VOICES OF INMATES IN PRISON:

A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

BY

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Voices of Inmates in Prison : A Qualitative Analysis

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in the Department of Psychology, University of Zululand.

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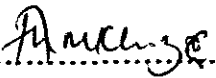
APPENDICES

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this is my own work and all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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ADELAIDE NOZIPHO MKHIZE

JANUARY 2003

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my parents, Themba and Thandi, my brothers, Qinisela, Zano, Des and Muzi and my daughter Nontsikelelo.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to uncover and understand the experiences of inmates in prisons. The study involved 10 inmates who had served at least two years of their sentence.

In this study, the researcher used purposive sampling in selecting the research participants. Data was collected using an essay, where participants were asked to respond to three open ended questions.

All interviews were conducted in Zulu in order to avoid any misunderstandings.

Qualitative data analysis was used to analyze the thematic content of the essays.

The following conclusions were drawn from the study:

- Being in prison is not fulfilling.

- Prisoners experience helplessness, hopelessness, loss of dignity, boredom. There is also a lack of respect which dominates prison life. Lack of facilities also formed part of their experiences.

Paying attention to these issues is important as they can contaminate any rehabilitation process and hinder inmates from rebuilding their lives.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Today every industrialised nation has prisons. There are a number of prisons in South Africa, all responsible for accommodating only adult people (those 18 years and above). Prisoner numbers continue to rise in countries all over the world resulting in severe overcrowding of prisons and other detention facilities. South Africa's shocking high prison statistics can no longer be ignored too.

Many people in the community have an impression of prisons as a place where criminals are simply locked up for punishment. That opinion would have been true 50 years ago. Unlike in the past, prisons are no longer designed for gross punishment but for rehabilitation. The move from the term "prison department" to "correctional services department" points to this paradigm shift in prison management. With the new approach, prisons should not be institutions of violence and gangsterism where "survival of the fittest" is the motto of the day. The need to effect change within the prison system seems to be in line with the World Health Organization's programme of "Health for all by the year 2000" which defines health as: a state of complete physical, mental and social well being (World Health Organization, 1978, p.2). Emphasis here is not about mental health, but mental wellbeing.

1.1   MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

Although presently, government and judicial system recognize the need for prisons to be places of change, prison inmates constantly find themselves having to be on guard for their lives while in prison. The culture of the prison, which is one lacking self respect and respect for other people causes stress for inmates. As indicated by Johnson (1996) imprisonment is painful. In support of this notion Zamble and Porporino (1990) explain that imprisonment serves to exacerbate psychological vulnerabilities. According to Cooke, Baldwin and Howison (1990) also, imprisonment does cause psychological distress.

Indeed prison affects the body as well as the mind. No one who has ever participated in prison, nor those of us who have participated only vicariously through the mass media has any doubts about its horrors. Hence in the present study the researcher wishes to discover and understand the phenomenological experiences of prison inmates.

1.2   STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There are many people incarcerated in state prisons in South Africa. However, very little has been done on empirical research about some of the experiences reported by black prison inmates.

Based on the humanistic perspective one may argue that it is essential to free people from disabling assumptions and attitudes so that they can live fuller lives (Carson, Butcher & Mineka, 1998).

However because of lack of knowledge and understanding about the experiences of prison inmates, it may be extremely difficult for correctional services personnel to accurately formulate an effective management and rehabilitation plan for prison inmates and thus bring about behaviour change. Again it will not be beneficial to concentrate on programmes dealing with individually induced stressors when in actual fact, the individuals milieu contains organization-based stressors, over which the individual has little or no control at all. Organizational interventions aimed at reducing or preventing these stressors can only be achieved once stressors are known.

This research therefore is aimed at describing as accurately as possible the unique human experience of some subjects exposed to prison stressors. Hence this research is entitled "VOICES OF INMATES IN PRISONS: A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS".

1.3   OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the present study was:

- To collect phenomenologically, descriptive data on individual cases in order to document the unique circumstances of each subject and evaluate the stressors to which

they are exposed. The study, therefore, aims at explicating phenomenologically the experiences of prison inmates.

- To conceptualise each case clinically as a basis for designing a behavioural programme to control stress.

1.4   VALUE OF THE STUDY

It is important for those in correctional services to know something about the growing population in state prisons, especially in South Africa. It is hoped that the present study will provide an important and insightful look into the lives of some of the prison inmates.

The present research results, therefore, aims to benefit both the prison inmates and those working with them.

1.5   DEFINITION OF TERMS

In this section certain terms are defined with the purpose of explaining and placing them in the context of the present study. These terms are listed below:-

Prisoner - any person who has been tried, and sentenced by the court of law. The terms prisoner and inmate will be used interchangeably throughout this study.

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Stressor - any experience that is negative for the inmate and results in a

negative psychological experience.

Stress - any negative psychological experience

Voices - by voices, the researcher means the unique experiences of prisoners.

Coping - Coping is defined by Houston (1990) as a response or responses whose

purpose is to reduce or avoid psychological distress. It is a response that an

individual employs to deal with psychological stress.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter provides an overview of information relating to the prison. The purpose is to give the reader an understanding of what is meant by the concept prison and the types of stressors in the lives of prisoners.

It seems, any discussion on stress and stressors is not complete without a discussion of how people deal with the stress and stressors that is, how they cope. Thus literature relating to the multiplicity of ways in which people can cope with psychological stress will be reviewed. Particularly referring to research pertaining to coping in prison.

An understanding of the prison seems crucial if one intends to understand the experience of prisoners. What will follow is the discussion of the prison and its culture. Reference will also be made to the theoretical approach used in this study.

2.1   PRISON

2.1.1   A brief history of prisons in South Africa

When the Cape was first occupied by the Dutch in 1652, imprisonment of convicted persons and their use for manual labour was not a priority. The kind of punishment used for offenders such as public executions by firing squads and public crucifixion was

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directed at the body. Detainees awaiting trial were held in early fortifications and mass deportation occurred to the now famous Robbin Island and other Dutch colonies in the East (Monograph No 29, 1998).

But with the first British occupation of the Cape, physical punishment was abolished and replaced with incarceration for a period proportionate to the offence (Van Zyl Smit, 1992). Penal policy developed rapidly in the Cape after 1834 with the abolition of slave trade, which caused the supply of labour to the farms to suffer. This resulted in the introduction of a rudimentary pass system for indigenous inhabitants, which later became a well-known feature of apartheid. People who abused the system worked as prisoners. Hence, in the 1840's and 1850's convicts worked on public projects such as building roads and ships.

In 1871, demands for labour were also felt in the rapidly expanding diamond mining industry. Here also, the prison system was used to provide labour and the public policy regarding incarceration was adapted. The prison supplemented the labour force, as many workers spent time in prison as a consequence of the pass laws. Referring to this issue Van Zyl Smit (1992) succinctly states: "the role of the state as the provider of unskilled black labour for the times through the penal system had become manifest (p.15) The penal policy that emerged was the first attempt to segregate prisoners along racial lines. Mine owners treated white workers different from black workers (Monograph, No 29, 1998).

In South African prisons, there were also gross human rights violations. Most prisoners were held in overcrowded communal cells, a situation that persists to this day. Human rights violations included cases of assault, particularly of political prisoners. Physical assaults inflicted by wardens on prisoners continued to the early 1990's and even as late as March and April 1994, prior to the democratic elections hundreds of assaults occurred in prisons throughout the country (Giffard, 1997).

