionnaire that can measure the individual characteristics that underpin the complex construct of an inflated sense of entitlement is required. The questionnaire needs to identify a basic level of entitlement, an inflated sense of entitlement, as well as behavioural ramifications when such entitlements have been violated. The questionnaire needs to be specifically designed, constructed and developed to administer to violent incarcerated offenders. First, however, the questionnaire will need to be trialled. A student sample was chosen for this purpose.

### 4.2.3 Question Design

The questions were designed from the theoretical model of an inflated sense of entitlement (see Chapter One) and the responses from the thematic analysis of the qualitative study (see Chapter Two). The three action themes from the qualitative study were combined with the twelve entitlement domains to construct questions for the study. A range of design decisions made to assist in the questionnaire construction followed. Each of these areas will be discussed in turn.

#### 4.2.3.1 Themes

Violent offenders espoused three subordinate action themes - assault, confrontation and rejection - when their inflated sense of entitlement had been violated. The violent offenders described assault as “to lay in to”, “beat up”, or “attack”. An example of this is, “When people don’t put up with my anger I want to
attack them”. The violent offenders gave various descriptions to explain confrontation, which they described as “meeting head on”, “challenge”, or “threaten”. An example of this is, “If people don’t respect my power I challenge them”. The violent offenders described rejection as “turn your back on”, “deny”, or “renounce” any individual who may have violated the violent offenders’ sense of entitlement. An example of this is, “My friends should do what I want or I will turn my back on them”. Each of these three subordinate action themes was then used to form the basis of question construction. Additional statements made by the violent offenders in the qualitative analysis were also included in the questionnaire, such as, “I often think, don’t you know who I am?”

4.2.3.2 Domains

There were twelve original domains; however, not all were retained in the questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of ten domains and the rationale for the selection of these domains will now be outlined. To begin with, the five most salient domains that violent offenders identified in the qualitative analysis were retained. These domains consisted of: anger; respect; power; obedience from subordinates; and obedience from family and friends. Responses to a violation of a sense of entitlement in these five domains were particularly likely to evoke an anti-social reaction. Although the next four domains - forgiveness; special treatment; extra good times; and wishes expressed as needs - did not feature highly in the qualitative analysis, they were retained to determine if these specific domains might be endorsed in the questionnaire.

The domain labelled “sympathy and support” was divided as the violent offenders appeared to shun sympathy and reported that they interpreted the word as
“pity”. Nevertheless, violent offenders had a strong expectation of support. Therefore, only the word “support” was retained.

The two original domains that were not included in the questionnaire were “frustration” and “pay back special favours”. Violent offenders in the qualitative study viewed frustration as a precursor to anger rather than a separate emotion. In order to reduce confusion the frustration domain was not included in the questionnaire. The second excluded domain, which was “pay back special favours”, appeared to be confounded with criminal pride and prison survival strategies. Accepting favours from another is to be avoided as it may place an offender in a precarious position. The favour may be “called in” at any time and the offender would be expected to assist in any activity in order to pay off the debt (personal communication Superintendent Casuarina prison, Department of Corrective Services, WA).

Therefore, ten of the original twelve domains were retained for the quantitative questionnaire. These domains consisted of respect, forgiveness, anger, support, special treatment, power, extra good times, obedience from family and friends, obedience from subordinates and wishes.

The following illustration demonstrates how the theoretical structure (see Chapter One) has driven question construction. First, each of the three subordinate action themes formed the basis for each question. In the following table the subordinate action themes were paired with domains. Each of the ten domains was then used as the focus for each question (see Appendix B for the full questionnaire). For example, in the “respect” domain each item refers to respect but the behavioural action themes changes depending on which subordinate action theme the item represents (see Table 4.1).
Table 4.1 *Illustration of Question Construction Using Domains and Themes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domains</th>
<th>Action Sub-Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Confrontation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rejection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>When people don’t show me respect I want to hit them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obedience from Subordinates</td>
<td>People should do what I say or I bash them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some verbatim statements the offenders made were so pertinent to a sense of entitlement that they were also included in the questionnaire. These statements included items such as “I deserve to be top dog”, which was included in the “power” domain and “people just don’t realise how special I am”, which was included in the “special treatment” domain. Using these methods a scale of fifty-four items was constructed.

4.2.4 *Questionnaire Design*

Information from the first study (see Chapter Two) was used to design individual questions. The statements made by violent offenders in response to questions on entitlement would be more relevant than statements made by non-violent individuals (Gregory, 1996). This is of particular importance as this questionnaire was being constructed specifically to measure a sense of entitlement in violent men. Factor analysis was used during the scale evaluation phase to determine the structure of the new scale. Principal axis factoring was chosen as it is recommended in determining the number, type and relationship of the underlying factors (Costello & Osborne, 2005). According to Gregory (2000) this design provides a sound method of questionnaire construction.
4.2.5 Questionnaire Construction

When designing any questionnaire there are certain factors that need to be taken into account. When designing a questionnaire specifically for offenders there are additional factors that require consideration. In this section the decision making process of the questionnaire construction will be discussed. These consist of a range of design features such as the scale type and range, readability and item wording.

4.2.5.1 Likert scale

A Likert scale format is considered to be the most common and the most user-friendly design (Barnette, 2000; Brannon, 1981). This is essential when asking questions of violent offenders as most offenders have low levels of education and poor verbal skills (Davies et al., 2004). Scores on a Likert scale are easily summated to give a grand total score for the questionnaire (de Vaus, 1995). Higher scores indicate a greater likelihood of the presence of the construct. In this case the higher the score the greater the likelihood of the presence of an inflated sense of entitlement.

4.2.5.2 Scale length

A six or seven point scale has been recommended as the optimal number of scales to yield suitable reliability (Komorita & Graham, 1965). Initially a seven-point scale was considered; however, the central or neutral point appeared problematic. Of concern was the mood and test taking attitudes of the participants (Mallinckrodt & Wei, 2005). As some participants may be susceptible to bias it was considered appropriate to avoid the central point to reduce neutrality (Komorita, 1963). Avoiding the neutral point would also circumvent noncommittal responses (Duncan & Stenback, 1988), due to ignorance or indifference (Grichting, 1994). Therefore a six-point format was chosen with number “1” indicating “not at all like me” and “6” indicating “very much like me”.
4.2.5.3 Readability and grade level

The questionnaire was designed to reflect the limited literacy and comprehension skills in the offender population (Davies et al., 2004). The accepted reading level considered appropriate for an offender population is considered to be approximately grade four primary school (Davies et al., 2004). The Flesch reading ease and the Flesch-Kincaid grade level statistical measures were used to ensure the questions were suitable for the participants in this study. The overall readability for the questionnaire was 93.1%, with a grade two reading level. The hardest question was “If people don’t respect my power I attack them”, which has a readability statistic of 75.5% with a grade four reading level. The easiest question was “I just take whatever I wish”, which has a readability statistic of 100% and a grade one reading level.

4.2.5.4 Positively-worded items

Only positively worded items were included in the questionnaire. According to Marsh (1986) reading difficulties in primary school children have been found to correlate with difficulty interpreting negative items. This may be due to an underlying cognitive-development phenomenon. Poor cognitive development has also been identified in offender populations (Robinson & Porporino, 2001). It was considered that negatively worded items may create confusion in an offender population.

The Entitlement Attitudes Scale used positively and negatively worded items, which resulted in what appeared to be a two-factor structure (Nadkarni, 1995). However, this interpretation was problematic (Barnette, 2000). It was noted that all of the directly worded items loaded onto one factor and all of the negatively worded items loaded onto the second factor, resulting in a nonsensical structure (Knight et
al., 1988). Therefore in order to increase the ability to correctly interpret the results, no negatively worded items were included in the questionnaire (Barnette, 2001). This completed the design and construction decisions for the measure. The next step is to discuss the method used in the administration of the SOEQ.

4.3 Method

4.3.1 Participants

Three hundred and eleven university student participants completed the questionnaire. Thirteen responses were excluded from the analysis. Of these 13 responses, 11 were substantially incomplete and the remaining two cases had such extreme responses that they were removed as outliers prior to the analysis. Thus, 298 were deemed suitable for analysis. Participants consisted of 193 females and 105 males, with an age range from 17 to 55 years with a mean age of 22 years ($\bar{X} = 22.47$, $\hat{S} = 7.69$). No incentives or rewards were given and participation was voluntary.

4.3.2 Questionnaire

Materials consisted of an information sheet (Appendix E) and the newly constructed SOEQ (Appendix F). The SOEQ comprised 54 questions designed to incorporate the ten domains and the major themes from the qualitative analysis. The questionnaire was titled, “Your Rights, Attitudes and Outcomes” and included a request for demographic information on age and sex.

4.3.3 Procedure

The study was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) of Murdoch University. Lecturers were approached, informed of the study, and asked for permission to invite their students to participate in the study. If the lecturers
agreed, then classes of students were approached to participate. At the beginning of lectures, prospective participants were given a very brief verbal outline and asked to read the information sheet prior to completing the questionnaire. Informed consent was implicit in completion of the questionnaire. When the questionnaires had been collected a debriefing session was conducted, and the students were thanked for their participation.

4.4 Analysis

The data was examined and cleaned. The following is the validation procedure used for the SOEQ. The analysis was conducted using SPSS. The sample size of 298 for a 54-item scale was considered suitable for scale construction (DeVellis, 1991). The sample size also met the criteria for cases-to-variable-ratio for principal axis factoring (Coakes & Stead, 2001).

A principal axis factoring (PAF) was conducted to determine the factor structure of the SOEQ. The PAF followed a three-step process. First, assumptions of normality and linearity were satisfied, with outlying cases removed prior to analysis. Two cases had z scores greater than 3.5 and were therefore removed as outliers. Factorability of the correlation matrix was assumed as Bartlett’s test of sphericity was large and significant ($p < .001$) and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure was larger than .6, at .929. The second step was to examine the scree plot to determine the number of factors (Costello & Osborne, 2005). According to Cattell’s (1966) method, two factors were revealed (See Appendix G). The third step was to examine the correlation of the two factors. This resulted in a factor correlation of greater than .3, which indicated that the factors were not orthogonal and therefore a Direct Oblimin or oblique factor rotation was conducted.
The resulting pattern matrix highlighted five behaviourally based items that loaded onto attitudinal based items. They did not appear to perform as powerfully as other behaviourally based items. On inspection these items were deemed to be not as “anti-social” as other behaviourally based items and were deleted from the data set.

A second principal axis factoring was then conducted and the resulting pattern matrix this time highlighted five attitudinal items that loaded onto behavioural questions. It appeared that these items performed in a powerful manner and were interpreted as more behavioural items. Nevertheless, these items appeared to be particularly anti-social and as the premise of the questionnaire design was targeted towards violent men, these questions were retained.

Ten of the remaining 49 questions, however, loaded onto both factors. On inspection, these questions appeared ambiguous and seemed to have incorporated both attitudinal and behavioural phrases. Although these items have the potential to increase ambiguity, they were retained in the questionnaire as this area of investigation is still very much in the exploratory stage.

Chronbach’s Alpha was conducted on the remaining forty-nine questions resulting in an overall alpha level of .96 with an alpha level of .95 for the behaviour subscale and an alpha level of .90 for the attitude subscale. This confirmed a high level of internal consistency. (See Appendix H for Corrected-Item Total Correlations). Twenty-six of the 49 items loaded onto the behavioural factor and 23 items loaded onto the attitudinal factor. The readability statistics for the final questionnaire was 92.8% Flesch reading ease, with a Flesch-Kincaid reading level of grade two.
4.4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The following are the descriptive statistics for the student sample conducted on the SOEQ. This includes figures illustrating the individual subscales and the breakdown for both the entitlement-attitude and entitlement-behaviour subscales of the SOEQ.

Descriptive statistics for the distribution of the entitlement-attitude and entitlement-behaviour scales have been illustrated using the following figures. Figure 4.1 illustrates the distribution of the student sample on the entitlement-attitude subscale. The scale on this figure specifically illustrates the full range of possible scores. This distribution is slightly positively skewed which indicates that the students in this sample have some attitudes of entitlement (see Figure 4.1).

![Figure 4.1 Distribution of Student Scores on Entitlement - Attitude (illustrating slight positive skew indicating moderate entitlement attitude scores).](image)

The next figure is the entitlement-behaviour subscale. This figure illustrates the distribution of the student sample on the entitlement-behaviour subscale. This
distribution has a strong positive skew which indicates students are scoring at the bottom of the scale. Given this floor effect, this scale has the capacity to measure high levels of a sense of entitlement, as would expect from violent offenders (see Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2 Distribution of Student Scores on Entitlement - Behaviour (illustrating strong positive skew indicating very low entitlement-behaviour scores).

