

**Relative Deprivation, Opportunity and Crime:  
A Study of Young Men's Motivations for  
Committing Burglary**

**PhD Thesis**

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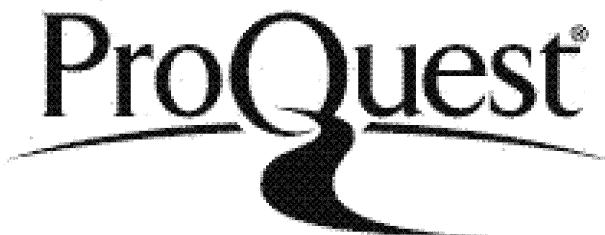


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## **Abstract**

### **Relative Deprivation, Opportunity and Crime:**

### **A Study of Young Men's Motivations for Committing Burglary**

Empirical studies have attempted to measure the relative deprivation – crime relationship with varying degrees of success. These have generally focused on examining 'actual relative deprivation' by employing quantitative methods to aggregated, area based data. Operationalising actual relative deprivation in terms of disparities in household income, these studies have attempted to show a relationship between income inequality and crime at the area level. From this they have assumed that those with the lowest incomes are most likely to perceive relative deprivation and are therefore more likely to engage in crime as a result. However, few studies have examined actual and perceived relative deprivation at the individual level.

This thesis set out to explore at the individual level whether those experiencing actual relative deprivation are more likely than others to perceive relative deprivation and to determine whether actual or perceived relative deprivation (if either) is a good predictor of criminality.

The study employed two methodologies to explore these issues. Secondary analysis of the 1998 Youth Lifestyle Survey was conducted and forms the core of the empirical work presented here. A study of 50 convicted burglary offenders was also undertaken to explore perceived relative deprivation. Both methodologies are limited by the problems associated with operationalising relative deprivation and these are detailed throughout the thesis.

The results show that perceived relative deprivation (especially relative deprivation of leisure pursuits) would appear to be associated with involvement in crime more often than actual relative deprivation at the individual level. However, neither would appear to be a good predictor of criminality when compared to other, 'tried and tested' measures.

For those offenders where perceived relative deprivation may be relevant, the thesis suggests that the offending peer group may provide a powerful comparative reference group while at the same time providing a means to resolve such experience through engaging in crime. Drawing on the findings, the thesis develops alternative theoretical frameworks for how relative deprivation may be associated with crime at the societal and individual level and provides a critique of these frameworks.

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# Chapter 1

## Introducing relative deprivation and crime

### Introduction

This thesis examines the relationship between relative deprivation and crime. The proposition to be tested in this study is simple. Individuals engage in crime because they feel deprived when they relate their situation to that of others more affluent than themselves (hence *relative* deprivation). Lacking the opportunities to increase their affluence through legitimate channels, such as paid employment, and with access to illegitimate opportunities readily available to them, they turn to crime to reduce their deprivation. The following thesis explores the relationship between being deprived and feeling deprived and the extent to which each of these are found to be associated with involvement in crime.

Although it is possible that the hypothesised effect of relative deprivation encompasses all types of crime, intuitively it may be particularly useful in explaining involvement in property crimes. For an individual experiencing relative deprivation and lacking the legitimate channels to remedy that state of affairs, engaging in property crime to obtain what is desired, would seem a rational solution to the perceived problem. While property crime is the focus of this study, one particular form of this behaviour will be examined in detail – burglary. No distinction is made here between those committing domestic and commercial burglaries. This is because it was considered that the choice about which type of burglary to commit would not be influenced by whether an individual experienced relative deprivation. Rather, it was felt that relative

deprivation would be a general motivational influence towards involvement in crimes of this type. Burglary is, in many ways, the epitome of a property offence requiring a standing motivation. An individual will need to make a decision to enter a property as a trespasser to steal something. ‘Entry as a trespasser’, the defining condition of burglary, will rarely if ever happen by chance, or as an innocent mistake. Offenders therefore need to be motivated to commit burglary and it is this motivation which places burglary at the centre of this study.

The remainder of this chapter describes a number of previous studies of burglary. Following this, a brief overview will be given of what is meant by relative deprivation, before moving on to examine these issues in more detail in later chapters.