After the uprisings of 1976 when youths protested against Bantu Education, prisons were used to detain political activists. Many of the prisons at this time were filled with youths who were treated in the same way as adult prisoners. Prisons continued to fill, especially during the various states of emergency in the 1980's.

However, the democratic elections of April 1994 brought with it the ANC's commitment to transform South African Society at all levels. Thus action was taken to start restructuring and reforming the Department. The departments name was changed from the Department of Prisons to the Department of Correctional Services. Amendments were made to the Prison Act of 1959 and they dealt with:

- abolition of apartheid in the prison system, most importantly segregation of prisoners was removed.
- enforcing correctional supervision, thus keeping the increasing prison population at bay, a factor financially beneficial for the department.

Indeed transformation has occurred in various parts of the Department. Such changes were precipitated by the Transformation Forum on Correctional Services, which unfortunately ceased its operations in September 1996 because of the withdrawal of the Department and conflict caused by political arguments (Monographs No 29, 1998).

2.1.2 Prison and the individual

Imprisonment is by definition involuntary physical incarceration. It is punishment for the offender and social deviant and is theoretically, means of protecting other members of society. Indeed, there was a time when prisons were merely designed for keeping prisoners away from society for both individual and community safety. Prison is defined by purpose. It presupposes that the inmates are there involuntarily for purposes of punishment. Prison is a radically transformed social reality, into which prisoners have been inserted for better or worse against their wishes. (Haysom, 1981). A prison according to Haysom (1981) is a total institution because the inmate is accorded no privacy and his life is planned entirely for him. The inmate cannot express initiative, he is uniformed and presented with a new "self".

However, according to the Annual Report (2002) prisoners are kept in prison for:

- enforcement of the sentences imposed by courts in the manner prescribed by the Correctional Services Act

- detention in safe custody without prejudicing their human dignity and

- promotion of social responsibility and human development.

It is clear from the foregoing discussion that currently, emphasis has shifted from prison institutional ability to reform offenders towards providing prisoners of whatever status with assistance and opportunities to develop their individual potential and to cope positively with their return to society. The idea that prisons should reform prisoners rather than punish them is also supported by the findings of the study done in the Eastern Cape depicted in Figure 2.1.
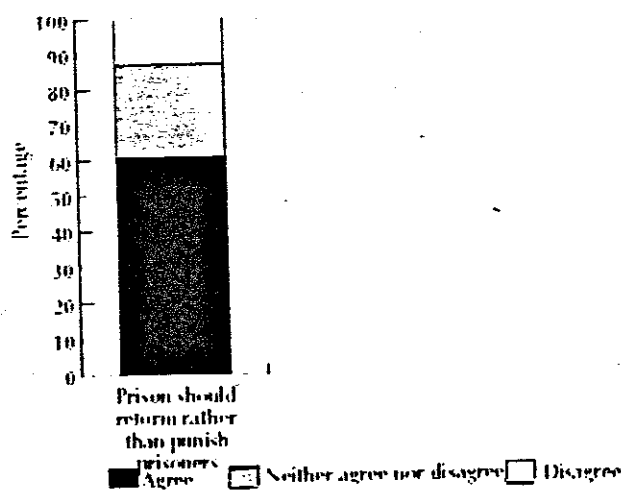

Fig 2.1 Respondent's view on the role of prison (Source: Monograph No 45, 2000)

In Figure 2.1 most respondents (61%) agreed that prisons should reform prisoners, rather than punish them. Only 13% of respondents disagreed with this aim of imprisonment, while just over a quarter were unsure. When asked what they thought should be the most important goal of prison in respect of convicted offenders, most thought rehabilitation (59%) followed by punishment (26%) and the removal of criminals from Society (14%) (Monograph, No 45, 2000). The 1% not accounted for, I suppose were the unsure cases.

There is a common agreement that the prisons are an uncomfortable and stressful place in which to live (Johnson, 1996; Backett, 1988; Zamble & Porporino). It has been described as brutalising and degrading. (Backett, 1988) Imprisonment is potentially stressful to all prisoners (Beckett, 1988). Few people would deny that prisons are uncomfortable places to live in.

Toch (1995) described prisons as frightening, disappointing and boring to people exposed to them, and a harsh environment with enforced intimacy, segregation and uniformity as a routine separation from love and status.

The prison is set apart by its clothes. One says something quiet important about oneself by what he wears. Clothes therefore exteriorise the assumptions one makes about oneself.

In prison there are three groups of people clearly distinguished by the way they dress. There are those who dress in ordinary civilian clothes, and this underlies their links with the outside world – social workers, teachers, psychologists. All these affirm their normal

citizenship. Correctional officers wear a smart uniform. Inmates too wear a uniform, which is not smart at all. It is dull, and it spells out, you are not an ordinary citizen, you are a prisoner.

What people wear in prison immediately places them; fostering peoples national tendency to think in stereotypes rather than in basic human terms, which is stressful when one thinks of how society perceives of him or her.

2.1.3   The culture and environment of the prison

The prison is a social world governed by the power hierarchies and economics filled with experience and interactions with diverse people demanding constant negotiations of self and other (Gear, 2002).

Relations are characterized by manipulation, deception and violence (Johnson, 1996; Flanagan, 1995). This is particularly true for the first time offender who has a choice to make, whether to join the inmate subculture or attempt to serve one's sentence isolated from the inmates. Serving sentence isolated from the inmate population is an option few offenders can tolerate psychologically and emotionally (Braswell, Fletcher & Miller, 1990).

Indications are that the maximum amount of stress is felt during the first few days and weeks that the prisoner is exposed to the full impact of prison life, and when he has to make the maximum adjustment to his new environment (Backett, 1988).

Most first time offenders very often, out of fear are manipulated to believe that they are in great danger and need protection in return for particular favours like sexual favours, material possessions, cigarettes, etc., hence out of fear many give in and find themselves subjected to sexual victimization. In support of this notion (Gear, 2002) points out that one respondent in his study on sexual violence and coercion in men in a South African prison mentioned that the first time you come to prison, due to fear you feel that you want protection, some kind of protection, and you do not know where you will get that protection.

Fear stems from direct assault to which prisoners are subjected, as well as from conscious efforts on the part of other prisoners to instill fear. This sees many new inmates recruited into a gang. The presence of gangs serves a variety of purposes in prisons. Evident in Gear's study (2002) is manipulation, deception into joining the gang with the aim of exploitation of the new inmate, stripping him of his possessions, or offering protection and material possessions in return for sexual favours.

During this time of confusion the inmate is faced with adjusting to his new environment. When the inmate is perceived as possessing characteristics that are associated with

weakness like being young, attractive, first offender, no gang affiliation, frightened or greedy, there is a great chance that he will be victimized sexually (Chonco, 1989).

Out of fear and further victimization a prisoner may join a gang with the hope of securing protection from this victimization. Joining a gang has its stresses, as you need to prove yourself and abide by the rules of the gang. New recruits are sent to be classified for the allocation of ranks depending on what kind of gang you belong to. In the research report by Gear, (2002), the classification goes as far as stabbing someone, be it another prisoner or a correctional officer to prove one's capacity for violence and gain recognition and new status in the gang.

Sexual victimization is by far the most feared and most common kind of victimization. Although physical violence is common in prisons it is not as feared as sexual violence (Chonco, 1989).