The descriptive statistics also consisted of the mean and standard deviation of the two subscales. The entitlement-attitudes scores in this distribution are in the mid range, which indicates that the student sample experience a wide range of entitlement-attitudes. The entitlement-behaviour scores, however, are in the low range. This indicates that the range of behavioural responses is restricted in the student sample (see Table 4.2).
Two exploratory investigations were also conducted; these consisted of sex and entitlement and age and entitlement. In the next section the results of the investigation on sex and entitlement will be reported. This will be followed by the results of the investigation on age and entitlement.

### 4.4.1.1 Sex and entitlement

An independent samples t-test was conducted to explore the function of sex on a sense of entitlement. There was a significant difference between males and females in regard to the sense of entitlement-attitude subscale, with males scoring higher than females ($t(289) = 2.50, p = .013$). When that entitlement was violated there was a significant difference in the sense of entitlement-behaviour subscale, with males again scoring higher than females ($t(288) = 2.72, p = .007$). These findings indicate that males and females differ in regard to feelings and thoughts regarding their perceived entitlements. In addition, it is males who are more likely to take action when their sense of entitlement has been violated.

### 4.4.1.2 Age and entitlement

A correlation was conducted to explore the function of age on a sense of entitlement. There was a significant negative relationship between age and

---

### Table 4.2 Descriptive Statistics for SOEQ Subscales on a Student Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscales</th>
<th>$\bar{X}$ (SD)</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td>65.4 (19.5)</td>
<td>23-128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behaviour</td>
<td>50.2 (21.2)</td>
<td>27-161</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
entitlement-attitude, which indicates that as age increases a sense of entitlement-attitude decreases ($r (291) = -0.19, p < .001$). Similarly, there was also a significant negative relationship between age and entitlement-behaviours ($r (290) = -0.21, p < .001$). These findings indicate that, in this cohort, as age increases attitudes towards a sense of entitlement as well as behavioural reactions to a violated sense of entitlement decreases.

4.5 Discussion

This chapter has described how the Sense Of Entitlement Questionnaire (SOEQ) was designed and developed to capture the multifaceted characteristics of a sense of entitlement in violent men. The SOEQ was designed using the action themes that were elicited from the qualitative study as the basis for item construction. Ten domains were then overlaid on each of these themes. Chronbach’s Alpha indicated a high level of test reliability for the overall test measure as well as for both subscales.

The exploratory investigation on the function of sex and age on a sense of entitlement yielded significant results for the two variables. Males and females differed in their attitudes of entitlement, with males scoring higher than females on both subscales. Moreover, males in this sample, rather than females, are more likely to react physically should their sense of entitlement be violated. This finding supports the well established notion that males are more openly angry, aggressive and physically violent than their female counterparts (Finney, 2004a; Monahan, 1981).

In addition, younger participants in this sample are more likely to have both a higher sense of entitlement and demonstrate more entitlement behaviours than older participants. This suggests that younger participants are more likely than older participants to react physically should their sense of entitlement be violated.
4.5.1 Limitations and Future Directions

One of the major limitations of this study was the use of a student sample instead of using incarcerated offenders to validate this questionnaire. However, the use of violent offenders in the questionnaire construction would create problems of over-testing such a population which, ethical considerations aside, would be quite inappropriate. Whilst the five most salient domains, identified by the violent offenders in the qualitative study, were not replicated as particularly salient by the student sample, this is to be expected. It is expected that the scores on the entitlement-attitude, and most particularly on the entitlement-behaviour scales, would be higher in violent offenders than in the student group. The distribution would be expected to encompass a much wider range of scores and be closer to a normal distribution than the positively skewed distribution of the student sample.

Initially the use of a student sample was considered unrepresentative of the general population; however, there is increasing evidence of diversity in the student population as noted in the report from the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) group (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2009). The OECD, of which Australia is a member, is committed to educational enhancement. This diversity is increasing in rate for tertiary institutions in countries that belong to the OECD countries, particularly in university education in Australia. This suggests that the students in this study are considered to be close to the demographic of the general public and although this is still not ideal, it is less of a problem than the use of student samples has been previously.

4.5.2 Conclusion

This study outlined the development of a sense of entitlement scale that appears to be reliable. The next step is to administer the SOEQ to incarcerated
violent offenders to determine the presence of an inflated sense of entitlement. This next step is expected to identify the presence of an inflated sense of entitlement in violent men.
Chapter Five: A Sense of Entitlement: Violence and Self-harm

5.1 Overview

The purpose of this chapter is to report on the administration of the SOEQ to incarcerated offenders to identify the presence or absence of an inflated sense of entitlement. The rationale for including self-harming offenders in this study was the general finding that violent offenders have a higher rate of self-harm than non-violent offenders as reported by Liebling (1992) and Dear et al. (1998b). In addition, support for this investigation to include self-harming offenders comes from the archival study on self-harm and violent offenders in Chapter Two of this thesis.

A quasi experimental study was conducted to establish the level of entitlement in both violent behaviour and the self-harming behaviour of incarcerated offenders. This study found that violent offenders have a more inflated sense of entitlement-attitude and entitlement-behaviour when compared with non-violent offenders. Self-harming offenders have a more inflated sense of entitlement when compared with non-self-harming offenders, but only for entitlement-attitude. However, violent self-harmers did not have the highest level of overall entitlement as expected.

In contrast to the student sample in the previous chapter, it was found that a sense of entitlement in this cohort remains constant regardless of age. To begin this chapter there is a very brief return to Plato and the disintegration of the just soul (360 B.C.E., Jowett, 2005: translator).
5.2 Entitlement in Violent Offenders who Self-harm

When speaking of Plato’s concept of the three parts of the soul, namely wisdom, courage and temperance, Nettleship (1958) interpreted that a wise man is said to have the capability of understanding that which is in his best interest as a holistic human being. A courageous man is said to have the courage of his convictions and have the ability to abide not only by his own principles but those of the legal system (Nettleship, 1958). A temperate man is said to have self-control and the ability to live a just and harmonious life (Nettleship, 1958). Plato’s conceptual understanding still holds today as contemporary offenders, and in particular violent offenders and offenders who suicide or self-harm, may be described as having considerable deficits in their capacity to attain wisdom, courage and temperance. As stated earlier (see Chapter One - 1.3.2), wisdom was defined as having the ability to have good judgement, courage was defined as having the ability gain the respect of others, and temperance was defined as having self-mastery (Nettleship, 1958) in order to conform to social mores (Young, 1994).

5.2.1 Violence, Suicide and Self-harm

To summarise what was noted earlier (see Chapter One - 1.7.1), one of the most disturbing acts of aggression towards others and the self is murder-suicide. The American Psychiatric Association (2005a) has reported that individuals likely to harm others have an increased risk of self-harm. They have also stated that suicidal individuals have an increased risk of harming others (American Psychiatric Association, 2005b). A number of studies have illustrated the links between murder and suicide (Wool & Ilbert, 1994) and violence and suicide, particularly in prisons (Biles, 1994; Biles & Dalton, 1999). A number of researches have reported that
violent men are more prone to suicide than non-violent men (Apter et al., 1991; Klinge, 1995; Moffitt et al., 1998). Similarly, researchers have reported that violent offenders are prone to self-harming behaviour (Dear et al., 1998b; Harding, 1994; Liebling, 1995; Towl, 1996). It is proposed that an inflated sense of entitlement underpins violence towards others and the self.

This study is expected to establish empirically an inflated sense of entitlement in violent men. An inflated sense of entitlement will be demonstrated through high scores on the two entitlement subscales. Once established, an inflated sense of entitlement may be measured to determine treatment readiness, treatment gains and treatment outcomes.

Directing harm-to-others and harm-to-self is somewhat interchangeable, according to the American Psychiatric Association (2005a, 2005b). For instance, individuals who are likely to harm others are also most likely to harm themselves (American Psychiatric Association, 2005a). Individuals who are likely to harm themselves are more likely to pose a risk to others including the potential for murder-suicide (American Psychiatric Association, 2005b). As mentioned earlier, some researchers have proposed that an inflated sense of entitlement is a criminogenic factor that is likely to underpin violent offending behaviour (Dear, 2005; Fisher et al., 2008) and may also underpin self-harming behaviour in offenders (Hall et al., 2006). Therefore, this study was designed to establish the level of entitlement in violent men and to establish the level of entitlement in self-harmers.

A quasi experimental study was run to investigate a sense of entitlement using the newly designed SOEQ. There are three hypotheses under investigation in this fourth and final study. The first hypothesis is that violent offenders will report higher levels of entitlement than non-violent offenders. The second hypothesis is that
offenders who self-harm will report higher levels of entitlement than non-violent, self-harming offenders. The third hypothesis is that violent offenders who self-harm will have the highest level of entitlement of the four groups.

5.3 Method

5.3.1 Participants

The study comprised 120 randomly selected Australian-born, non-Indigenous male participants, consisting of 60 violent offenders (30 of whom had a history of self-harm and 30 of whom did not) and 60 non-violent offenders (30 of whom had a history of self-harm and 30 that did not) incarcerated in two maximum-security facilities in WA. The randomisation procedure was as follows. A full muster list was obtained for the prisoners. The prison staff then selected names from the list, at random. A total of 132 prisoners were selected from the list by staff, 120 agreed to participate.

The criterion used for identifying violent offenders was that their current index offence was for a serious violent offence (See Appendix A for inclusion criteria for crimes of violence). Self-harm status was determined by the documented self-harming history on official prison records. Non-inclusion criteria consisted of sexual offenders, individuals with active psychiatric disturbances, individuals with substantial intellectual impairment, as well as individuals likely to pose a threat to prison staff.

Demographic information was collected on age, marital status and education. There was no discernible difference in the demographic information between the violent and non-violent offenders, or between the self-harming and non-self-harming offenders. Specifically, there was no significant difference in age between violent and non-violent incarcerated offenders \( (F(1,116) = 1.44, \ p = .233) \) or between self-
harming and non-self-harming incarcerated offenders \( (F(1,116) = .002, p = .966) \). In addition, there was no significant difference between violent and non-violent incarcerated offenders in marital status \( (\chi^2 (3) = 6.07, p = .108) \) or between self-harming and non-self-harming incarcerated offenders \( (\chi^2 (3) = 2.92, p = .404) \).

Finally, there was no significant difference between violent and non-violent incarcerated offenders in education level. \( (\chi^2 (4) = .10, p = .999) \) or between self-harming and non-self-harming offenders \( (\chi^2 (4) = 4.80, p = .308) \) (see Table 5.1).

Table 5.1 *Demographic Information - Violent and Self-harming Offenders*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Self-injury</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>( \bar{X} )</td>
<td>( \hat{\sigma} )</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SH</td>
<td>31.10</td>
<td>(9.31)</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>To Year 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Year 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Year 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>Trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tertiary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent Offender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-SH</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>(8.62)</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>To Year 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Year 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Year 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>Trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tertiary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SH</td>
<td>32.67</td>
<td>(7.66)</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>To Year 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Year 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Year 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>Trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tertiary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-violent Offender</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-SH</td>
<td>32.90</td>
<td>(8.42)</td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>To Year 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Single</td>
<td>Year 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>Year 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>Trade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tertiary</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SH = Self-harm    Non-SH = Non-Self-harm
5.3.2 Measures

The SOEQ was used as it was designed specifically to assess an inflated sense of entitlement in violent males. The reliability from the student sample used in the construction of the SOEQ, using Chronbach’s alpha, was .96, with an alpha level of .90 for the attitudinal subscale and an alpha level of .95 for the behaviour subscale (see Chapter Three - 4.4). A reliability check was conducted prior to the analysis on this study, which resulted in an overall alpha of .94, with an alpha level of .87 for the attitudinal subscale and an alpha level of .95 for the behavioural subscale. These results confirmed a high level of internal consistency.

5.3.3 Procedure

The Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) of Murdoch University and the Research Application and Review Committee (RARC) of the Department of Corrective Services approved the study. A list of prospective participants was then generated from the prison database and random selection was conducted from this list. This process was continued until there were thirty participants in each group.

Standard ethical procedures were applied. For instance, prospective participants were given an information sheet (Appendix K) explaining the study. They were then asked to sign a consent form (Appendix L) prior to completing the SOEQ (Appendix M). On completion of the questionnaire, participants were given further information about the study and a debriefing session was conducted. Participants were informed that psychological support was available if required. Each participant was thanked for their time and contribution. To ensure confidentiality each completed questionnaire was given an alphanumeric code.
5.4 Analysis

The analysis of the data begins with information on the data screening and the descriptive statistics. This will be followed by an examination of age and entitlement to investigate any age-related differences as was revealed in the student sample (see Chapter Four - 4.4.1.2). This is followed by the main analysis.