### **Previous research on burglary**

There have previously been plenty of studies which have examined the causes of crime and many of these have shaped the character of modern criminology (Merton, 1938; Shaw and McKay, 1942; Cohen, 1955; Cloward and Ohlin, 1960 ; Hirschi, 1969; Sutherland, 1942 / 1973). Fewer studies have specifically examined burglary. Such studies have often focused on situational crime prevention measures. For example, work on repeat victimisation in the UK (Forrester et al., 1988, 1990; Farrell and Pease, 1993; Anderson et al., 1995; Chenery et al., 1997; Pease, 1998) has concentrated on improving security measures, both physical and social, on houses that have already been burgled in order to repel future burglary attempts on the same property. Work has also been undertaken to aid the police detection of burglaries (Tilley and Ford, 1996; Coupe and Griffiths, 1996) and these have often focused on improving police

procedures. In addition, a number of studies have examined various issues related to burglars themselves. These have often investigated the nature of the offending (Walsh 1980, 1985; Maguire, 1982) or the target selection process (Bennett and Wright, 1984; Cromwell et al., 1991; Wright and Decker, 1994). There would appear, however, to have been few attempts systematically to investigate the motivation to burgle. Wells (1994) and Dickinson (1995) have examined the relationship between unemployment and burglary and finding a positive association between the two at the aggregate level of analysis. There have also been a number who have dealt with the causes of burglary in their general discussions of this type of crime (Walsh, 1980; Maguire, 1982; Bennett and Wright, 1984). See Shover (1991) for a more thorough literature review of previous research on burglary to that date.

Much remains unknown about the motivation to burgle. The concept of relative deprivation may provide fruitful ground on which to gain a better understanding of burglary. In the remainder of this chapter, relative deprivation will be introduced in more detail.

### **Introducing Relative Deprivation**

Relative deprivation of one form or another has long been regarded as a possible source of crime in Western societies. The basic premise behind this notion is that individuals may become involved in acquisitive property crimes<sup>1</sup> because they desire things which others possess and which they cannot gain by legitimate means. This condition gives rise to 'relative deprivation'.

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This includes those property crimes such as theft, shoplifting, burglary and robbery which result in an offender stealing the property belonging to someone else, without that person's consent.

In the literature on relative deprivation and crime, we can discern two distinct forms of the concept. These can be termed 'actual relative deprivation' and 'perceived relative deprivation'.

Actual relative deprivation refers to a situation where individuals are objectively deprived in comparison to others. This is usually indexed as differences in wealth, income, or lifestyle, which can involve quantifying each person's economic well being in comparison to its distribution in society. Although actual relative deprivation is often about measuring disadvantage, it is not a concept restricted to the poor. No matter which socio-economic group one belongs to, one is likely to be in a position of actual relative deprivation in comparison to more advantaged groups. As such, actual relative deprivation should be distinguished from the concept of absolute poverty. While the former is about relative differences between individuals or groups and can be associated with all socio-economic groupings, absolute poverty is only concerned with the objective description of what it is to be poor, without reference to others in more favourable conditions<sup>2</sup>. In short, people in a rich welfare state will not experience absolute poverty, but can experience actual relative deprivation.

Actual relative deprivation is akin to relative poverty and the concepts are, indeed, often used interchangeably. For example, when discussing the relative differences in resources available to various groups in society, Townsend (1970) states that:

*"Poverty is therefore defined in terms of relative deprivation (understood in an objective and not, as by some sociologists, a subjective sense)..."* (Townsend 1970, p. 43)

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<sup>2</sup> The extent to which any measure of absolute poverty can be termed as objective has been called into question by Rein (1970), who found considerable disagreement between experts in the definition of the most basic measure of poverty - the level of nutrition required to sustain life. The problems of defining absolute poverty are exacerbated when attempts are made to include other 'necessities of life', such as minimum levels of clothing and shelter required.

This leads us to the second definition of the concept - perceived relative deprivation. This notion is what Townsend (1970) would have called a subjective sense of relative deprivation. While this encompasses the idea of one group being less advantaged than others, it includes the additional factor of those in the less advantaged group comparing their situation to that of others who are better off, thereby recognising their own disadvantage.

This recognition of disadvantage will result because individuals will view themselves as lacking (either totally, or in sufficient quantity) the currency in terms of which the comparison is made. The number of possible currencies of comparison is almost infinite. Comparisons could be focused on material possessions, such as the latest fashionable clothes, a new DVD player, or a bigger house. Alternatively, the comparisons may be qualitative; they may be about the desire to be accepted by a certain group, or about being successful in a certain field of endeavour. It is important to note that these comparisons need not be made solely with other individuals who possess the object of desire, it could be made with one's own remembered position. For example, those who have had a house repossessed and now find themselves renting accommodation, or those who are unemployed after satisfying careers may make comparisons not with others currently in more fortunate circumstances, but with the more favourable position they themselves once occupied.