Johnson (1996) mentions that violent man cannot live by violence alone, and have no desire to do so. This means that gangs and other predatory groups must be more than convenient vehicles for exploiting others. To serve the normal needs of other members, they must also be a safe harbour within the lonely and dangerous prison world, providing a kind of extended psychological support system.

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Not all prisoners go through the same experiences and not all inmates are victimized, MacNamara, (1983) believes that this victimization is "normal". Just as in free society, the poor commit crimes against the poor, blacks against blacks, neighbours against neighbours. In prison inmates kill inmates, inmates rape inmates, the muscleman extort goods, services and sex from the young and the weak, organized gangs of inmates prey on the loners and an inmates property will be stolen by force by those who share his convict stigma (MacNamara, 1983).

The reactions to such an environment are not uniform and some prisoners appear to negotiate imprisonment with comparative ease, while others face difficulties and distress.

2.1.4. Major challenge for the Department of Correctional Services in South Africa

The Department of Correctional Services is at the end of the criminal justice process and thus it is greatly affected by the problems that afflict the rest of the system. The discussion that follows briefly outlines some of the major challenges facing the Department of Correctional Services.

2.1.4.1. Overcrowding

Observations from literature (Crime Index Volume 5, Number 5, 2001) indicate that between 1996 and June 2001 the overall number of prisoners in South Africa prisons

increased by 34% whilst the number of sentenced prisoners increased by 27% and the number of those held awaiting trial increased by 54% (See Fig 2.2)

	Dec 1996	Dec 1997	Dec 1998	Dec 1999	Dec 2000	June 2001
Awaiting trial	33 426	41 435	54 121	61 563	55 558	51 559
Sentenced	92 326	100 975	92 157	104 407	107 988	116 884
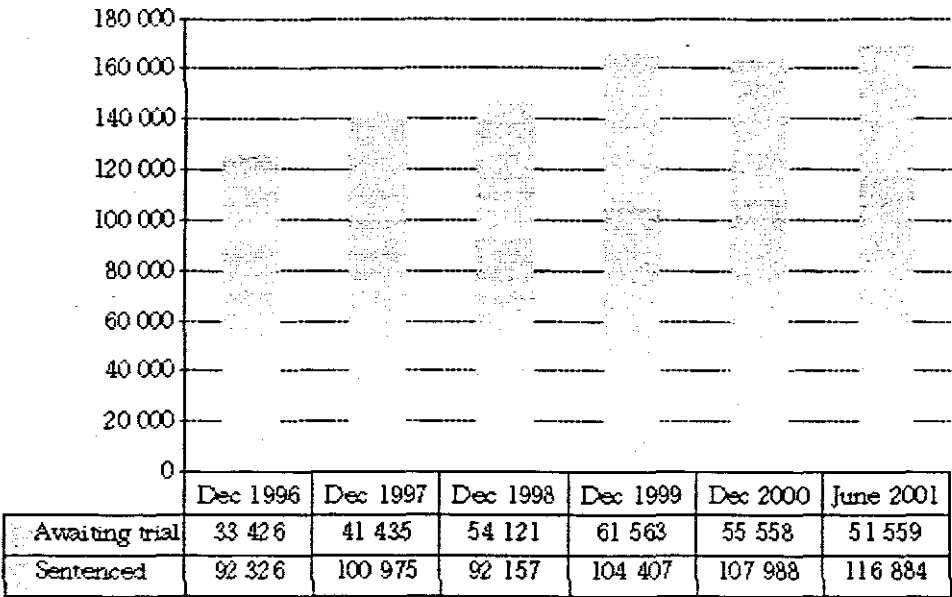
Figure 2.2 Prison Population Dec 1996 – June 2001 (Crime Index Volume 5, Number 5, 2001)

The increase in the number of sentenced prisoners is directly related to the rise in levels of crimes. Apparent is that awaiting trial prisoners pose the greatest challenge to prison capacity (Crime Index Vol. 5, No 5, 2001). The increase in the number of awaiting trial prisoners has to do with the pace cases are processed by police and courts. One of the main reasons for the large number of people held awaiting trial is their inability to pay bail. For instance in June 2001 a total of 17588 (34%) of awaiting trial prisoners were held because they could not afford to pay bail and over 1100 of these had bail set at less than R1000 as depicted in Table 1.

Table 1 : Prisoners awaiting Trial unable to pay bail: June 2001

Province	Below R300	R600–R300	R1 000–R600	Total below R1 000	Total above R1 000	Total
Gauteng	203	864	1 391	2 458	3 223	* 5 681

p://www.iss.co.za/PUBS/CRIMEINDEX/01V.../Providing

Source Crime Index Vol. 5, No 5, 2001.
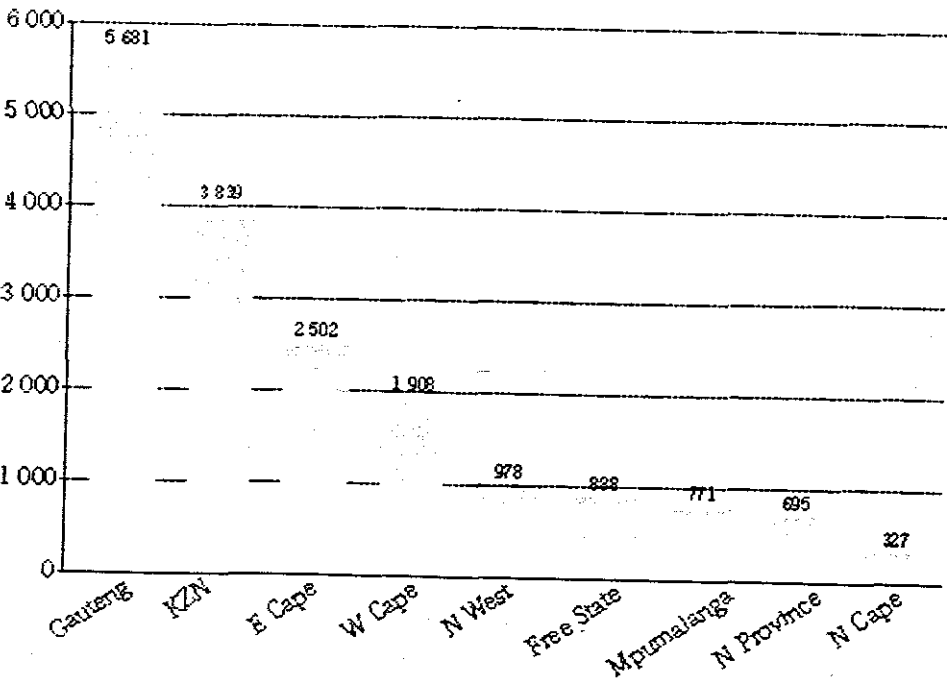
Figure 2.3 Number of prisoners awaiting trial unable to pay bail, August 2001.

(Source : Crime Index Vol. 5, 2001).

Most of the awaiting trial prisoners unable to pay bail were in Gauteng (32%) followed by

KwaZulu-Natal (22%) Eastern Cape (14%) and Western Cape (11%). This trend

correlates with the crime trends in the country where, compared to the other provinces, Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Eastern Cape and Western Cape have the highest levels of recorded crime.