5.4.1 Data Screening

The data was screened prior to analysis. Where participants had endorsed two choices for the same item, the mean of both choices was calculated and used as the item response as recommended by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007). Tests of normality revealed a normal distribution for the violent self-harm group and a positively skewed distribution for the other three groups. This shows that the violent self-harming offenders made use of the top end of the distribution, whereas the scores from the other three groups were consistent with those of the student sample (see Chapter Four - 4.4.1). The Shapiro-Wilk statistic was also violated in these three groups. However, violation of normality and equality of variance were deemed acceptable due to the amount of participants in each cell (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Normal probability plots and detrended normal plots were conducted on the dependant variables for each of the four groups and the assumptions of linearity and homoscedasticity were met. Correlations were conducted which assessed the assumptions for multicollinearity and singularity. None of the correlations were above the cut off score of .9, as recommended by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007).

To check for univariate outliers, z scores were examined. There were two extreme scores from the responses recorded on the behavioural subscale for the violent offender group. Even though this revealed the extreme, yet accurate nature of these respondents, it was decided to transform these outliers in order to make the
statistic more representative of the sample. These outliers were transformed using a procedure recommended by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007). This procedure involved dividing the difference between the extreme score and the next score in line, then subtracting that number from the extreme score to reveal the modified score (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). However, following this procedure, two further behavioural scores remained as extreme outliers and were therefore deleted from the data.

To check for multivariate outliers, Mahalanobis distance statistic values were calculated for each of the four groups. Using a conservative alpha level ($\alpha = .001$) as recommended by Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), comparison with the appropriate chi-square value showed no multivariate outliers in the data ($\chi^2_{\text{crit}}(2) = 3.86$). The Box’s M test was examined for multivariate homogeneity of variance-covariance and was found to be significant, which violated this assumption. However, given the sample size of each cell, robustness of the significance test is expected and the outcome of Box’s M test may be disregarded in this instance (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

5.4.2 Descriptive Statistics

In addition to problems of distribution, the range of scores on the two dependent variables for the violent offender group was particularly broad. The range of scores for the non-violent offenders was substantially narrower. The standard deviations for the two violent offender groups demonstrated a wider range of responses to both of the dependant variables than did the non-violent offenders. This range of responses indicated considerable variability in the violent offenders’ views, particularly on the entitlement-behaviour subscale (see Table 5.2).
Table 5.2 *Mean and Standard Deviation Scores from the SOEQ - Offender Status and Self-injury Status*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Offender Status</th>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Violent Status</th>
<th>Self-injury Status</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-violent Offender</td>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td>Non-Self-harm</td>
<td>Self-harm</td>
<td>53.50</td>
<td>10.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>59.54</td>
<td>12.718</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent Offender</td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Self-harm</td>
<td>Self-harm</td>
<td>68.97</td>
<td>17.087</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>75.03</td>
<td>19.954</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-violent Offender</td>
<td>Behaviour</td>
<td>Non-Self-harm</td>
<td>Self-harm</td>
<td>36.60</td>
<td>8.661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>36.79</td>
<td>11.836</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent Offender</td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Self-harm</td>
<td>Self-harm</td>
<td>54.03</td>
<td>22.238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>58.80</td>
<td>20.236</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.4.3 Age and Entitlement

In the previous investigation, using the student sample, it was revealed that there was a negative relationship with age (see Chapter Four - 4.4.1.2). Therefore it was considered of interest to examine the function of age on a sense of entitlement in violent and non-violent incarcerated offenders. To accomplish this, a correlation was conducted that showed that there was no overall relationship between age and a sense of entitlement in this sample of offenders. There was no significant relationship on the entitlement-attitude subscale of the SOEQ ($r (118) = -0.085, p = 0.357$). Similarly, there was no significant relationship on the entitlement-behaviour subscale ($r (118) = -0.123, p = 0.179$). A further correlation was computed using only the data from the
violent offenders as it has been suggested by a number of researchers that this group seems to “mature” later than perhaps mainstream offenders (Hall, 1988; Hare, 1999; Zamble, 1992). This result showed a non-significant result in violent offenders for the entitlement-attitude subscale \( r (58) = -.060, p = .651 \). Similarly, there was a non-significant result for the entitlement-behaviour subscale \( r (58) = -.096, p = .466 \). These computations were then compared with the results from the non-violent offender group. These results were also non-significant on the entitlement-attitude subscale \( r (60) = -.018, p = .889 \) and the entitlement-behaviour subscale \( r (60) = -.07, p = .618 \). These findings suggest that, in this sample, as age increases the attitudes and the behaviours related to a violated sense of entitlement in both violent and non-violent offenders, remains stable. These results do not provide support for the difference in maturation rates for violent and non-violent offenders as suggested by Hall (1988), Hare (1999) and Zamble (1992).

5.4.4 Multivariate Analysis

A 2 (violent/non-violent) \times 2\) (self-harm/no-self-harm) multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), was conducted as this statistical analysis was the most appropriate analysis for this study. The dependent variables, which were attitude and behaviour, had been identified both theoretically (see Chapter One - 1.10) and statistically (see Chapter Four - 4.4). A MANOVA has the capacity to investigate these two dependent variables (attitude and behaviour) simultaneously, across the two independent variables (violent status and self-injury status), whilst reducing the type one error. The MANOVA, using Pillai’s criterion, showed a significant effect for the multivariate construct of a sense of entitlement \( F (2,113) = 1032.04, p < .001 \). The MANOVA showed a significant multivariate effect for violent versus non-violent offenders \( F (2,113) = 23.25, p < .001 \). However, there was no significant
multivariate effect for self-harm versus non-self-harm ($F(2,113) = 2.26, p = 109$). In addition, there was no significant multivariate effect for an interaction between the two independent variables ($F(2,113) = 0.36, p = .696$). The univariate results for the interaction were not significant for either attitude ($F(2,114) = 0.01, p = .996$) or behaviour ($F(2,114) = 0.55, p = .461$). In the next section, the univariate results for violent offender status and self-injury will be presented separately.

5.4.5 *Univariate Analysis - Violent Offender Status*

As previously stated, the multivariate result for violent status was significant. Univariate analyses of variance were then examined and revealed significant main effects. There was a significant main effect for violent offenders when compared to non-violent offenders entitlement-attitude ($F(1,114) = 29.19, p < 001, \omega^2 = 0.19$). The effect size of 19% was calculated according to Cohen’s (1988) formula. This indicated a strong relationship between the variables (Cohen, 1988) (see Figure 5.1).

*Figure 5.1* Mean entitlement scores for violence (error bars represent standard error of the mean).
Univariate analyses of variance also revealed a significant main effect for violent offenders when compared with non-violent offenders in entitlement-behaviour ($F(1,114) = 40.63$, $p < .001$, $\omega^2 = 0.25$). The effect size of 25% was calculated manually, which also indicated a strong relationship between the variables (Cohen, 1988). The results for both subscales are highly significant. The univariate result for entitlement-behaviour was somewhat larger than that of entitlement-attitude.

5.4.6 Univariate Analysis - Self-injury Status

The univariate analysis of variance demonstrated a significant main effect for self-injury status in regard to only one of the two subscales (see Figure 5.1).

![Figure 5.2](image_url) Mean entitlement scores for self-injury status (error bars represent standard error of the mean).

There was a significant main effect for self-injury status; however, this was only in regard to the entitlement-attitude subscale ($F(1,114) = 4.46$, $p = .037$, $\omega^2 = 0.02$). The effect size of 2% was calculated manually, and indicated a small
relationship between the variables (Cohen, 1988). There was no significant main effect for behaviour ($F(1,114) = 0.64, p = .425$). It is most likely that the very strong non-significant effect for entitlement-behaviour is weakening the not particularly significant effect for attitude; hence, the non-significant multivariate result. This is to be expected because the behaviour questions did not include specific anger-in type questions (see Limitations section in this chapter - 5.5.1).

### 5.4.7 Investigating Criminogenic Needs

An investigation was conducted to determine if an inflated sense of entitlement was as salient in non-violent offenders as it appeared to be for violent offenders. This was accomplished by performing a $2 \times 2$ Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) using the mean scores from the violent and non-violent offenders in this study. Also included were the mean scores from only the male participants from the student sample used in the questionnaire construction phase of the study. Results for the student sample were based on fifty-four items; therefore five items were removed to match the forty-nine items used in the final questionnaire which was administered to the incarcerated offenders.

The ANOVA revealed that there was a significant difference in entitlement-attitude ($F(2,149) = 11.88, p < .001$). There was also a significant difference in entitlement-behaviour ($F(2, 149, 16.09, p < .001$). Both the male student sample and the non-violent offenders had similar mean scores on the entitlement-attitude subscale of the SOEQ. The violent offenders, however, had substantially higher mean scores on this subscale. Post hoc comparisons were then conducted on entitlement-attitude using Tukey’s HSD, which revealed a significant difference between violent offenders ($p < .001$) and both the non-violent offenders ($p < .001$) and male students ($p = .012$) in entitlement-attitude (see Figure 5.3).
Both the male student sample and the non-violent offenders had similar mean scores on the entitlement-behaviour subscale of the SOEQ. The violent offenders had substantially higher mean scores on the entitlement-behaviour subscale. Post hoc comparisons were also conducted on the entitlement-behaviour subscale using Tukey’s HSD, which revealed a significant difference between violent offenders ($p<.001$) and both the non-violent offenders ($p<.001$) and the male students ($p=.005$) (see Figure 5.3). These results indicate that an inflated sense of entitlement may be a criminogenic need as it discriminates between male students and non-violent offenders on the one hand and violent offenders on the other.

Figure 5.3 Comparison of mean scores for males on entitlement attitudes and behaviours (error bars represent standard error of the mean).

Following the comparison scores between these three groups, one final investigation was conducted. This follows on from the qualitative study (see Chapter Two) that revealed substantial differences in the behavioural responses of members of the general public, when compared with violent offenders. This investigation set
out to determine if there was any empirical difference between the two groups of offenders.

5.4.8 Differences in Domains

The final investigation in this study was conducted to explore the differences in the attitude and behavioural measures for the domains between the incarcerated violent and non-violent offenders, using a repeated measures ANOVA. The final questionnaire consisted of forty-nine questions, comprising nine attitude domains and nine behavioural domains. This investigation revealed a significant difference in the scores on the entitlement-attitude subscale between violent offenders ($F(7.14, 421) = 35.18, p<.001$) and non-violent offenders ($F(6.31, 372.15) = 70.49, p<.001$). This was particularly evident in the anger, special treatment, power, obedience from subordinates and wishes domains (see Figure 5.4).

![Figure 5.4 Mean scores on entitlement-attitude domains for violent and non-violent offenders (error bars represent standard error of the mean).](image-url)
A parallel investigation on the entitlement-behaviour subscale also revealed a significant difference between the violent \( (F(6.65, 392.48) = 9.56, p<.001) \) and non-violent offenders \( (F(6.30, 371.56) = 9.88, p<.001) \). However, in this investigation it was revealed that violent offenders scored significantly higher on all nine domains. It is noted that the respect domain rated far higher than any of the other domains, followed by forgiveness, anger, extra good times and special treatment (see Figure 5.5).

![Figure 5.5](image_url)  
*Figure 5.5* Mean scores on entitlement-behaviour domains for violent and non-violent offenders (error bars represent standard error of the mean).

5.5 Discussion

Demographic information collected from the participants in this study indicated that both violent and non-violent offenders were similar regarding age, education and marital status. However, this information appeared inconsistent with the findings of previous research (Robinson et al., 1997; Toch & Adams, 1989). These researchers found violent offenders to be older, less educated and more likely
to be single than non-violent offenders. However, it is noted that offenders housed in maximum security facilities are more likely to be more criminogenic than average non-violent offenders may be. Therefore, this result may be related to a sampling issue rather than any particular differences.

The results of this study supported the first hypothesis - that violent offenders will report higher levels of entitlement than non-violent offenders. These results indicated that violent offenders have a higher sense of entitlement in their attitudes than non-violent offenders. In addition, the violent offenders also had substantially higher levels of reported entitlement-behaviours than non-violent offenders. In fact, there were higher entitlement-behaviour scores on all nine domains, suggesting that violent offenders would be open to using anti-social means should their expectations on any of these domains be violated. This result has important implications for treatment.

When three cohorts were compared - male students from the previous study; non-violent offenders; and violent offenders - the results demonstrated that an inflated sense of entitlement is both a clinical and statistically significant issue for violent offenders. The results of this study revealed that the student and non-violent offenders had similar levels of entitlement-attitude and entitlement-behaviour. Violent offenders had substantially higher scores on both of these subscales. This suggests that an inflated sense of entitlement appears to be specific to violent offenders and may therefore be a criminogenic need in regard to violent offenders.

The second hypothesis - that self-harming offenders will report higher levels of entitlement than non-self-harming offenders was only partially confirmed. It was demonstrated that self-harming incarcerated offenders in this study had a sense of entitlement in relation to attitude, but not behaviour. This area would benefit from
further research, particularly as there was no specific anger-in or self-harm questions included in this study. If these questions had been included there may have been a difference in entitlement-behaviour (see Limitations section in this chapter - 5.5.1).