Regardless of the currency of relative deprivation, it should be made clear that perceived relative deprivation is not automatically a consequence of actual relative deprivation. This is an important distinction to make when considering the relationship between relative deprivation

and crime. There are clearly situations in which actual relative deprivation may be present without perceived relative deprivation following. This can be illustrated by Lea and Young's discussion of the relationship between political marginality and relative deprivation:

*"Political marginality is unlikely to result in riot unless there is the added sense of frustration stemming from relative deprivation. A social group may be economically and politically marginalised, yet if it has no desire to participate in the structure of opportunities and social rights from which it is excluded, frustration need not occur."*  
(1993, p. 218).

Much the same argument might be employed to explain why social structures which clearly have a significant, built-in inequality of wealth and opportunity can remain stable and unchallenged. Under such circumstances, actual relative deprivation is inherent as some members of the society are, on any objective measure of wealth, substantially better off than others. Yet perceived relative deprivation may not ensue, because those at the less affluent end of the social system are either not making comparisons with those more fortunate, or, having made the comparison, do not feel unjustly deprived.

Just as actual relative deprivation can exist without consequent perceived relative deprivation, perceived relative deprivation can occur without actual relative deprivation. By their very nature, perceptions of relative deprivation are subjective and need not be based on the 'real' facts, but on what an individual believes to be the facts.

From a criminological perspective, relative deprivation (both actual and perceived) may provide explanations for why certain individuals will choose to deviate from societal norms and engage in unlawful behaviour. There is certainly nothing new about using relative deprivation as an explanation for crime. In 1916, Willem Bonger published his thesis on criminality and economic conditions, which propounded the principles underlying the concept. Although he himself did not use the term 'relative deprivation', it was used in Austin Turk's introduction to the 1969 abridged version of 'Criminality and Economic Conditions' to summarise part of Bonger's theorising:

*"The potency of economic want as a factor in crime causation is mainly determined by whether or not poverty is experienced as relative deprivation, in a social context (capitalism) wherein people are taught to equate economic advantage with intrinsic superiority and disadvantage with inferiority."* (Quote from Turk in Bonger, 1969 p.11).

Bonger preferred to use the term 'cupidity' (meaning a strong desire for wealth) to explain the situation whereby individuals would desire things they saw others possessing. This cupidity was felt to be fuelled by the environment in which individuals live. The more contact they have with a wealthier and more luxurious world, the more likely they would be to desire the artefacts of that world. He also noted that the experience of the environment was insufficient to explain involvement in crime. This would also depend on how intensely the desires were experienced. In short, *"The more intense a man's desires, the more risk he runs, other things being equal, of falling foul of the law"* (1969, p.109). Bonger's theory would appear to encompass what we would term both actual and perceived relative deprivation. It contains actual relative deprivation

in that it is based on real differences in economic wealth between groups in society. It also includes the perception (correct or erroneous) of being in a state of actual relative deprivation in comparison to others, therefore a perception of relative deprivation. As Bonger (1969) so emphatically stated *"It goes without saying that no one has ever desired any luxury that he has not seen someone else enjoy. It would be a waste of time to discuss this. Every need that is not strictly necessary is not innate but acquired."* (1969, p.107)

Bonger's theorising also points to another aspect of relative deprivation that may be relevant for understanding any relative deprivation - crime relationship. Involvement in crime may not just follow from a recognition that one is relatively deprived (in actual terms), but may be more likely the more *intensely* one desires the things that others have. This early work suggests there is a psychological process of intensity of feeling that is important as a mediating variable between recognition of relative deprivation and the commission of crime. These issues will be examined later in this thesis.

### **Pointing the way forward**

In this opening chapter I have introduced the concept of relative deprivation, which may well provide a motivation for involvement in crime and, more specifically, may explain why some individuals engage in burglary. In the following chapters I will explore these issues in more detail. Chapter 2 will explore the potential for relative deprivation theory by examining how existing criminological theories could utilise the concept. Chapter 3 examines the relationship between relative deprivation and crime and shows how previous studies have attempted to

measure the concept, before concluding with a number of research questions to be answered by this thesis. Chapter 4 provides the details of the methodology employed for undertaking the empirical aspect of this work. Chapter 5 then goes on to examine the relationship between actual relative deprivation and crime, using data from the 1998 Youth Lifestyle Survey (YLS). Chapter 6 builds on the work of the YLS by exploring how perceived relative deprivation manifests itself in the lives of young offenders. This was based on a survey of 50 convicted burglars interviewed for this study. Chapter 7 highlights the means by which the empirical work allows a fuller understanding of relative deprivation. Chapter 8 offers two theoretical frameworks that tentatively attempt to provide alternative descriptions of how relative deprivation is associated with crime at the societal and at the peer group level. Chapter 9 draws together the conclusions from the study as a whole.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Exploring the potential of relative deprivation in criminological theory**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter examines previous criminological literature to explore how relative deprivation has been treated in the past and to identify the ways in which an improved understanding of any relationship between relative deprivation and crime could enhance those theories. The purpose of this exercise is, in one sense, to justify the need to take a fresh look at this relationship, as detailed in the remainder of this thesis. However, it does also help to show that there is a fairly long tradition (at least by criminological theorising standards) of explaining how relative deprivation influences individuals to engage in offending behaviour. Before proceeding to examine the literature, there is a need to differentiate between what might be termed implied from explicit notions of the relative deprivation – crime relationship.