2.1.4.2 HIV/Aids

Evident from literature (Crime Index, Vol. 5, No 5, 2001) is that another challenge facing the Department of Correctional Services is the control of communicable diseases and viruses, particularly HIV/Aids and tuberculosis (TB). The easy spread of communicable diseases among inmates is facilitated by the current problem of overcrowding. Figure 2.4 depicts the substantial increase in the number of "natural" deaths in prisons between 1996 and 2000.
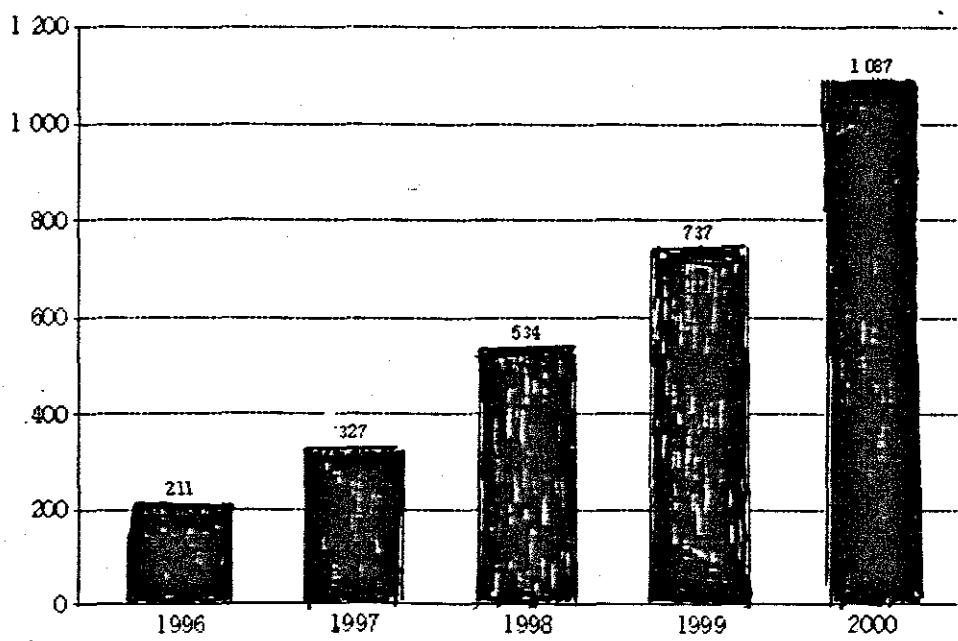
Figure 2.4 : Number of "natural" deaths in prisons, 1996 – 2000   (Source : Crime Index Vol. 5, No 4, 2001).

Although it is not clear what the causes of these deaths were, it is assumed that they were caused by Aids. The spread of the HIV/Aids epidemic among prison inmates is worrying and requires urgent attention.

2.1.4.3 Children in prison

More than 1200 children, many as young as 14, are languishing in South African prisons, some being held without trial for as long as two years (Daily News, 2002). These children are held in vastly overcrowded facilities and prison officials often say they don't believe these children are their responsibility. In fact it was revealed as long ago as 1992 that as many as 4000 children who had not been found guilty of crimes were being held in South African prisons in harsh and threatening circumstances. Ten years later numbers are up dramatically on that total inspite of an outcry both locally and abroad at that time (Daily News, 2002).

Held in overcrowded facilities, these children have had inadequate access to rehabilitation programmes, because of their numbers. Most un-sentenced children being held, have been arrested for crimes labelled "aggressive" and "sexual" (Daily News, 2002).

2.2 STRESSORS: DEPRIVATIONS OF PRISONERS

Sykes (1966) in his classic and most influential study on the role of stress in prison, analysed the social structure that existed within the prison and attempted to gain

understanding of the factors that contributed to an earlier prison riot (Johnson, 1996; Flanagan, 1981). From his study he considered the "pains" or "deprivations" as giving rise to most psychological conflicts or distress the prisoner experienced. •

The deprivations studies by Sykes (1966) may be a point of departure in looking at deprivations that inmate's experience, as stressors in their lives. Sykes (1966) in discussing the psychological pains of imprisonment, argued that by its nature, imprisonment deprives liberty, limits goods and services, deprives or at least sharply reduces heterosexual relations, and limits both autonomy and security. All these are inherent in any prison (Johnson, 1996).

2.2.1 Loss of liberty

This is the most apparent deprivation or hardship, the particular feature of which is the separation of the prisoner from the outside world (Backett, 1988). The significance of this loss goes beyond limitations in movement. A deeper loss is found in the involuntary seclusion of the outlaw from the larger society and all that entails in terms of loss of contact with loved ones and one's former way of life.

There is also the pain of moral rejection implied in confinement. Confinement represents a statement by society that the prisoner is no longer a person to be trusted or respected to move freely among his fellow citizens. Since a person's self-image is supported and

created by certain stable social environments, upon entering prison, this stability is jeopardized. The self-image is eroded as his freedom is stripped away from him.

2.2.2 Limitation of goods and services

Although many prisons are more accommodating in terms of amenities and recreations, the loss of goods is still felt by the inmate. (Sykes, 1966) maintains that however equipped the prison may be, prisoners are apt to believe that they can still do better in the free world, and hence conclude that prison conditions are painfully depriving.

2.2.3 Limitation of autonomy

Since the inmate is under the control of the correctional official, he is thus non-autonomous. This starts symbolically when the inmate enters custody and gives up his possessions, clothes and have them replaced by the standard issue provided by the institution. This dispossession of property enforces the loss of individuality experienced by the person (Backett, 1988).

Sykes (1966) maintains that rules are non-negotiable and beyond dispute. Staff need not give reasons: inmates need only to obey. In essence, prisoners have been returned to the helpless, dependent status of children. This may not feature in all prisons, but is common in many.

2.2.4 Loss of security

Sykes (1966) maintains that prisoners are a potential threat to one another especially when there is loose supervision by officials. The sense of insecurity arises in living with men who cannot be reasonably expected to abide by the rules of society. While it is true that every prisoner does not live in the constant fear of being robbed or beaten, the constant companion of thieves, rapists, murderers and aggressive individuals is far from reassuring. Physical assaults from other prisoners and corporal punishment from officials are also a source of insecurity. There are also assaults on the psyche of the person, as well as on the body of the prisoner.

Violence and the threat of violence has a negative effect on the social climate of prisons and the attitudes and morale of prisoners. Zamble (1992) reports that stress in prisons is caused by the fear of attack, and the lack of avenues to escape. With the limitations of free movement within the prison, it is difficult if not impossible for the prisoner to escape from his aggressor.

2.2.5 Sexual deprivation

Most inmates become severely frustrated by being deprived of normal heterosexual relations. They may turn to pornographic magazines, self-gratification or homosexual relationships to satisfy their natural urge. The pressure for homosexual satisfaction of one's sexual needs provoke anxiety in many prisoners. Sykes (1966) maintains that those

prisoners who discuss sexual deprivation see this deprivation as uniquely cruel and irreducible pain of confinement. Sexual victimization evolves out of prisoner's needs for sexual gratification. Therefore, because of lack of heterosexual contact, these men resort to homosexual relationships, which for some is a source of stress. Younger inmates suffer at the hands of experienced inmates and find themselves tricked and forced into homosexual activities.

In addition to these deprivations mentioned above, Cooke, Baldwin and Howison (1990) mentions loss of control, loss of family, lack of stimulation and loss of models as sources of pressures experienced by inmates.