The third hypothesis - that violent offenders who self-harm will have the highest level of entitlement of the four groups was not confirmed. There was no interaction between violent status and self-harming behaviour. It is difficult to speculate why this hypothesis was not supported, it is hoped that future research may provide more information on the results of this study. Nevertheless, the main effects results provide tentative support for the notion of providing treatment programs that target an inflated sense of entitlement for those who violate others or themselves.

The investigation conducted on the function of age on a sense of entitlement indicated that there was no correlation between age and an attitude of entitlement in violent and non-violent incarcerated offenders. These findings indicate that as age increases, the behaviours in violent and non-violent offenders remain stable. The finding on age does not support for the notion of an “age burn out” of violent offenders as suggested by Hall (1988) and Hare (1999). This finding is in contrast to the results from the student sample (see Chapter Four - 4.4.1.2) and will be discussed in the next chapter.

5.5.1 Limitations and Future Directions

There were some limitations encountered with this study. The first limitation was the late exclusion, by the Research Application and Review Committee (RARC) of the Department of Corrective Services, of a second questionnaire relating to specific self-harm and suicidal ideation (see Chapter Six - 6.3.9 for more information). As a result of this exclusion, offenders who had previously self-harmed were included in the design for the final study.
The second limitation concerned the inclusion criteria of wilful murder and murder. The inclusion of this criterion appeared problematic with regard to three participants, two convicted of wilful murder and one convicted of murder. These three participants willingly agreed to take part, yet each of them endorsed the minimum score available. With full knowledge of their index crimes they did not even endorse the statements in regard to assaulting a friend, family member or someone they felt was subordinate to them. One of the participants incarcerated for wilful murder insisted that instead of a score of “1” for “not at all like me” there should have been a “not applicable” option. He made this assertion particularly in regard to the question on expecting to be forgiven by family and friends for past mistakes. This offender insisted that he had never made a mistake, not even a minor error, in his entire life. It would be difficult to determine why such responses were given by these three participants, especially as they had openly agreed to participate and they were aware that they could stop at any time without the need to explain themselves. However, it could be speculated, that their responses were an accurate portrayal of how they actually view themselves. The scores from these three participants were such extreme outliers that their data was unusable and was removed from the data set.

Another limitation may have been the differences in time already spent in prison. For instance, five participants in the violent self-harming category spontaneously reported that if they had been given this questionnaire when they first arrived in prison they would have endorsed much higher scores. This may provide some explanation regarding the variability in the violent offenders’ views, as indicated by the standard deviation. In general, their comments indicated that they had settled down since the beginning of their sentence and their original sense of
entitlement had substantially subsided. However, this notion was not measured as part of this study. The length of time in prison and this settling-down phenomenon has previously been reported on, in that which Zamble (1992) refers to as the “maturity factor”. Zamble (1992) maintains that prison may promote the maturation process in offenders who have received long prison terms. According to Zamble (1992) the offenders’ adaptive abilities increase to ensure a reasonable quality of life behind bars whilst their motivation towards anti-social behaviour, and the sanctions that will bring, decreases. In addition, the prospect of early release is also an overriding factor that has the capacity to shape pro-social behaviour in incarcerated offenders (Zamble, 1992).

Future directions may include using the SOEQ early on in an offender’s term of incarceration. In addition, further studies would benefit from data collected from larger participant samples. Finally the SOEQ may be administered to other offender populations, such as different cultural and different age cohorts.

5.5.2 Conclusion

The multidimensional construct of a sense of entitlement can now be successfully identified and measured using the SOEQ. The particularly conservative inclusion criterion for violent incarcerated offenders used in this study means that these findings have the capacity to be generalized to broader populations. These populations include Indigenous male violent offenders, violent offending adolescents and women with violent offending histories. Identification of an inflated sense of entitlement may then lead to inclusion in the design and implementation of treatment programs in order to reduce violent behaviour towards others and towards themselves. At this point there is no comment about the nature or level of intervention; however, what appears evident is that intervention is certainly required.
Chapter Six: Synthesis and Conclusion

6.1 Overview

The final chapter presents a synthesis and discussion of the findings originating from this thesis. In order to examine a sense of entitlement and its relationship to violence, as well as its relationship to self-harm, a questionnaire needed to be created. To accomplish this, an archival study was conducted on violent self-harming offenders to determine the feasibility of including an investigation on self-harm. A qualitative study was then conducted to provide the background material for the questions. Once the questionnaire was created it was tested on a student sample to ensure its reliability, and was then administered to violent and non-violent incarcerated offenders.

The general results support the global hypotheses of this thesis that an inflated sense of entitlement is related to both violent and self-harming behaviour. The results also demonstrated that an inflated sense of entitlement met two of the three criteria needed to qualify as a criminogenic need. Whilst the elements of the model (see figure 1.1) appear to be established, further studies are required to investigate the specific pathway. Notwithstanding the pathway, investigating an inflated sense of entitlement in individual violent offenders has the capacity to determine treatment readiness.

This final chapter begins with a return to the philosophical premise that underpins a sense of entitlement followed by a discussion on the theoretical model. This is followed by a brief overview of the four studies and the global hypotheses. Next is a general discussion that will address only those areas that traversed two or more of the four studies. Followed by limitations and concluding comments.
6.2 Synthesis of the Four Studies

Plato alerted us to the importance of an inflated sense of entitlement, but since his observations, this concept has received only minimal attention in the psychological literature. He noted the connection between an inflated sense of entitlement and the psychological descent into violent behaviour (Jowett, 2005: translator). As mentioned earlier, an individual living an ethical, moral and spiritual life was considered to be a “just soul” (Pappas, 1995). As a result, this individual would live a wise, noble and satisfied life (Nettleship, 1958). To achieve this state of being the three parts of the soul need to be working in harmony (Strathern, 1996). According to Plato’s concept, if these three parts were not working in harmony then disintegration into a pathological sense of entitlement would ensue, and as stated earlier (see Chapter One - 1.3), may elicit strong negative attitudes such as pride, arrogance and contempt that have the propensity to result in violent behaviour (Lorenz, 2006; Nettleship, 1958). These emotions, cognitions and behaviours still hold true in violent offenders in contemporary times.

This thesis has built on Plato’s observations about entitlement and violent behaviour. The aim was to confirm that an inflated sense of entitlement is linked to violence, both outward and inward directed. This confirmation started with a proposed theoretical model, which drove the four related studies.

6.2.1 Theoretical Model

The four studies have supported the fundamental tenet that an inflated sense of entitlement, violence and self-harm are related. The theoretical model of this thesis was supported (see Figure 1.1 in Chapter One). This body of work demonstrated that when violated an inflated sense of entitlement may lead to violence towards others was confirmed (see Chapters One and Five). In addition, the hypothesis that an
inflated sense of entitlement when violated may lead to violence towards the self was confirmed (see Chapters Two and Five). The findings illustrated that violent offenders have substantially different cognitive and behavioural responses than non-violent offenders or non-offenders. Notwithstanding the presence of emotions and cognitions, the flow of the emotions and cognitions is yet to be established. A future study using path-analysis may be able to confirm the flow of this model.

In the next section the studies that were conducted to investigate this theoretical model will be briefly reviewed. This is to call to mind the four studies to provide a framework for the general discussion that follows the section on the global hypotheses.

6.2.2 Individual Studies

The first study (see Chapter Two) found a qualitative difference between incarcerated violent men and male members of the general public. This study found that when an inflated sense of entitlement was violated, violent men were most likely to resort to assault. Assault was the most likely response in regard to the five most salient domains used in the qualitative study: being anger, respect, power, obedience from perceived subordinates and obedience from family and friends.

The second study (see Chapter Three) used archival material and found that incarcerated violent offenders self-harm at a far higher rate than incarcerated non-violent offenders. This study found that of the self-harming offenders, nine out of ten were violent offenders. It was also found that violent offenders were far less likely to have warnings of potential self-harm on the prison database than non-violent offenders.

The third study (see Chapter Four) involved the construction and validation of the SOEQ on a student sample. This scale had sound psychometric properties and revealed two statistical factors suggesting both attitude and behavioural subscales.
Two other investigations were conducted on sex and age. The first investigation found that male students had higher levels of entitlement than female students. The second investigation found that as age increases a sense of entitlement, and reactions to a violation of an inflated sense of entitlement, decreased in this cohort.

The fourth study (see Chapter Five) was the administration of the SOEQ to incarcerated offenders. This study found that if an inflated sense of entitlement was violated in any of the nine domains, violent men would be most likely to use violence. This behaviour was most likely to occur when the respect, anger and power domains were involved. When examining self-harming behaviour and entitlement, this study found that self-harming offenders may have entitlement-attitudes towards self-harm when their inflated sense of entitlement is violated. Whilst each of these studies had separate hypotheses, when combined they answered the global research questions and the findings of the global hypotheses.

6.2.3 The Global Hypotheses

The first global hypothesis - that an inflated sense of entitlement is related to violent offending was supported. The second global hypothesis - that an inflated sense of entitlement was related to self-harming behaviour was also supported. This means that two directions of expression were investigated - violence towards others and violence toward the self. To increase clarity, the following discussion will address violence and self-harm separately.

6.2.3.1 Violence

A sense of entitlement was found to be a multifaceted construct with two major factors, attitude and behaviour. The presence and strength of the entitlement-attitude scale illustrated the strength of an inflated sense of entitlement. The entitlement-behaviour scale illustrated the propensity to lead to anti-social and violent actions. In
the qualitative study it was shown that when an inflated sense of entitlement has been
violated, violent offenders may use assault, confrontation or rejection strategies -
with assault being the most common outcome. This was most likely to occur when
involving the respect domain, followed by the power and anger domains (see Chapter
Two - 2.4.2).

6.2.3.2 Self-harm

This study found that violent offenders are more likely to self-harm than non-
vviolent offenders (see Chapter Three - 3.4). However, whether this is due to an
inflated sense of entitlement is unclear. As stated earlier, the qualitative analysis
showed that when a sense of entitlement was violated in violent offenders their
responses were assault, confrontation or rejection (see Chapter Two - 2.4.3). The
question here is the “rejection” response. Two reasons a violent offender may leave a
volatile situation are proposed. The first reason may be that the violent offender is
planning to return in order to re-engage, possibly having recruited others to assist
them (see Chapter Two - 2.5.3). Another reason a violent offender may leave a
volatile situation may be their inability to cope with the situation. In this situation the
violent offender may turn their angst inward towards themselves by engaging in self-
harming behaviour, as suggested by Liebling (1992) and Dear et al. (2000).

Violent men turning their anger in on themselves has been well documented in
the literature (American Psychiatric Association, 2005a; Hall et al., 2006). However,
this may not totally involve an inflated sense of entitlement. The results of this
investigation suggests that whilst violent men may use rejection strategies and leave
a situation with frustration and angst, having an inflated sense of entitlement may not
necessarily be a direct pathway to self-harming behaviour (see Nathanson, 1992).
The findings of the final study (see Chapter Five - 5.4.6) there was a difference in
entitlement-attitude but not for entitlement-behaviour. This appears to be an artefact due to the scale looking at violent behaviour as opposed to self-harming behaviour. The SOEQ did not specifically measure self-harming behaviour.

6.3 General Discussion

There are a number of issues to be addressed in the general discussion that go beyond the individual studies as well as those issues that are of a more global nature. The following will include discussions on the domains, relationships between personalities and theoretical perspectives. Next are discussions on a sense of entitlement and attachment styles, culture and age. This is followed by treatment and assessment of criminogenic needs. Finally, there is a discussion on limitations and future directions and overall concluding comments.

6.3.1 Domains: The Similarities Between Studies

Different samples with a completely different methodology, one qualitative (see Chapter Two) and the other a highly structured scale (see Chapter Five), were used to investigate a sense of entitlement. Yet, despite the differences of the data collection method, the domains of respect, anger and power were consistent in regards to both entitlement-attitudes and entitlement-behaviours. The relationship between an inflated sense of entitlement, respect and violence is an important finding of this body of work.

Respect was found to be of particular importance to violent offenders in regard to entitlement. These findings supported previous research by Jenkins (1990), who identified respect as a particularly salient variable in violent males. Incarcerated male violent offenders were most likely to feel entitled to assault others if they were not shown the level of respect to which they believed they were entitled.
The relationship between anger, an inflated sense of entitlement and violence is also a key finding of this research. These findings supported the previous studies conducted by Beck (2000) in his study on anger, hostility and violence. The current study found that incarcerated male violent offenders believed they had the right to become angry if their sense of entitlement was violated. Their anger may then escalate to violent behaviour, should their perceived entitlement be called into question.

The relationship between power, an inflated sense of entitlement and violence is also an important finding of this research. These findings supported the previous work conducted by Raskin and Terry (1988), who reported on the power differential in narcissistic males. The current study found that incarcerated male violent offenders were most likely to expect to have power over others and would assault others if this entitlement appeared to be violated. However, it was interesting to note the different understandings of power between the members of the general public and the violent offenders interviewed for the qualitative study. The participants from the general public appeared to interpret power as responsibility towards others. The violent offenders appeared to interpret power as control of others. This perception of power by violent offenders has important treatment implications as this perception would need to be addressed to assist violent offenders to appreciate the differences in understanding, which may result in pro-social change.

6.3.2 Relationships: Personality Disorders and Individual Characteristics

In this section the relationship between psychological disorders and a sense of entitlement will be discussed. This will be followed by the relationship between individual personality characteristics and entitlement.
6.3.2.1 Personality disorders

It is only now that an inflated sense of entitlement in violent men has been tested empirically using a scale specifically designed for violent offenders. This is important as a sense of entitlement appears to underpin a range of personality disorders, including NPD (American Psychiatric Association, 2000) and Psychopathy (Cleckley, 1988; Hare, 1996, 1998). In addition, APD (Kernberg, 1975; Millon, 1981) and BPD (Farrington, 2002; LaTina et al., 1993; Marcus & Swett, 2002) also appear to include an inflated sense of entitlement. From now on, a sense of entitlement may be empirically evaluated to determine the presence of this concept in personality disorders. If an inflated sense of entitlement is found in individuals with these disorders, then such a finding will have contributed an important new facet to our understanding of these disorders. This may make diagnosis more accurate as well as opening up other avenues of treatment. As stated in the first chapter, individuals with personality disorders have been reported to have a chronic difficulty with emotion regulation and integration of cognitive functions, which may lead to anti-social and pro-criminal behaviour (Hart, 1998). The qualitative study also revealed areas of difficulty regarding a sense of entitlement and emotion regulation. Violent offenders reported strong negative emotions in response to questions in a number of domains under investigation. In addition, the violent offenders reported difficulty with cognitive functions that included responses ranging from “I didn’t think” to engaging in provocative thinking strategies. However, it is unknown what percentage of offenders in this study may have been diagnosed with a specific personality disorder.

The findings from the qualitative study also supported the process model of emotion regulation by Gross (2002). Gross (1998) maintains that mental health is
contingent upon emotion regulatory processes, and reports that all of DSM-IV Axis II disorders and over half of Axis 1 disorders are based in the dysfunctional regulation of emotions. Gross (1998) maintains that there are five regulatory points in the emotion generative process, which comprise: “selection of the situation; modification; attention; change of cognitions; and modulation of response” (p.271). Initially the situation may be reappraised and suppressed in order to decrease the aversive experience (Gross, 2001). Later on in the generative process, suppression of emotion may be elicited, which inhibits any outward display of emotion. However, this inhibition of emotion is said to have no impact on the adverse experience, thus the individual leaves the emotionally charged situation with a range of negative emotions. This may explain the rejection strategy employed by violent offenders following the violation of their perceived entitlement.

A high level of entitlement generates negative emotions, which are likely to quickly escalate should these entitlements be violated. If there is no outlet for these negative emotions then an inflated sense of entitlement may put an individual at risk of self-harm. This is because the effort to control the negative emotions may have an opposite, or paradoxical, effect which can end up increasing the intensity of the emotion (Wegner, 1994). Davey et al. (2005) argues that whilst suppression of hostile feelings by violent offenders may prove effective in the short-term, in the long term this may end up as a counter productive strategy. For instance, eventually these suppressed emotions are likely to surface with increased intensity (Davey et al., 2005).

In his theory of Ironic Processes of Mental Control, Wegner (1994) posits that the desire to control negative cognitive states may produce a paradoxical effect. According to Davey et al. (2005) this paradoxical effect has the potential for negative
states such as anger, to build up. How this “build-up” of anger is later discharged is of particular importance in terms of the direction that it is expressed. In other words, individuals may harm others or harm themselves. This build-up may be likened somewhat to Freud’s catharsis model (Breuer & Freud, 1974). In the catharsis model an individual was said to have a build-up of negative energy during the normal course of life. This build-up of negative energy needed to be released, in order for balance to return. Freud’s notion was discredited some time ago; however, the idea of a build-up of energy following a specific event has remained as a viable concept (Davey et al., 2005). Other researchers have also reported on pent-up hostility and rage (Berkowitz, 1983; Grey, 1987). The responses from the qualitative analysis (see Chapter Two), where offenders reported leaving a distressing situation full of angst, provide support for these researchers.

6.3.2.2 Individual characteristics

The results of this investigation on an inflated sense of entitlement are consistent with some of the individual personality characteristics that include anger, aggression and violent behaviour (Andrews & Bonta, 1998; Freud, 1961b; Krug & Cattell, 1980). As in the previous section on personality disorders, an inflated sense of entitlement is rarely formally identified as a part of individual personality characteristics. In this section it will be demonstrated how an inflated sense of entitlement may be applied to some specific personality characteristics such as a weak super-ego, narcissistic personality traits and threatened egotism.

An inflated sense of entitlement may be explained through a weak super-ego (Krug & Cattell, 1980). The opposite of a weak super-ego is a strong super-ego, which is described as living a lifestyle that is highly regarded, moral and law-abiding.
The current studies demonstrated that violent offenders with an inflated sense of entitlement do not appear to engage in this type of lifestyle.

A sense of entitlement may be illustrated through a narcissistic personality trait. A narcissistic personality trait is the description given to an individual displaying some, but not all, of the traits required for a diagnosis of Narcissistic Personality Disorder. A narcissistic personality trait is another personality characteristic that has been aligned with violent behaviour (Twenge & Campbell, 2003). Whilst a sense of entitlement is imbedded in the description of narcissism, it has not been afforded a prominent position. According to the responses in the qualitative (see Chapter Two) and quantitative investigations (see Chapter Five) many violent offenders in these studies exhibited attitudes and behaviours commensurate with narcissistic personality traits.

A sense of entitlement may also be explained through the concept of threatened egotism (Bushman & Baumeister, 1998; Bushman et al., 2003). The egotism model is where an individual with a threatened ego experiences difficulty sustaining inflated notions of their own superiority (Bushman & Baumeister, 1998). This model is aligned with an inflated sense of entitlement in which an individual has similar experiences when their inflated sense of entitlement has been violated (see Chapter Two). The factors described as the driving force behind both egotism and an inflated sense of entitlement include the acquisition and maintenance of self-image (Rhodewalt & Morf, 1995), status (Baumeister et al., 1996), honour (Brookman, 2003; Levi & Maguire, 2002) and pride (Baumeister et al., 2000). This body of work demonstrates the theoretical relationship of egotism and an inflated sense of entitlement.
A sense of entitlement may now be empirically evaluated to confirm the presence of an inflated sense of entitlement in both personality disorders as well as in individual personality characteristics. This is an important point as it implies that regardless of whether an inflated sense of entitlement is a pervasive personality defect or a personality state, it has the capacity to be amenable to intervention and treatment.

The next part of this discussion moves from individual differences to several key theoretical perspectives introduced at the beginning of this thesis. This will be followed by discussions on key characteristics that were highlighted during these studies.

6.3.3 Relationships: Theoretical Perspectives on an Inflated Sense of Entitlement

Whilst an inflated sense of entitlement may well be part of the major theories on anger, aggression and violence, this concept does not appear to have been accorded any particular significance. In this section it will be demonstrated how an inflated sense of entitlement may play a more formal role in each of these theories.

6.3.3.1 Frustration-aggression Hypothesis

One way to explain how an inflated sense of entitlement can lead to violence is through the Frustration-aggression Hypothesis (Berkowitz, 1983, 1989; Berkowitz & LePage, 1970; Dollard et al., 1939, 1970). Breaches of an inflated sense of entitlement can result in frustration which leads to anger which in turn can be the precursor to aggression. Further, individuals with a high level of entitlement may be more readily frustrated and angry and thus engage in higher, and possibly more frequent, levels of aggression. Individuals tend to want to discharge the aversive state of frustration and one way of doing this is to use hostility and violence (Berkowitz, 1983). This has been demonstrated by the data in the current studies. For instance, violent offenders with an inflated sense of entitlement in the qualitative study
believed that frustration was a precursor to aggression (see Chapter Two - 2.5.11.1). Individuals may be motivated by their perceived entitlements. Thus, an inflated sense of entitlement has the capacity to be applied to the Frustration-aggression Hypothesis.

6.3.3.2 Learned Helplessness Model

At first glance learned helplessness does not appear to have any direct relationship with an inflated sense of entitlement in violent men (Abramson et al., 1978; Maier & Seligman, 1976; McKean, 1994; Seligman, 1989). Nevertheless, learned helplessness has been identified in offenders who have been incarcerated for long terms (Kankus & Cavalier; 1995; Schill & Marcus, 1998). Many of the violent offenders who participated in the current studies were undertaking long terms of incarceration. The depressive symptoms of learned helplessness, which include powerlessness and helplessness, may also lead to the release of pent-up hostility in explosive rage (Berkowitz, 1983; Grey, 1987). It was demonstrated in the final study that violent offenders, who would make up a substantial amount of long-term incarcerated offenders, have an inflated sense of entitlement. The violation of an inflated sense of entitlement may provide the impetus to transform these depressive feelings into hostility and violence in an attempt to restore internal equilibrium. Thus, an inflated sense of entitlement interacts in significant way with the Learned Helplessness Model.

6.3.3.3 Social Interactionist Model

Another way to explain how an inflated sense of entitlement leads to violence is through the social interactionist model of aggression and violence (Felson & Tedeschi, 1993). This study showed support for Felson and Tedeschi (1993), who reported that violent offenders seem to live by their own set of rules that are often
outside the social mores and legal requirements for “right living”. Within their rule-based construct violent offenders believed that they have the right to punish anyone who has violated their personal rule. This punishment is seen as inflicting justice, and should the situation escalate then violent behaviour will follow. The offenders in this study clearly do not follow the social mores and legal boundaries for communal living and, as a result, are incarcerated for serious infractions of the law.

Surprisingly, most violent offenders exhibited some insight into their behaviour at this level. For example, just over two thirds of the violent offenders endorsed question 30 in the SOEQ, “Sometimes I have felt I was above the law” as “very much like me”. The results of this study demonstrated how many of the violent offenders operate to their “own set of rules” or entitlements. It would be considered quite easy for someone to transgress, or violate, any of these “rules”, which may then result in a violent assault. Violence would be enacted to restore the violent offender’s own idiosyncratic notion of justice.

6.3.3.4 Attribution of Hostile Intent Theory

How an inflated sense of entitlement may lead to violence may also be explained through the Attribution of Hostile Intent Theory (Ferguson & Rule, 1983; Weiner, 1986). The attribution of hostile intent is a theory that is highly consistent with the provocative cognitions identified when a sense of entitlement is violated in violent offenders (see Chapter Two). This theory posits that neutral or ambiguous stimuli may elicit a malevolent interpretation in some individuals, which has the potential to result in an aggressive or violent response (Ferguson & Rule, 1983; Weiner, 1986). The attribution of hostile intent has been identified as a cognitive style which is stronger and more prevalent in violent offenders (Coppello & Tata, 1990). The current studies demonstrated that when an inflated sense of entitlement
has been violated the provocative cognitions that were elicited included attributions
of hostile intent. These provocative cognitions and interpretations then had the
capacity to lead to violent behaviour. This process demonstrates how an inflated
sense of entitlement may provide the impetus to escalate negative feelings and
provocative thoughts to anti-social behaviours. For instance, a neutral or ambiguous
situation may be interpreted as provocative resulting in thoughts of reprisals and anti-
social behaviour. This model demonstrates how an inflated sense of entitlement
interacts with the Attribution of Hostile Intent Theory.

6.3.3.5 Social Exchange Theory

How an inflated sense of entitlement may lead to violence may also be
explained through the Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964; Homans, 1958). Social
exchange is the expectation of repayment of debts owed (Blau, 1964; Homans,
1958). According to Exline et al. (2004), individuals with “narcissistic entitlement”
have very high expectations for payment of debts. These debts may not necessarily
be limited to financial debts but may also include social debts. When dealing with
grievances violent offenders seem to have their own set of rules, and if they believe
that they have been dealt with in an unfair manner, they are most likely to retaliate
with violence. The reasoning behind this may be to elicit respect and to restore
status.