2.2.6 Loss of control

The ability to choose how one lives his or her life is very much important. When one enters prison this ability to choose is taken away. Prisoners cannot choose when to do the most basic human functions like washing, dressing, going to sleep, or choosing when and what to eat. All these very ordinary, but very important behaviours are outside the prisoner's control. Many prisoners may find this humiliating, frightening, particularly the first time it happens.

Loss of control over events outside the prison is seen as having the potential to cause even more distress. What happens outside cannot be shared. As his social networks deteriorate

because he is in prison, he becomes unable to influence or control events in the lives of people that he cares for (Gibbs, 1983).

2.2.7   Loss of family

One of the most obvious changes that takes place on coming to prison is that the prisoner leaves behind his family and friends. Separation from those we love is usually painful. The change is frustrating for both the inmate and his family. However the pressure and frustration is lessened by the possibility of communication, which can be telephonic, or through letter writing.

A common theme among prisoners is the fear of loss of wives and girlfriends (Braswell, Fletcher & Miller, 1990). Prolonged absences often have other serious consequences, upon the stability of relationships.

2.2.8   Lack of stimulation

Apart from missing friends and family, the prisoner also misses other kinds of day-to-day activities. The routine of prison and the fact that there is little variety in the surroundings, in the faces that you see and in the work that you do, means life can become monotonous. This lack of stimulation can affect the way people think. As mentioned by Cooke et al., (1990) it seems the ability to think is altered and it becomes harder to solve problems. Although the general level of intelligence is not affected, people find it difficult to work

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out solutions to tasks they have to do. This usually happens to people who have been kept in restrictive environments.

2.2.9 Loss of models

Loss of models is one of the results of being in prison. This is especially true for younger inmates who are still in the phase of development where they need good models. From outside the community they may copy friends, parents, older brothers and sisters. But inside the prison there may be fewer models to copy, since there are only other offenders. This means that they are easily influenced by those inmates who often attempt to exploit the situation. Young offenders tend to copy the notorious offenders and may become more involved in crime.

According to Zamble and Porporino (1990) various stress related disorders and many acute physical ailments occur much more frequently among prisoners than the general population. They report more sleeping problems, more headaches, greater fears of nervous breakdown, and substantially higher levels of anxiety and depression. Rates of suicide are also reported to be higher than that of the general population. Walker (1995) noted that suicides are more likely to take place at an early stage of imprisonment.

2.3 COPING IN PRISON

People cope with stress in different ways. The discussion, which follows, will outline the multiplicity of ways in which people can cope with stress.

Also a review of research on coping pertaining especially in the prison situation will be undertaken with the aim of gaining an understanding of coping behaviours in prisoners.

Coping is defined by Houston (1990) as a response or responses whose purpose is to reduce or avoid psychological distress. It is a response that an individual employs to deal with psychological stress. The discussion on prison experience and stressors has given some light on stressors due to imprisonment such as loss of control, loss of freedom, lack of autonomy and loss of friends and family. Therefore coping is an important aspect to consider in prisoner's lives.

Some prisoners appear to be able to cope better than others with stresses, and adjust easily to prison life (Braswell, Fletcher & Miller, 1990). Those unable to make adjustments inevitably have limited means of coping at their disposal.

Prisoners adapt to prison life in different ways, Johnson (1996) identifies one common coping strategy as choosing suitable environment that suit their needs at their own terms. The inmate confronted with a diversity in prison environments is able to choose a "niche" within the larger prison, that is, a world to which he can adapt at, partly on his own terms.

The niche is defined broadly as a functional sub setting containing objects, space, resources, people and relationships between people (Johnson, 1996). It is seen as a potential instrument for the relaxation of stress. Searching for a "niche" means searching for that particular setting where adjustment seems easier.

Seymour in Johnson (1996) sees 'niches' as defenses of the boundaries to the self. Although a "niche" rarely guarantees happiness, it is maintained that it usually guarantees survival.

Johnson (1996) suggests that evidence of these adaptive processes at work can be found in accounts of life of virtually any prison.

Another view by (Braswell et al., 1990) is that imprisonment appears to encourage a number of role patterns, which can be, identified among inmates. These coping roles distinguish prisoners into three categories, namely:

- Outsiders
- Insiders
- Changers

Outsiders

These prisoners cope with prison life by viewing confinement as a temporary loss of freedom. They see it as a pause in their outside lives to which they plan to return. They accept confinement, serve their time, are released and return to their original lifestyle. They avoid trouble with other prisoners and correctional staff by doing just what they have to do to realize their goals. They mind their own business when it involves other offenders and generally refuse to become involved in other inmate's problems.

Insiders

These cope with prison life as if it is the real world. The outside life has nothing to offer these inmates. Insiders tend to cope better in confinement than in the outside world. They are considered losers in the outside world. The insiders develop their own social environment within the walls of the prison, inside they are somebody. They hold power, wealth and influence among other inmates.

Changers

The changers view confinement as an opportunity to better themselves and to change. They want to learn how to adapt better to the outside world and to make a new life for themselves. They participate voluntarily and enthusiastically in programs available to them during confinement. They are attracted to the change programs offered at

correctional institutions dealing with therapy, vocational training. The changers are said to be one fourth of the inmate population and are generally older.

It is clear from literature that prison environments matter more than programs existing in them. The nature of environment a person is exposed to eventually shapes that person's behaviour. Affirmative environments facilitate positive adaptive strategies because affirmation enhances one's self worth, inspires hope and encourages positive engagement with one's surroundings.

Negative environments will be characterized by deception, lack of respect, violence and victimization (Johnson, 1996).

2.3.1 THE COPING PROCESS

A variety of coping strategies exist that individuals use for dealing with stress.

The two main coping responses are: covert, within-organism coping responses and overt, action oriented coping responses (Houston, 1990). Within each classification, several techniques are indicated.

2.3.1.1 COVERT, WITHIN – ORGANISM COPING RESPONSES

Covert coping refers to coping responses that occur within the organism and that are not directly observable. There are three types of covert, within-organism coping responses, that is, those that focus on cognitive problem solving, cognitive control of negative affect and facilitating other coping responses.

Cognitive problem solving : this type includes cognitive activities whose aim is to modify the aversive situation, whether internal or external. For example find new recreational activities. There are three categories of cognitive problem solving: Cognitive planning, cognitive rehearsal and information seeking.

Cognitive planning involves mental formulation for dealing with problems. One kind of cognitive planning involves generating ideas concerning alternative courses of action for an aversive situation, and evaluating the consequences of each alternative.

Cognitive rehearsal involves going over in ones mind in some detail what might happen in a forthcoming situation, a sequence of behaviours or alternative sequences of behaviours for responding to a situation, and the likely responses to the situation.

Information seeking. A person may search their memories or think back to a similar situation in the past to draw information as to how to cope covertly or overtly with the present situation, or how to construe a situation if the present one is ambiguous.

Cognitive control of negative affect

This type of coping refers to cognitive activities aimed at reducing negative feelings by influencing the perception of an aversive situation, ones coping capacities, or the negative feeling themselves rather than objectively modifying the aversive situation. There are two categories of cognitive control, which are cognitive avoidance and cognitive reinterpretation.

Cognitive avoidance involves avoiding thoughts of negative feelings. Concepts such as perceptual defense, attentional diversion, selective attention, and selective memory serve under cognitive control.