6.3.3.6 Alexithymia

Violent offenders are capable of describing their emotions in the abstract;
however, it is unclear if they are able to do this at a time when their emotions are
actually occurring. Deficits in cognitive processes that have resulted in violent
behaviour (Hall et al., 2006) have been also associated with high levels of
alexithymia (Parker et al., 2001). For example, Parker et al. (2001) described high
levels of alexithymia as including deficits in the cognitive ability to guide thought processes and subsequent behaviour. According to Parker et al. (2001), these individuals would have limited behavioural options available to them. Mallinckrodt and Wei (2005) reported that deficits in social competencies and social support coupled with psychological distress are indicative of alexithymia.

Violent offenders in these studies appeared to be guided by their thought processes, no matter how anti-social these thought processes may be. From the in-depth interviews in the qualitative study (see Chapter Two) to the responses to the questions in the quantitative study (see Chapter Five) it seemed quite likely that psychological distress played a considerable role in their anti-social behaviour. When describing their emotions, the participants of this study demonstrated low levels of certain characteristics of alexithymia.

The violent offenders in the qualitative study (see Chapter Two) had a high level of ability to report on their emotions. Whilst they may not have completed specific violent offender treatment programs, it is highly likely that they would have been in a treatment program that taught them to articulate their emotions or, alternatively, they could have simply acquired the language in the prison milieu. However, it could also be possible that these findings shed light on alexithymia. This may explain why they are able to describe their emotions so clearly when they are not in an affective state.

Violent offenders in the qualitative study (see Chapter Two - 2.4.4.2 & 2.6.1.2) seemed to have more difficulty describing their cognitive processes. This difficulty was identified some time ago and has been addressed in some offender treatment programs (Robinson & Porporino, 2001). In their attempts to describe cognitive processes, violent offenders appeared to demonstrate high levels of the other
characteristics that make up the construct of alexithymia. For instance, violent offenders reported on a wide range of provocative thoughts. Some offenders reported that before and during an assault that they “didn’t think”. The findings on an inflated sense of entitlement and alexithymia may be an interesting area in which to conduct follow-up investigations. This discussion on theoretical perspectives has demonstrated in general how an inflated sense of entitlement may play a more formal role in each of these various theories. Next is a particular area of interest that has emerged from this body of work.

6.3.4 Attachment Styles and Entitlement

One of the most interesting relationships to emerge from these studies was the relationship between attachment styles, maladaptive functioning and an inflated sense of entitlement. Investigations in the areas of maladaptive attachment styles in childhood and in adult intimate relationships have the capacity to provide further understanding in this area. Therefore a brief overview of the original attachment theory and adult attachment styles has been included here to bring to mind various attachment styles.

Attachment theory was originally proposed in 1969, after examining infant-caregiver attachment styles of children that appeared to be suffering maternal deprivation (Bowlby, 1979). Later, Ainsworth et al. (1978) conducted the “strange situation” experiments. They noted three major attachment styles: secure, avoidant and anxious-ambivalent attachment.

Four adult attachment styles were proposed by Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991), which were based on an individual’s own positive or negative self-image, as well as the positive or negative image of others. The researchers labelled these styles as secure, preoccupied, fearful-avoidant and dismissive-avoidant. The dismissive-
avoidant attachment style is of interest explaining the behaviour of some self-harming offenders. Bartholomew and Horowitz (1991) reported that individuals in the dismissive-avoidant category protect themselves against being let down by others by disengaging from others and remaining aloof. Individuals with dismissive-avoidant attachment styles prefer that which is known, and tend to reject new ambiguous information resulting in cognitive rigidity, which then has the propensity to increase an inherent sense of anxiety (Mikulincer, 1997).

Attachment styles may determine various dysfunctional experiences of anger (Mikulincer, 1998), and have been identified as possible antecedents to personality disorders (Modestin, Oberson, & Erni, 1998). These styles appear to support the identified behavioural differences noted in prison reports between adult male incarcerated violent offenders who self-harm and non-violent incarcerated offenders who self-harm (personal communication Manager Suicide Prevention, Department of Corrective Services, WA).

Particular attachment styles in adult romantic relationships have been identified in examinations of intimate partner violence (McClellan & Killeen, 2000). These researchers reported that insecure attachment styles may be demonstrated in different ways. For instance, an individual with an avoidant attachment style may be aloof and may not share their feelings. An individual with an anxious-ambivalent attachment style; however, may be hypervigilant to any threats to status, prone to perceptual distortions and have a mistrust of others (McClellan & Killeen, 2000). These factors are consistent with attitudes and perceptions held by violent offenders. Furthermore, when describing serious violent offending, Weisz et al. (2000) reported that the “anxious attachment style of the borderline/dependent type” may be at high risk of carrying out murder should their relationship break down. This was considered to be
the case even if the relationship was merely perceived to have broken-down (Weisz et al., 2000). In this situation an inflated sense of entitlement may also be in operation.

6.3.4.1 Attachment Theory

Attachment theory is also implicated in how an inflated sense of entitlement may lead to violence (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Bowlby, 1979). Attachment theorists have reported that attachment style underpins a range of violent offending (Baker & Beech, 2004), from dysfunctional expression of anger (Mikulincer, 1998) through to homicidal behaviour (Weisz et al, 2000). The current studies demonstrated that violent assault was the preferred method of response by violent men when their inflated sense of entitlement had been violated (see Chapter Two - 2.4.3.1). This was followed by equal preference being given to either confrontation or rejection strategies. Rejection was a strategy used by violent offenders to remove themselves from the situation. These responses are consistent with attachment theory, specifically the avoidant or anxious-ambivalent attachment styles (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Bowlby, 1979) and the dismissive-avoidant attachment style (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991; McClellan & Killeen, 2000; Mikulincer, 1997, 1998).

It may well be that attachment styles influence an inflated sense of entitlement. Further investigation into attachment styles and entitlement may provide valuable information on the rejecting and assaultive behaviours reported by the violent offenders in the qualitative (see Chapter Two) and quantitative (see Chapter Five) studies.

In the next section there are two areas of exploratory investigation: the function of culture and age on entitlement.
6.3.5 *Culture and an Inflated Sense of Entitlement*

To investigate criminal thinking styles in Caucasians and African Americans, Walters (1996) included an examination of a sense of entitlement. Walters (1996) found entitlement, as measured by aggressiveness and as exerting power and control over others, was specific to African American offenders. However, the qualitative study (see Chapter Two) found a number of entitlement domains that were particularly salient to a Caucasian violent offender sample and likely to result in violence. These domains consisted of a right to anger, respect, power, obedience from perceived subordinates and obedience from family and friends. The quantitative study (see Chapter Five) found a right to respect, forgiveness, anger, extra good times and special treatment as particularly salient to the violent offenders who participated in this study. The SOEQ appears to be a more fine-tuned scale than the scale used by Walters (1996). The SOEQ has been able to identify an inflated sense of entitlement in Caucasian Australian offenders used in this body of work. However, other cultures were excluded in the current investigations for sound empirical reasons (see Chapter One - 1.11.1). Further research is required to compare Caucasians with other groups, such as Indigenous Australians to determine if an inflated sense of entitlement varies in different cultures.

6.3.6 *The Function of Age on an Inflated Sense of Entitlement*

An interesting finding is the differences between the results from males in the student sample and the incarcerated offender sample. During the construction of the SOEQ it was revealed that there is a substantial relationship between age and a sense of entitlement (see Chapter Four - 4.4.1.2). The results of the student sample revealed a strong negative relationship indicating that as age increases a sense of entitlement decreases. In addition, there was also a strong negative relationship between age and
a sense of entitlement that had been violated, which indicated that as age increases anti-social reactions to a violated sense of entitlement decrease.

However, when examining the offender sample, the results of age differed substantially (see Chapter Five - 5.4.3). The results from the two offender groups, violent and non-violent, showed that there was no significant relationship between age and a sense of entitlement in entitlement-attitudes or in entitlement-behaviours. It was thought that violent offenders may have a later maturation than non-violent offenders; therefore the sample of offenders was examined separately. However, the results were the same as for the combined offender group. In contrast to the results from the student sample, it was found that as age increases, in incarcerated offenders, both attitudes and behaviours related to the violation of an inflated sense of entitlement appear to remain stable.

These findings indicate that there may be some maturing out of an inflated sense of entitlement in the student group which was not evident in the offender groups. This finding does little to support the notion proposed by Zamble (1992) that time in prison may help the maturation process of incarcerated offenders. The result of the quantitative study (see Chapter Five) does not seem to support the premise of “burn out” for offenders as suggested by some researchers (Hall, 1988; Hare, 1999). This finding may, however, provide some support to the premise put forward by Harris et al. (1991), that “burn out” does not hold for violent offenders. Why the relationship with age and the attitudes and behaviours that are elicited from a sense of entitlement appear to remain stable is somewhat of an enigma. One suggestion is that these results may be due to a truncated correlation. For instance, it may be that offenders mature much later than members of the general public as proposed by Zamble (1992). Thus, if the age bracket of the offenders was much broader a
stronger relationship between age and offender’s sense of entitlement may be revealed. This result opens the possibility for further research. This finding has value in regard to assessment for treatment readiness and the design of treatment programs.

6.3.7 Treatment

As previously stated, many violent offenders are highly resistant to change (Polaschek & Reynolds, 2000). It would seem that assessment for treatment programs requires an investigation into the presence of an inflated sense of entitlement prior to any attempts to change any other developmental attitudes or criminogenic behaviours.

One general factor recommended for inclusion in violent offender treatment programs is that which Howells and Day (2002) referred to as “situational-override” (p.223). For instance, violent offenders may hold inappropriate personal standards or, alternatively, be unable to maintain these standards in particular situations (Howells & Day, 2002). This situational-override may then disengage the ability to self-regulate one’s behaviour. It is reasonable to assume that situational-override may be mediated by an inflated sense of entitlement. By targeting an inflated sense of entitlement in programs violent offenders may become more psychologically robust and resilient to situational variables that elicit the disengagement of self-regulation.

The value of the newly created SOEQ is that an inflated sense of entitlement can be measured empirically using a measure specifically designed for violent offenders. This has substantial implications for treatment programs that target violent offending, such as the potential to identify treatment readiness or treatment resistant individuals. The SOEQ may also identify the need for an inflated sense of entitlement to be addressed early on in treatment programs. Individuals with an inflated sense of entitlement are likely to have particularly poor insight regarding
entitlement and are therefore unlikely to see the need to change their behaviour. Addressing an inflated sense of entitlement as a pre-requisite to violent offender treatment programs will provide a sound measure of treatment readiness. The SOEQ also has utility in conducting pre-treatment base-line measures, treatment progress measures and the ability to measure post-treatment gains. As an adjunct, a SOEQ also has the utility to identify violent offenders who may have thoughts of self-harm or suicidal ideation. In addition, it may be that instead of dealing with self-harming behaviour and violent behaviour separately, these two areas of violence may be addressed simultaneously in offender programs. This discussion now leads to the assessment of the selection criteria for criminogenic needs.

6.3.8 Criminogenic Needs Assessment

As mentioned previously, criminogenic needs are the anti-social, pro-criminal factors that are related to offending attitudes (Andrews, Bonta et al., 1990; Andrews, Zinger et al., 1990). These criminogenic needs have been recognized as salient factors to be addressed in successful violent offender treatment programs. An inflated sense of entitlement had been proposed as a criminogenic need (Fisher et al., 2008). Therefore the goals of this body of research was to determine if an inflated sense of entitlement is related to criminal behaviour, and to create a questionnaire so that this concept can be successfully measured in offenders.

As noted in the first chapter of this thesis, there are three criteria required to qualify as a criminogenic need (Bonta, 1996). The first criterion is that a characteristic can be changed (Bonta, 1996). Whilst this raises the question of whether or not an inflated sense of entitlement be changed, the answer is beyond the scope of this thesis. What is required is a treatment program designed to target an inflated sense of entitlement and evaluate the treatment gains as this will provide the
final criterion to determine if this concept may be established as an authentic criminogenic need.

However, the second criterion required to qualify as a criminogenic need is that a positive impact can be made on recidivism. The major question for this criterion is: does the concept distinguish, or is it related to, criminal behaviour? To answer this question it needs to distinguish between groups. Study four (see Chapter Five) demonstrated a difference between violent and non-violent offenders in a sense of entitlement. Therefore, not only is an inflated sense of entitlement a criminogenic need, but it is specifically related to violence.

The third criterion is that the concept must be able to be measured in order to assess treatment progress and treatment gains (Bonta, 1996). Previously a sense of entitlement was unable to be effectively measured; therefore, it would not qualify as a criminogenic need. Now it can be measured as the new SOEQ is a reliable scale, which is easy to score and can be used in prisons.

An inflated sense of entitlement may then join a long list of criminogenic needs that are currently incorporated into treatment programs for violent offenders. As noted earlier, these consist of impulsivity (Farrington, 2002), attribution of hostile intent (Copello & Tata, 1990; Ferguson & Rule, 1983), anger control (Novaco, 1997; Polaschek & Reynolds, 2000) and coping deficits (Zamble & Porporino, 1988, 1990). In addition, anti-social sentiments (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990; Hirschi, 1969) and the use of neutralizing self-talk to disengage pro-social values (Sykes & Matza, 1957) are also targeted in violent offender treatment programs.

A sense of entitlement may be related to, and perhaps interwoven into, these other criminogenic needs. For instance, researchers have agreed that anti-social sentiments of violent men that can be temporarily held in abeyance (Gottfredson &
Hirschi, 1990; Hirschi, 1969), may be triggered when an inflated sense of entitlement has been violated. At this point, impulsivity (Farrington, 2002), poor emotional control (Novaco, 1997), the lack of adequate coping mechanisms (Zamble & Porporino, 1988, 1990) and the attribution of malevolent intent (Polaschek & Reynolds, 2000) may then come into play. This may be followed by a disengagement of pro-social values (Sykes & Matza, 1957). Then as the sequence plays out, anti-social and pro-criminal behaviour may ensue.

Violent offending is increasing and, as a result, violent offenders are becoming a larger proportion of incarcerated offenders in the western world (Polaschek & Reynolds, 2000). Therefore, having a specific measure to assess a sense of entitlement would be of value in correctional facilities in order to provide appropriate assessment and treatment.

6.3.9 Limitations and Future Directions

One of the most difficult limitations of this study was the severe prison staff shortages in the WA prison system at the time of data collection for these studies. This situation resulted in the exclusion by the Research Application and Review Committee (RARC) of the Department of Corrective Services, of a second questionnaire relating to specific self-harm and suicidal ideation (see Chapter Five - 5.4.6). Whilst the SOEQ asked about rejection and withdrawal behaviours it did not specifically address the question of self-harm. The rejection strategies were aligned with self-harming behaviour which was somewhat of a conceptual leap. In order to reduce this conceptual space, offenders who had previously self-harmed were included in the design for the final.

Future studies would benefit from the inclusion of specific questions on an inflated sense of entitlement and specific self-harming behaviour. It is strongly
recommended that the best place to study the attitudes and behaviour of violent men is whilst they are incarcerated in a protective facility. This would ensure staff would be available to monitor the offenders and intervene if necessary. The success of treatment programs for violent behaviour and/or self-harming behaviour is contingent upon appropriate interventions targeting criminogenic needs.

Whilst the studies in this series demonstrated the relationship between an inflated sense of entitlement and violent men, further investigation is warranted to investigate self-harm in this population. Further investigations into an inflated sense of entitlement would benefit from the inclusion of a measure to specifically investigate self-harm or suicidal ideation.

6.3.10 Conclusion

This body of work is distinctive as it investigates the rarely examined notion of a sense of entitlement in violent men. This thesis on an inflated sense of entitlement in violent men makes a substantial contribution to the understanding of violent behaviour. Previously there were many descriptions and definitions explaining an inflated sense of entitlement but very little in the way of psychometric measures, particularly in regard to violent men. Recently, an inflated sense of entitlement had been established theoretically as a criminogenic need (Fisher et al., 2008). Now, as a result of this thesis, an inflated sense of entitlement has the capacity to be established empirically as an authentic criminogenic need that can investigate treatment readiness and increase treatment gains.
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Appendices

Appendix A  Inclusion Criteria for Crimes of Violence

Wilful Murder
Murder Manslaughter
Grievous Bodily Harm
Unlawful Wounding
Robbery with Violence
Armed Robbery with Violence
Armed Robbery in Company
Armed Robbery
Attempted Armed Robbery
Assault Occasioning Bodily Harm
Assault Public Officer
Assault (Common) Unlawful
Assault with Intent to Resist Arrest.
Assault Not Specified
Appendix B  Official Prison Database

The Total Offender Management System (TOMS) is the computerised database for the Department of Corrective Services in Western Australia. Each incarcerated offender is registered on TOMS and all information pertaining to that individual is contained in their personal file. Included in this electronic file are the three information sources used in this investigation. These information sources consist of the Alert System, the Offender Summary Sheet and the Incidents and Charges Record.

- The Alert System includes a range of alerts for the health and wellbeing of the individual, including any vulnerability to or previous attempts to self-harm.

- The Offender Summary Sheet consists of a brief synopsis of health and wellbeing, convictions and terms of incarceration, as well as including any vulnerability to or previous attempts to self-harm.

- The Incidents and Charges Record contains prison charges and convictions, as well as any significant incidents involving the individual, such as attempts to self-harm or suicide.
Appendix C  Semi-structured Interview Proforma - Study One

(1) Do you think that you have a right to be treated with more respect?
(1a) What happens if people don’t treat you with a lot of respect?
   Prompt What would you be thinking?
   What would you be feeling?
   What would you do?

(2) Do you think that you deserve to be forgiven for mistakes you may make?
(2a) What happens if people don’t give you the forgiveness you deserve?
   Prompt What would you be thinking?
   What would you be feeling?
   What would you do?

(3) Do you think that you have a right to be angry when people don’t do what you ask?
(3a) What happens if you get angry when people don’t do what you ask?
   Prompt What would you be thinking?
   What would you be feeling?
   What would you do?

(4) Do you think that you right to be frustrated when people don’t do what you ask?
(4a) What happens when you get frustrated when people don’t do what you ask?
   Prompt What would you be thinking?
   What would you be feeling?
   What would you do?

(5) Do you think that you should get sympathy and support when you are having a hard time?
(5a) What happens if people don’t show you sympathy and support when you are having a hard time?
   Prompt What would you be thinking?
   What would you be feeling?
   What would you do?

(6) Do you think that you deserve special treatment?
(6a) What happens if people don’t give you the privileges and special treatment you deserve?
   Prompt What would you be thinking?
   What would you be feeling?
   What would you do?
(7) Do you think that you ought to have more power than you have right now?
(7a) What happens if people don’t give you the power that you think you should have?
   Prompt What would you be thinking?
   What would you be feeling?
   What would you do?

(8) Do you think that you deserve extra good times to try to make up for bad times in your past?
(8a) What happens if you don’t get extra good times to try to make up for the bad times in your past?
   Prompt What would you be thinking?
   What would you be feeling?
   What would you do?

(9) Do you expect greater obedience from family members and friends?
(9a) What happens if family members and friends are not obedient?
   Prompt What would you be thinking?
   What would you be feeling?
   What would you do?

(10) Do you think that you deserve greater obedience from people you think are less important than you?
(10a) What happens if people who you think are less important than you are not obedient?
   Prompt What would you be thinking?
   What would you be feeling?
   What would you do?

(11) Do you feel that you ought to pay back others for special favours they have done for you?
(11a) What happens if you don’t payback special favours other people have done for you?
   Prompt What would you be thinking?
   What would you be feeling?
   What would you do?

(12) Do you think that you should have whatever you wish?
(12a) What happens if people don’t give you what you wish?
   Prompt What would you be thinking?
   What would you be feeling?
   What would you do?
Appendix D  Information Sheets - General Public and Violent Offenders

Information Sheet for General Public

Information Sheet

My name is Sofia Fisher and I am a postgraduate student at Murdoch University. This study forms the basis of research for my PhD. The Ethics Committees of both Murdoch University and the Department of Justice have reviewed this project. My supervisors are Mr Guy Hall from the School of Law and Dr Angela O’Brien-Malone from the School of Psychology. This study involves looking at how people think that they deserve to be treated by others, and what happens if other people do not treat them in the way that they are expecting.

Men are being recruited for this study from the general community and from incarcerated offenders in the metropolitan prison system. This is because some men are needed in order to represent the general community. Other men are needed to represent people in prison. We want to know how you personally feel about this topic. Although this study may not benefit you directly, your contribution may help other people in the future. Your help would be much appreciated.

This exercise should take no more than one hour of your time. All that is required is for you to talk about what you think, feel and do when faced with particular situations when other people do not act towards you in a way that you think you deserve. This will be followed by an opportunity for you to ask any additional questions you may have about this study.

Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you retain your right to withdraw at any time during the proceedings without providing any reason or explanation. Your decision to withdraw will be respected and you will not be disadvantaged in any manner for this decision. Research data gathered for this study may be published in a psychological journal at some future date; however, my report will not use your name or any information linking you to the answers you have given.

I will be available to answer any questions that you may have, or if you would like a copy of the research summary. My contact phone number at Murdoch University is 93602761 or Mr Guy Hall from the School of Law at Murdoch University, on 93606033. Alternatively, you may contact the University Human Research Ethics Committee on 93606677.

Sofia Fisher
Researcher
Information Sheet for Violent Offenders

My name is Sofia Fisher and I am a postgraduate student at Murdoch University. This study forms the basis of research for my PhD. The Ethics Committees of both Murdoch University and the Department of Justice have reviewed this project. My supervisors are Mr Guy Hall from the School of Law and Dr Angela O’Brien-Malone from the School of Psychology. This study involves looking at how people think that they deserve to be treated by others, and what happens if other people do not treat them in the way that they are expecting.

Men are being recruited for this study from the general community and from incarcerated offenders in the metropolitan prison system. This is because some men are needed in order to represent the general community. Other men are needed to represent people in prison. We want to know how you personally feel about this topic. Your contribution may help other people in the future. Your help would be much appreciated.

This exercise should take no more than one hour of your time. All that is required is for you to talk about what you think, feel and do when faced with particular situations when other people do not act towards you in a way that you think you deserve. This will be followed by an opportunity for you to ask any additional questions you may have about this study.

Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you retain your right to withdraw at any time during the proceedings without providing any reason or explanation. Your decision to withdraw will be respected and you will not be disadvantaged in any manner for this decision. Your participation in this research will have no impact on your parole eligibility or your release date. Research data gathered for this study may be published in a psychological journal at some future date; however, my report will not use your name or any information linking you to the answers you have given.

I will be available to answer any questions that you may have, or if you would like a copy of the research summary. My contact phone number at Murdoch University is 93602761 or Mr Guy Hall from the School of Law at Murdoch University, on 93606033. Alternatively, you may contact the University Human Research Ethics Committee on 93606677.

Sofia Fisher
Researcher
Appendix E  Consent Forms - General Public and Violent Offenders

Consent Form for General Public

Consent Form

Name ____________________________________________

I give my consent to participate in this research. In addition, I give my consent for this interview to be tape recorded. I understand that this study is about looking at how different people expect to be treated by others and what they think, feel and do if people don’t treat them in a way that they are expecting. I have read and understand the information sheet and no pressure has been put on me to participate. My consent is voluntary.

I have read the information above and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree that research data gathered for this study may be published provided that no information which might identify me is published. I understand that participation in this research will have no impact on my parole eligibility or my release date, and that all data from the study will be kept in a way which does not allow my name to be linked to my answers.

If you are willing to take part in this study, please sign the form below.

Participant  Date

Interviewer  Date

Thank you for your help.
Consent Form for Violent Offenders

Consent Form

Name _____________________________________

I give my consent to participate in this research. In addition, I give my consent for this interview to be tape recorded. I understand that this study is about looking at how different people expect to be treated by others and what they think, feel and do if people don’t treat them in a way that they are expecting. I have read and understand the information sheet and no pressure has been put on me to participate. My consent is voluntary.

I have read the information above and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree that research data gathered for this study may be published provided that no information which might identify me is published. I understand that participation in this research will have no impact on my parole eligibility or my release date, and that all data from the study will be kept in a way which does not allow my name to be linked to my answers.

If you are willing to take part in this study, please sign the form below.

_________________________________________  Date
Participant

_________________________________________  Date
Interviewer

Thank you for your help.
Appendix F Information Sheet - Test Validation

My name is Sofia Fisher and I am a postgraduate student at Murdoch University. This study forms part of the research for my PhD and has been reviewed by the Ethics Committee’s of both Murdoch University and the Department of Corrective Services (formerly known as the Department of Justice). My supervisor is Mr Guy Hall, Associate Dean of Research from the School of Law. This study involves looking at how people think that they deserve to be treated by others, and what happens if people do not treat them in the way that they are expecting.

Students are being recruited to represent members of the general community in order to test out a new questionnaire to be used in a future study. We want to know how you personally feel about this topic and, although this study may not benefit you directly, your contribution may help other people in the future. Your help would be much appreciated.

This exercise should take less than 10 minutes of your time. All that is required is for you to provide answers to a short questionnaire. The questions ask about what you think, feel and do when faced with particular situations especially when other people do not act towards you in a way that you think you deserve.

Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you retain your right to withdraw at any time during the proceedings without providing any reason or explanation. Your decision to withdraw will be respected and you will not be disadvantaged in any manner for this decision. If you do not want to participate then simply do not fill out the questionnaire. Research data gathered for this study may be published in a psychological journal at some future date; however, my report will not use your name or any information linking you to the answers you have given. If you have any further questions about this study you are welcome to contact me.