Cognitive reinterpretation involves attempting to reduce negative feelings by reinterpreting the negative situation, the negative feelings themselves, or one's coping capacities.

2.3.1.2   OVERT, ACTION-ORIENTED COPING RESPONSES

Included here are coping responses that can be directly observed.

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Aversive Situation – Focused Coping

There are several ways in which people can avoid or escape aversive situations or the people or things that may cause aversive events. Thus people may leave an embarrassing social situation as well as avoid people who are likely to embarrass them. Avoidance may also occur through inaction, for instance, a voiding embarrassment by not speaking up in a group, a voiding arguments and negative feelings by not bringing uncertain topics of conversation with certain people.

Actions on physical environment

There are numerous behaviours that serve to modify the aversive stimuli in the physical environment. One's body is included here as a facet of the physical environment. Examples are fixing up unpleasant surroundings, turning down loud sounds.

Actions on interpersonal environment

Overt, action oriented coping behaviours may be employed to influence other people in an attempt to reduce the evasiveness of situations. Examples of such coping responses are verbal attack, negotiations, and physical attack.

Negative –affect-focused coping

Responses of this type of negative affect involve actively doing something to reduce negative feelings, two categories may be identifies i.e. general strategies, affect specific strategies.

General strategies: there are many coping behaviours that are generally applicable to a wide array of negative feelings. The following are some of the many categories of such coping behaviours: use of drugs, fainting or sleeping, mediational exercises, prayer, deep relaxation aerobic exercise, rigorous physical activity, ventilating feelings like yelling or pounding, having a good cry, seeking pleasurable exercises, watching T.V., going to the movies.

Affect specific responses: these include doing good deeds, self-punishment. These are associated with reducing guilt.

2.3.2   MATURE COPING IN PRISON

Johnson (1996) discusses these major attributes of mature coping inside the prison.

Dealing with problems and achieving autonomy: meeting problems head-on using all resources legitimately at one's disposal. This aspect of mature coping involves assertiveness, a sense of personal efficacy, and an internal locus of control, with respect to

one's immediate environment mature coping is doing the best you can with what is rightfully yours.

Security without deception and violence: the second characteristic of mature coping is addressing problems without resort to deception or violence, except when necessary for self-defense. Deception and violence are primitive behaviours. Regrettably, deception and violence flourish in dangerous and unstable environments, where there is chronic absence of trust in oneself and others (Toch, 1995). Thus in prisons, deception and violence are a regular feature of daily life and adjustment, they are seen as normal, even desirable behaviours. Manipulation is also the name of the game (Kummerlowe, 1995). Co-operation is comparatively rare and hence honesty has limited adaptive value in public social encounters, telling the truth is regarded as being naïve.

Caring for self and other: self actualization through human relations: Another characteristic of mature coping is making an effort to empathise with and assist others in need (Johnson, 1996). The point is that one can achieve autonomy and security, that is control over one's life through relatedness to others, with trust in ourselves and in the world both individuals and groups can acquire confidence in their ability to gain security and fulfil essential motives through co-operation and connection (Flanagan, 1981).

Trust, can replace power as a mode of problem solving (Staub 1989 in Johnson 1996). He further maintains that power strategies operate destructively; power expresses itself in manipulation, deception and violence which in turn spurn division and dissension. Trust

allows people to feel secure enough to relate to others openly and honestly, and to be co-operative in the resolution of difficulties.

Flanagan (1981) on his research on coping behaviours of prisoners, discovered that long term inmates tended to actively avoid trouble. Prescriptions such as "mind your own business," "adjust to authority," "choose your associates wisely," and "remain alert to cues in the environment." Many prisoners expressed the desire to use prison time profitably to gain tangible improvement in skills, and a better chance to negotiate life following release.

Toch (1995) in his research on the environmental psychology of prisons suggested that some inmates identify "niches" within the prison environment – that often features lower social density, escape from the turmoil of the general population, non confrontational contact with staff, and group identity among participants.

Support from friends and family

A large body of research has demonstrated the health promoting benefits of appropriate, supportive interaction among family members (Robinson & Dalton, 1990). For the prisoner the existence of a suitable family support system has been shown to buffer psychological stress, thus helping to present physical and mental illness. On the other hand absence of an effective social support system has shown increase susceptibility to disease.

2.4 PREFERENCES AND NEEDS OF PRISONERS

Toch (1977) in Johnson (1996) researched and codified the following ecological dimensions that express the needs and preferences of prisoners. These are as follows:

- **Activity :** a concern about under stimulation; a need for maximising opportunities to be occupied and to fill time; a need for distraction.

- **Privacy :** a concern about social and physical over stimulation; a preference for isolation, peace and quiet, absence of environmental irritants such as noise and overcrowding.

- **Safety :** a concern about one's physical safety; a preference for social and physical settings that provide protection and that minimise the chances of being attacked.

- **Emotional feedback :** a concern about being loved, appreciated and cared for; a desire for intimate relationships that provide emotional sustenance and empathy.

- **Support :** a concern about reliable, tangible assistance from persons and settings and about services that facilitate self-advancement and self-improvement.

- **Structure** : a concern about environmental stability and predictability; a

     preference for consistency, clear cut rules, orderly and scheduled

     events and impingements.

- **Freedom** : a concern about circumscription of one's autonomy; a need for

     minimal restriction and for maximum opportunity to govern one's

     own conduct.

Naturally inmates vary in terms of their needs and preferences, and these need not be

uniform for all prisoners.

2.5 Factors Distinguishing long term and short term prisoners

The future

Literature on the effects of imprisonme t point out differences in the experiences of these

inmates. Flanagan (1981) in his study on adaptive strategies and perspectives of inmates,

discovered that the concept of the future demarcates long term and short term inmates. For

long term prisoners notions of the future are dismissed because thoughts about charting

one's course serves as a reminder of that he will be in the same institution then as now.

Short-term prisoners can chart progress toward the goal of release. Goodstein, MacKenzie

and Shotland (1984) mention that loss of personal control over events inside prison make

the future seem unpredictable for inmates. Information concerning future events is thought to provide people with the perception that they have some degree of control over the events, and in part alleviating the stress of uncertainty.

Relations

The second major set of problems distinguishing long term and short term prisoners relates to the maintenance of relationships with persons in the outside world. The basic problem is that family members who can wait for three years are far less likely to wait for thirteen years. Most inmates serving longer sentences realise this fact and understand the attenuation of relationships that occur. Most long-term prisoners realise that life for those outside must proceed in their absence.

Assault on self

Another type of deprivation that troubles long term prisoners is the lack of respect 1 others that characterises the prison environment. On this study se *eral men responded that the most trying aspect of their confinement was the continuous assault on their self-esteem that occurred in the prison environment. Many inmates noted the lack of respect for one, as an individual was the most difficult problem they dealt with.

2.6 THE EXISTENTIAL PHENOMENOLOGICAL METHOD IN PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH

Nyembe (2002) refers to phenomenological research as a type of descriptive and qualitative method concentrating on the meaning of the experiences of an individual rather than paying attention on the description of his observable actions and behaviour. The goal of phenomenological research is to give a clear description of human experience (Polkinghorne 1989 in Nyembe, 2002). Thus, phenomenological research concerns itself with individuals experience, that is, a human beings awareness of a particular thing.