Should anyone feel in any way upset by any of the questions you may contact me directly and/or you are welcome to collect a card, which will be left at the front of the room, in order to contact the Murdoch University counselling service.

I will be available to answer any questions that you may have. A summary of my findings will on [http://www.law.murdoch.edu.au/research/summary.html](http://www.law.murdoch.edu.au/research/summary.html) which is the Law School web site. In addition, my contact phone number at Murdoch University is 93602761 and Mr Guy Hall number from the School of Law at Murdoch University, is available on 93606033. Alternatively, you may contact the University Human Research Ethics Committee on 93606677.

Sofia Fisher
Researcher
Appendix G  Preliminary Questionnaire - 54 Questions

Your Rights, Attitudes and Outcomes

Date ________ Age ___ Marital status _____________ Education level ________________

1. If people don’t treat me with respect I write them off.  
2. I deserve to be obeyed.  
3. I expect to get my own way.  
4. When people don’t put up with my anger I want to reject them.  
5. If people don’t do what I tell them I will challenge them.  
6. When people don’t show me respect I want to yell at them.  
7. People should do what I say or I bash them.  
8. When people don’t show me respect I will put them down.  
9. I feel like society owes me a lot.  
10. I should be treated with more respect.  
11. People should obey me.  
12. When people don’t put up with my anger I want to attack them.  
13. People should do what I say or I will reject them.  
14. Sometimes I have felt I was above the law.  
15. I should be forgiven for the mistakes I make.  
16. If people don’t do what I tell them I will humiliate them.  
17. When people don’t put up with my anger I yell at them.  
18. I should have more power.  
19. I don’t get enough respect.  
20. I am entitled to my wishes.  
21. My partner should do what I want or I will hit them.  
22. When people don’t put up with my anger I want to put them down.  
23. When people don’t forgive my mistakes, I don’t talk to them.  
24. People just don’t realise what a first-rate person I am.  
25. I often think “don’t you know who I am?”  
26. I should get support when I am having a hard time.  
27. My family should do what I want or I will confront them.  
28. People I am close to should forgive my mistakes.
29. When people don’t show me respect I want to hit them.
   Not at all like me  1  2  3  Very much like me  4  5  6
30. I deserve to be top dog.
   Not at all like me  1  2  3  Very much like me  4  5  6
31. If I need a hand people should help me.
   Not at all like me  1  2  3  Very much like me  4  5  6
32. I am entitled to what I need.
   Not at all like me  1  2  3  Very much like me  4  5  6
33. If people don’t respect my power I challenge them.
   Not at all like me  1  2  3  Very much like me  4  5  6
34. My friends should do what I want or I will turn my back on them.
   Not at all like me  1  2  3  Very much like me  4  5  6
35. If people don’t give me support when I need it, I disown them.
   Not at all like me  1  2  3  Very much like me  4  5  6
36. If people don’t forgive my mistakes I challenge them.
   Not at all like me  1  2  3  Very much like me  4  5  6
37. If people don’t respect my power I attack them.
   Not at all like me  1  2  3  Very much like me  4  5  6
38. I just take whatever I wish.
   Not at all like me  1  2  3  Very much like me  4  5  6
39. I am better than most people.
   Not at all like me  1  2  3  Very much like me  4  5  6
40. If people ruin my good times I reject them.
   Not at all like me  1  2  3  Very much like me  4  5  6
41. If people don’t give me support when I need it, I confront them.
   Not at all like me  1  2  3  Very much like me  4  5  6
42. If people don’t show me respect I meet them head on.
   Not at all like me  1  2  3  Very much like me  4  5  6
43. If people don’t respect my power I write them off.
   Not at all like me  1  2  3  Very much like me  4  5  6
44. If people don’t forgive my mistakes I want to hit them.
   Not at all like me  1  2  3  Very much like me  4  5  6
45. If I didn’t get what I wished for I would take it out on others.
   Not at all like me  1  2  3  Very much like me  4  5  6
46. If people ruin my good times I lay into them.
   Not at all like me  1  2  3  Very much like me  4  5  6
47. If people don’t give me support when I need it, I hurt them.
   Not at all like me  1  2  3  Very much like me  4  5  6
48. People should put up with my anger.
   Not at all like me  1  2  3  Very much like me  4  5  6
49. I deserve good times.
   Not at all like me  1  2  3  Very much like me  4  5  6
50. If I didn’t get what I wished I would use violence.
   Not at all like me  1  2  3  Very much like me  4  5  6
51. I have the right to express my anger.
   Not at all like me  1  2  3  Very much like me  4  5  6
52. I deserve good times because I have a lot to make up for.
   Not at all like me  1  2  3  Very much like me  4  5  6
53. People just don’t realise how special I am.
   Not at all like me  1  2  3  Very much like me  4  5  6
54. I threaten people who ruin my good times.
   Not at all like me  1  2  3  Very much like me  4  5  6

Thank you for your participation
Appendix H  Scree Plot - Test Construction

Scree Plot from Factor Analysis Study 3
### Appendix I Corrected-item Total Correlation - Test Construction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Factor A</th>
<th>Factor B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>If I need a hand people should help me.</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I deserve good times because I have a lot to make up for.</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>People I am close to should forgive my mistakes.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I should be treated with more respect.</td>
<td>0.62</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I expect to get my own way.</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>When people don’t put up with my anger I want to reject them.</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I feel like society owes me a lot.</td>
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<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>If people don’t respect my power I challenge them.</td>
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<td>0.74</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>People should obey me.</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.55</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>When people don’t put up with my anger I want to attack them.</td>
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<td>If people don’t give me support when I need it, I disown them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>I should be forgiven for the mistakes I make.</td>
<td>0.51</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>If people don’t do what I tell them I will humiliate them.</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>My friends should do what I want or I will turn my back on them.</td>
<td>0.53</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>I am entitled to my wishes.</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>When people don’t put up with my anger I want to put them down.</td>
<td>0.73</td>
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<td>People just don’t realise what a first-rate person I am.</td>
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<td>People should do what I say or I will reject them.</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>I often think “don’t you know who I am?”</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>When people don’t put up with my anger I yell at them.</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>I should get support when I am having a hard time.</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>When people don’t show me respect I want to hit them.</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>I deserve to be top dog.</td>
<td>0.61</td>
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<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>I deserve to be obeyed.</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>When people don’t show me respect I will put them down.</td>
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<td>I am entitled to what I need.</td>
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<td>My partner should do what I want or I will hit them.</td>
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<td>Sometimes I have felt I was above the law.</td>
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<td>If people don’t forgive my mistakes I challenge them.</td>
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<td>If people don’t respect my power I attack them.</td>
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<td>33</td>
<td>I am better than most people.</td>
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<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>If people ruin my good times I reject them.</td>
<td>0.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>If people don’t show me respect I meet them head on.</td>
<td>0.56</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>If people don’t respect my power I write them off.</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>People should put up with my anger.</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td>If people don’t forgive my mistakes I want to hit them.</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>If I didn’t get what I wished for I would take it out on others.</td>
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<td>I don’t get enough respect.</td>
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<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>If people ruin my good times I lay into them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>42</td>
<td>If people don’t give me support when I need it, I hurt them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>People should do what I say or I bash them.</td>
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<td>44</td>
<td>I should have more power.</td>
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<td>45</td>
<td>I deserve good times.</td>
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<td>46</td>
<td>If I didn’t get what I wished I would use violence.</td>
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<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>I have the right to express my anger.</td>
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<td>0.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>48</td>
<td>People just don’t realise how special I am.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>I threaten people if they ruin my good times.</td>
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</table>

Chronbach’s Alpha for each subscale – 23 “A” items and 26 “B” items Total = 49 items
Appendix J  Information Sheet - Offenders

Information Sheet

My name is Sofia Fisher and I am a student at Murdoch University. This study forms part of the research for my PhD. The Ethics Committee from Murdoch University and the Department of Corrective Services have both reviewed and approved this project. My supervisors are Mr Guy Hall and Dr Jaimie Beven from the School of Law. This study involves looking at how people think that they deserve to be treated by others, and what happens if other people do not treat them in the way that they are expecting.

Men are being asked to help with this study. We want to know what you think and feel about this topic. Your help might help other people in the future. Your help would be much appreciated.

This exercise should take no more than 10 minutes of your time. All you need to do is to answer one questionnaire. The questionnaire will ask about what you think, feel and do when other people do not act towards you in a way that you think you deserve. After you finish answering the questions, you can ask any of your own questions that you may have about this study.

It is up to you if you want to help. You can say no, or if you say yes, you can stop anytime and you don’t have to say why. This is your right and you will not get into any trouble if you want to say no. If you say yes it is because you want to help and this will not influence (positively or negatively) your chances for parole or early release. The results of this study may be published in a journal or a book in the future. My report will not use your name or anything that can link you to the answers you have given.

I will be available to answer any questions that you may have, or you if you have access to a computer, you will be able to see a summary of my research findings which will be posted on http://www.law.murdoch.edu.au/research/summary.html. If you have any concerns or complaints about the way this study was conducted you are welcome to talk with Paul Gill who is one of the Chaplains who works at Hakea and Casuarina. Chaplain Gill will be able to contact the Murdoch University Human Research Ethics Committee to pass on your concerns.

Sofia Fisher
Researcher
Appendix K  Consent Form - Offenders

Consent form

1. I agree voluntarily to take part in this study. I understand that this study is looking at how different people expect to be treated by others and what they think, feel and do if people don’t treat them in a way that they are expecting.

2. I have read the Information Sheet provided and been given a full explanation of the purpose of this study, of the procedures involved and of what is expected of me. The researcher has answered all my questions and has explained the possible problems that may arise as a result of my participation in this study.

3. I understand that helping with this study will have no impact on my parole eligibility or my release date.

4. I understand I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without needing to give any reason.

5. I understand I will not be identified in any publication arising out of this study.

6. I understand that my name and identity will be stored separately from the data, and these are accessible only to the investigators. All data provided by me will be analysed anonymously using code numbers.

7. I understand that all information provided by me is treated as confidential and will not be released by the researcher to a third party unless required to do so by law.

Signature of Participant: ________________________  Date: 
……/……/……
(Name)

Signature of Investigator: ________________________  Date: 
……/……/……
(Name)

Supervisor’s Signature: ________________________  Date: 
……/……/……
(Name)
Appendix L  Sense of Entitlement Questionnaire - 49 Questions

**Your Rights, Attitudes and Outcomes**

Code____

Date ________Age ___Marital status _______________ Education level______________

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. If I need a hand people should help me.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. I deserve good times because I have a lot to make up for.</td>
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<td>3. People I am close to should forgive my mistakes.</td>
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<td>4. I should be treated with more respect.</td>
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<td>5. I expect to get my own way.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. When people don’t put up with my anger I want to reject them.</td>
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<td>7. I feel like society owes me a lot.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. If people don’t respect my power I challenge them.</td>
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<td>9. People should obey me.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. When people don’t put up with my anger I want to attack them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. If people don’t give me support when I need it, I disown them.</td>
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<td>12. When people don’t show me respect I want to yell at them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. I should be forgiven for the mistakes I make.</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. If people don’t do what I tell them I will humiliate them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>15. My friends should do what I want or I will turn my back on them.</td>
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<tr>
<td>16. I am entitled to my wishes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>17. When people don’t put up with my anger I want to put them down.</td>
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<td>18. When people don’t forgive my mistakes, I don’t talk to them.</td>
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<td>19. People just don’t realise what a first-rate person I am.</td>
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<tr>
<td>20. People should do what I say or I will reject them.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>21. I often think “don’t you know who I am?”</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>22. When people don’t put up with my anger I yell at them.</td>
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<td>23. I should get support when I am having a hard time.</td>
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<tr>
<td>24. When people don’t show me respect I want to hit them.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>25. I deserve to be top dog.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>26. I deserve to be obeyed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>27. When people don’t show me respect I will put them down.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>28. I am entitled to what I need.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>
29. My partner should do what I want or I will hit them. 

30. Sometimes I have felt I was above the law. 

31. If people don’t forgive my mistakes I challenge them. 

32. If people don’t respect my power I attack them. 

33. I am better than most people. 

34. If people ruin my good times I reject them. 

35. If people don’t show me respect I meet them head on. 

36. If people don’t respect my power I write them off. 

37. People should put up with my anger. 

38. If people don’t forgive my mistakes I want to hit them. 

39. If I didn’t get what I wished for I would take it out on others. 

40. I don’t get enough respect. 

41. If people ruin my good times I lay into them. 

42. If people don’t give me support when I need it, I hurt them. 

43. People should do what I say or I bash them. 

44. I should have more power. 

45. I deserve good times. 

46. If I didn’t get what I wished I would use violence. 

47. I have the right to express my anger. 

48. People just don’t realise how special I am. 

49. I threaten people if they ruin my good times.

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Thank you for your participation