Phenomenological research begins by focussing on the experience under investigation (Nyembe, 2002). As explained by Nyembe (2002) the researchers attitude towards human phenomena, determines the way the researcher understands the phenomena. It is the transcendental attitude of a phenomenological researcher that allows him to suspend his perceptions and presuppositions by making them explicit. It is through this continuous process of phenomenological bracketing that the investigator becomes aware of further assumptions and be able to move from a natural attitude to a transcendental one. According to Stone (1986) in Nyembe (2002) the interviewees descriptions allow the interviewee to bring the individuals pre-reflective life world to the level of reflective awareness and thus showing itself as psychological meaning. Kruger (1986) agrees that the phenomenological approach focuses on ways in which the human being can be systematically understood in terms of human rather than biological and mechanical structures. Through the existential phenomenological approach, therefore, an individual is

allowed to describe a personal experience paying attention to significant events which portray personal meanings. The primary concern of the phenomenological research method is the intentions and meanings people attach to their experiences as these are lived in space and time Nyembe (2002) agrees that phenomenology is a science of experience.

The existential phenomenological approach enables the researcher to understand the human being as experiencing and to whom experience occur (Nyembe, 2002). Here, it is reasoned that the researcher attempts to understand the phenomena as they reveal themselves.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

When doing research, it is the researchers special undertaking to select a relevant research design. According to Kerlinger (1973) a research design is an outline of what the researcher will do. A research design is an outline of methods used to gather and analyse data. Thus, the present chapter refers to the plan through which the present study was undertaken.

3.1   THE STUDY

3.1.1   Aim of the study

The aim of the present study was to understand the experiences of prison inmates, hence the title "voices of inmates in prison: a qualitative analysis." The idea here was to get a good understanding and insight into the experiences of prison inmates.

3.1.2   Research technique

The primary approach is phenomenological and qualitative. The phenomenological approach was chosen because, according to Kruger (1986), "it focuses on ways in which the human being can be systematically understood in terms of human rather than biological or mechanical structure." Sparrius (1992) notes that in an area of research where little has

been done, the qualitative approach is often the approach of choice. Researchers, who wish to promote an understanding of human experiences such as grief, hope, caring and so on would find it difficult to quantify the data (Brink, 1996). Qualitative methods would be appropriate and effective to use in such cases.

A qualitative research method focuses on aspects such as meaning and experiences and studies human experience from the viewpoint of the research subjects, and in the context in which the action takes place. In the present study, the prisoner's experience of imprisonment is being studied in the context in which it takes place, which is the prison.

3.1.2   The Participants

The study involved 10 subjects recruited from a Empangeni prison in KwaZulu-Natal. Subjects who had served at least two years of their sentences were used. This criterion for involvement in the study was aimed at obtaining a group of research participants who have had experience of the phenomenon which is being investigated, which is prison experience. The sample consisted of people who were willing to participate in the research. Participants were informed that participation was completely voluntary and would not have any negative consequences should they decide to withdraw.

Subjects used in the present study were verbally fluent, had the ability to give complete and sensitive descriptions of the experience under investigation and were able to express their feelings, thoughts and perception concerning the research phenomena.

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In this study sampling was purposive since the researcher picked only those subjects who best met the purpose of the study using her own judgement about which respondents to choose. According to Bailey (1997) the advantage of purposive sampling is that the researcher can use his/her research skills and prior knowledge to choose respondents.

3.1.4 Data Collection

Participants in the present study were asked to write an open essay elucidating the following aspects:

- how you felt about being a prisoner

- did imprisonment affect your family and social life?

- did you cope with imprisonment and how?

It seemed appropriate to collect data using essay writing as it offered the participants time to think through and write down their experiences. This type of questionnaire will be able to capture an extensive range of perceptions and experiences among prison inmate in the sample.

Participants were requested to give as much information as they could.

The data were collected in a series of individual interviews. All interviews with subjects were in Zulu to avoid any misunderstandings.

3.1.5 Procedure

The researcher requested permission to conduct research at the Empangeni prison from the relevant authorities. On acquiring permission, the researcher outlined the purpose of the study to the participants and explained to them what the study hopes to achieve.

The participants were also informed that their responses would be treated with confidentiality.

3.1.6 Scoring

The researcher scored and coded data collected. Information on scored data is reported on Chapter 4.

3.1.7 Data Analysis

To be able to attach meaning to data collected, qualitative data analysis was used to analyse the thematic content of the written stories to uncover the themes, attitudes and fears.

Content analysis used to analyse the data focuses on the main message as communicated by the participant. Holsti (1968) in Berg (2001) explains that qualitative data analysis is

any technique for making inferences by systematically and objectively identifying special characteristics of messages.

In the present study stories of participants were analysed along the lines suggested by Polkinghorne (1989) and Stones (1986) in Nyembe (2002), who suggested the following steps:

- to be faithful to the data the first reading of the subject's protocol involved the researcher bracketing her personal preoccupations and judgements. The researcher thoroughly read each subject's protocol to achieve a holistic sense of the protocol.

- the researcher read the subjects protocols for the second time and divided transcripts into meaningful units which are constituents of the experience because they retain their identity as parts of the particular experience. Central themes were identified and recorded at this stage.-

- from each natural meaning unit the research drew out aspects that are relevant to the topic and re-described them in psychological language. Aspects not related to the topic were excluded. Natural meaning units transformed into psychological language were synthesized and tied together into descriptive statement of essential psychological meanings.

- having completed structures of each subject, the researcher developed description at the general level. The general description conveyed the meaning structure of the phenomenon in general.

Information on analysed data is reported on Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Having collected raw data, the researchers next step is to analyze it and interpret the results of the analysis. Thus, in this chapter data collected for this study are presented with comments about significant observations.

The results are mostly presented in table form to allow the reader better understanding of the findings of the study.

4.1   BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION OF PRISON INMATES

All ten participants (n=10) in the present study were males. Table 2 displays the distribution of participants by gender, age, marital status, educational level, length of sentence and number of imprisonment.

Table 1. Distribution of subjects by gender, age, marital status, educational level, length of sentence and number of imprisonments.

| | Male | Female | Age | | Material Status | | Education Level | | Length of Sentence | | Number of Times Imprisoned | |
			20-34	35-45	Single	Married	Grade 8-12	Post Grade 12	10-18 Yrs	19-25 Yrs	Once	Twice
Frequency	10	0	5	5	6	4	8	2	6	4	9	1
Percentage	100	0	50	50	60	40	80	20	60	40	90	10

According to Table 2, only males were involved in the study because the prison where the sample was obtained had no female prisoners.

All participants in the present study were 20 years and above and they had all been convicted for serious crimes, such as armed robbery and murder. Five prison inmates were between the ages twenty and thirty-four and the other five were between the ages thirty-five and forty-five.

As seen in Table 2, most respondents (n=6, which is 60%) were not married, only 40% of the sample was married.

Table 2, shows that all respondents had some form of education, 80% of the participants had attained Grade 8 – 12 educational level and 20% had obtained post Grade 12 education.

All participants in the present study had been sentenced for 10 years and above for crimes they committed. Most of the participants, that is, 9 (90%) of them were imprisoned once and only 1 (10%) was imprisoned twice.

4.2   REACTIONS OF PARTICIPANTS

Reactions viewed as emotional symptoms that appeared in the content of the participants' protocols are given in Table 3.

Table 3.   Prison inmates reactions to imprisonment

THEMATIC CATEGORIES OF EMOTIONAL SYMPTOMS	NUMBER OF RESPONSES	%
Loneliness and being bored	7	70
Scared, afraid and insecure	6	60
Loss of trust and negative feelings toward prison staff and inmates	6	60
Anger towards friends, Families and a rejecting Society	5	50
Loss of dignity and respect	5	50
Feeling sad and wishing to be alone	2	20
Feeling helpless and Hopeless	2	20
Feeling restrained	2	20
Guilt feeling for committing Crime	2	20

The results of this study show a high percentage of participants expressing feelings of loneliness and being bored. It is interesting to observe that most participants reported to be scared, afraid and insecure and expressed loss of trust and negative feelings towards both inmates and prison staff. Respondents also expressed feelings of anger towards friends, families and society who are rejecting. These results are consistent with the literature in that literature (Braswell, Fletcher & Miller, 1990) mentioned that a common complaint amongst prisoners was loss of significant relationships. This result is expected. According to Zamble and Porporino (1990) people will visit the prisoner for the first few years, but cannot be expected to do so for the next fifteen or twenty years. What also emerged is respondents felt that they have lost their dignity and respect by being in prison.

As portrayed in Table 3, some respondents expressed feeling sad and wishing to be alone as well as feeling helpless and hopeless. Also reported by some respondents was that they were feeling restrained and guilty for committing the crime.

4.3   EVIDENCE FROM RESULTS

The results of the present study support the evidence that imprisonment can have adverse psychological effects on prisoners such as: inappropriate social adjustment, helplessness, depression, guilt, shame and anxiety disorders.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

In this study the researcher examined the experiences of prison inmates especially those with prison sentences of 10 years and above.

The present study was a response to a realization that many black people are incarcerated in state prisons in South Africa but very little has been empirically reported on the prison experiences of these individuals. Research that is looking at the phenomenological experiences of prison inmates is very useful in understanding the stressors to which they are exposed.

From the present study the following conclusions were drawn.

5.1 COLLECTING DATA USING AN OPEN ESSAY

Open essays of prison inmates uncovered their emotional problems and levels of stress. The experiences of prison inmates were brought to the fore using their written open essays. These written open essays were found to be an important basis of understanding the experiences of long term prison inmates, Nyembe, (2002) agrees that naïve descriptions from subjects are preferred in phenomenological research. Indeed interviews in which open-ended essays are used to elicit original data are preferred.

5.2   THE EXPERIENCES OF BEING IMPRISONED

The respondents gave their experiences of being imprisoned in terms of feelings and thoughts. Their feelings and thoughts amongst others included loneliness, being bored, scared, afraid, insecure, loss of trust, negative feelings toward friends and families, loss of dignity and respect, feeling sad, hopeless and helpless as well as feeling guilty for committing crime and lacking freedom or being restrained.

It is clear from the study that support of family and friends is important. This is an indication that social networks are a source of support for prison inmates. Contact with the outside world through family and friends make life bearable for prison inmates. One obvious change is that a prisoner leaves his family and friends something which is frustrating to both parties. Although prison officials attempt to lessen this pressure, by allowing regular visits, it is not the same as having normal spontaneous interactions with family members. For instance, during prison visits there is always the presence of a correctional service official. There are also time constrains imposed, which are also frustrating.

Apparent from the present study is that prison inmates miss certain activities. They indicated that the prison dictates what you're supposed to do and when to do it. Many prisoners miss the freedom of making minor decisions such as what to wear, eat and when to sleep.

Participants in the present study have complained of boredom resulting probably from insufficient recreational facilities for long term prisoners. Cooke et al., (1990) referring to this notion notes that the routine of prison has little variety in the surrounding except the faces that you see daily.

Some respondents in the study have expressed regrets about their crimes and reported guilt feelings as a bitter experience.

Findings of the present study have indicated that most prison inmates felt that once incarcerated they lost their dignity and respect. Indications are that being in prison strips one of ones individuality and reduces one to an object. Some people do not call you by name but refers to you as a prisoner (isiboshwa). Even after release from prison the stigma that you are a prisoner follows you.

Results further suggest that prisoners lose the ability to control their lives including basic human functions like choosing what to eat, when to go to sleep, what to wear etc. Apart from loss of control inside the prison, lack of control over events outside the prison causes more distress. Gibbs (1983) explains that as social networks deteriorate, the prisoner becomes unable to influence or control events in the lives of the people he loves. According to Gibbs (1983) this is the major cause of helplessness and hopelessness in prisoners.

Apparent from this study is that stress is a central feature of prison life and this factor should not be ignored by correctional services officials as well as by the significant others in the prisoners life. If prisons are to become places of rehabilitation, stress must be controlled.

Any rehabilitation process may be hampered by factors such as helplessness, hopelessness, lack of respect, lack of dignity etc. Therefore, prisons should be environments that can meet the adjustment needs of prisoners. Even maximum-security prisons should encourage adequate adjustment in prisoners rather than be a source of stress.

5.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE PRESENT STUDY

Due to practical considerations, the research was conducted only to ten prison inmates in Empangeni prison. It is not claimed that this sample of 10 prison inmates will be fully representative of the population of prisoners.

Again since the present study dealt with investigating and explicating experiences of individuals this precludes generalizing of the results to an extended population. Obviously, a great deal of empirical research is needed to enable us to understand the experiences and the many mechanisms and variables involved in the development of the kind of experiences that have been identified in prisoners who have been kept in maximum-security sections.

5.4   RECOMMENDATIONS

Positive environments promote rehabilitation. Therefore, the more closely the conditions of imprisonment approximate those normally seen outside, the better the inmates can learn to survive without resorting to criminal behaviour (Zamble, Porporino & Kalotay, 1984). This allows them to also learn the ways that will help them survive outside the prison and function as normal citizens.

Opportunities need to be created for prisoners to pursue a meaningful life in prison.

Encourage prisoners to keep contact with relatives and friends so that they do not lose contact with the outside world.

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APPENDIX A

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

(a)   Age: ....

(b)   Educational level: ....

(c)   Length of sentence: ....

(d)   Type of offence: ....

(e)   Number of times imprisoned: ....

(f)   Number of visits per month: ....

(g)   Activities involved inside the prison? ....

(h)   What are your hobbies?   ....

VOICES OF INMATES IN PRISON : A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

Dear Respondent

The purpose of this study is to uncover the experiences of inmates in prison. Please feel free to express your experiences as a prisoner. All information supplied will be treated with confidentiality.

Write an essay elucidating the following aspects.

Question 1

How do you feel about being a prisoner. Uzizwa unjani ngokuba isiboshwa. Chaza.

....

....

....

....

Question 2

Did imprisonment affect your family and life style. Ingabe ukuboshwa kwayiphazamiza

yini impilo yakho neyomadeni wakho. Chaza.

....

....

....

....

Question 3

How did you cope with imprisonment. Wabhekana kanjani nalesisimo sukuboshwa.
Chaza.

....

....

....

....

University of
Zululand
Educational
Psychology
Department

☐Private Ba
KwaDl

⊃Telephone Number: 035-
⊋Fax Number: 035-

Area Manager/ Head of Prison

Qalakabusha Prison

Empangeni

I would like to apply for permission to conduct research in this institution. I am currently doing my internship which is supervised by the University of Zululand.

My area of interest is in improving the programs offered to prisons, looking at their experiences. I will include a copy of the proposal if necessary.

Thank you.

Supervisor

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