#### **Differentiating implied and explicit forms of relative deprivation**

Criminological theorists have, in a small but important body of literature, explicitly used the term 'relative deprivation' to explain criminality. More commonly, the concept of relative deprivation has been implied in much of the work on anomie and subcultural theories, which

dominated criminological debate in the 1950's and 1960's. This distinction between the explicit and implicit use of the concept was highlighted by Lea (1992) who saw that:

*"Street crime, such as household burglary, shoplifting, and street robbery are those which come most readily to mind when considering relative deprivation as 'illegal means to socially sanctioned goals'. However, relative deprivation theory as developed by Cloward and Ohlin (1960) and others, saw the causes of delinquency not so much in an instrumental response to deprivation as might be evidenced by engaging in burglary as an income supplement, but in the development of a subculture in which alternative values develop precisely as a way of coping with the frustrations of exclusion from legitimate routes to success." (Lea, 1992 p.74)*

The distinction made here is between crime as an (explicit) instrumental response to relative deprivation and crime which is a reflection of a deviant value system, which itself is generated by the inherent (implicit) relative deprivation induced by the social system as a whole. These two approaches provide a meaningful framework for discussing developments in the link between relative deprivation and crime. Although not a perfect association, there seems to be a relationship between the implicit / explicit dichotomy and the dichotomy between criminological theory and empirical research. Criminological theory has tended to develop using an implicit notion of relative deprivation, while empirical research has focused largely on the explicit relationship between relative deprivation and crime. The following chapter concentrates on how relative deprivation has been implied in previous theory and examines how further developments in relative deprivation theorising may benefit theory development. Chapter 3 then

examines previous empirical research on the relative deprivation crime relationship, which, by and large, uses the explicit notion of the concept.

### **How relative deprivation could benefit existing theory**

The following pages explore five criminological traditions and identify the ways in which a further understanding of relative deprivation theory could be used to enhance them. The criminological theories to be examined are anomie theory, traditional strain theory, general strain theory, left realist criminology and social control theory.

#### **Anomie theory**

Although dating back to the sixteenth century, the term 'anomie' was popularised by the French sociologist Emile Durkheim. Literally translated, anomie means 'normlessness', although a re-reading of Durkheim's work has suggested that 'deregulation' is a more accurate definition of the term (Bernard, 1995). As Downes and Rock (1988) pointed out, there are two distinct ways in which Durkheim uses the term. In '*Division of Labour in Society*' (1964) anomie was used to characterise a condition suffered by society when the economy changed more rapidly than regulatory functions could accommodate. By contrast, the use of anomie in '*Suicide*' (1952) focused on the psychological condition of the individual who is insufficiently regulated by society.

Durkheim had little to say about the relationship between anomie and crime, but his general theoretical framework allows us to look at crime from a Durkheimian perspective. One set of social institutions, which could be said to have a very direct regulatory function, comprises the framework of law. Under normal conditions, it is in the individual's self interest to obey the law because of the way those interests are shaped by society. During periods of rapid economic change, the existing framework of regulatory controls become weakened, releasing individuals to pursue unlimited aspirations which may result in participating in illegal behaviour. As would be the case with suicide, we might expect the level of crime to increase during periods of rapid decline or expansion in the economy.

Generally speaking, the uses of anomie theory for explaining the incidence of crime remained untapped until it was developed by Robert K. Merton in '*Social Structure and Anomie*' (1938). In comparing him to Durkheim<sup>3</sup>, Bernard (1995) noted that Merton "*...retained the essential description of anomie as a situation in which people find it in their interest to violate the law, but he changed the spatial and temporal distribution of anomie in an organic society.*" (1995, p.86)

For Merton, anomie was not a dysfunction of society which occurred when the regulatory system broke down. It was, rather, a product of a correctly functioning capitalist society. Rather than being the temporary phenomenon, resulting from periods of rapid social or economic change, envisaged by Durkheim, Merton's anomie was a permanent and inherent aspect of society. Durkheim had viewed anomie as a condition which resulted when temporary deregulation freed individuals to espouse continually higher aspirations, which, when not held in

check, were infinite. By contrast, Merton viewed aspirations as determined by society and the failure to achieve them could lead to withdrawal of legitimacy for the norms and values of society. As Downes and Rock put it:

*"For Durkheim, deregulation led to infinite aspirations; for Merton, infinite aspirations led to deregulation. The result, for both, was the same: high rates of deviation."*

Downes and Rock (1988, p.121)

Instead of focusing on extreme forms of behaviour, such as suicide, Merton developed a model which could be used to explain a range of everyday social behaviours, from conformity to societal norms, through to certain forms of deviance, such as drug and alcohol addiction and involvement in crime.

Merton's theory hinged on an understanding of two aspects of the social system - culturally prescribed goals and institutionalised means. Theorising within the context of the culture of the USA of the 1930's, culturally prescribed goals were seen by Merton as universally accepted goals which were transmitted to all within a society and which defined the things towards which all should aspire. Institutionalised means provided the norms and values which defined the legitimate ways in which societal goals could be achieved. Merton theorised that anomie tendencies would prevail when institutionalised means were insufficient to achieve the culturally prescribed goals. Being constantly told what one should be achieving on the one hand and lacking the legitimate opportunities to achieve on the other, could cause an anomie response in

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<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that Bernard was referring to Durkheim's 'Division of Labour in Society' thesis, rather than to that of 'Suicide' when making this comparison.

the individual. This would be characterised by a sense of infinite, insatiable aspirations, resulting in feeling disillusioned and discontent with the existing social structure.

Merton viewed this as an inevitable result of a capitalist, industrialised society, based upon maintaining a high level of consumerism. It would be a constant and on going process, rather than occurring merely at times of rapid economic change, as in Durkheim's model. As Downes and Rock (1988) noted, Merton's perspective was influenced by the era and the society in which he was writing. Merton originally formulated his theory in the USA in the late 1930's, at a time when the country was beginning to emerge from the depths of economic depression. He recognised that, culturally, very strong and persistent messages were transmitted to the general population through the family, the school, the workplace and other major social institutions. These messages propounded the importance of success, the importance of 'being someone'. Moreover, success was measured primarily (although not solely) in terms of the accumulation of wealth. Americans by and large valued money highly. Indeed, as Merton noted:

*"In some large measure, money has become consecrated as a value in itself, over and above its expenditure for articles of consumption or its use for the enhancement of power. 'Money' is peculiarly well adapted to become a symbol of prestige."* (Merton, 1957, p.136)

Not only was the value of great wealth stressed in American culture, but also the accessibility to such affluence was purported to be open to everyone. Through hard work and diligence, the accumulation of a fortune, so prized by the population, was achievable by all who sought it.

Reality did not, however, match this 'American Dream'. Life in the USA was characterised by widespread unemployment and poverty. The social structure therefore placed harsh restrictions on the opportunities for those in many situations to fulfil the dream. Merton recognised this paradoxical relationship between the desire for wealth on the one hand and the reality of limited opportunities on the other. An individual facing this contradiction was, he believed, at risk of suffering anomie.

Experiencing anomic pressures was not necessarily a recipe for becoming involved in crime. The theory was not a straightforward mechanistic one, where those experiencing anomie were automatically destined to participate in crime. To account for the fact that anomie induced frustration was more prevalent than deviancy and that deviancy could manifest itself in many ways, Merton postulated five alternative responses to anomic pressures - conformity, innovation, ritualism, retreatism and rebellion.

**The conformist response** was considered to be the most common reaction to experiencing anomie and indeed was deemed necessary if a society was to remain stable. Conformity involved a basic acceptance of the anomic situation in which individuals found themselves, with both the cultural goals and the institutionalised means accepted as legitimate. What seems less clear from Merton's work is why the majority of the population should choose a conformist response, rather than the alternatives outlined by Merton.

**Innovation** was a far more interesting response in terms of its applicability to criminology. This represented the situation in which an individual accepted the cultural goals of a society, but rejected the institutionalised means of achieving them. Thus, instead of choosing legitimate, legal ways of accumulating wealth, innovators choose illegal ways of making their fortune. Anomie induced innovation was regarded as a major explanation for illegal activities, especially those related to the acquisition of money.

**Ritualism** was viewed as a common response to the pressures of anomie. This involved either a rejection, or lowering, of the cultural goals which drive the desire for success. This would result in an individual continuing to abide by the norms and values of society, thereby accepting the institutionalised means but deciding not to even try to achieve the goals to which the culture dictates one must aspire. Merton saw that this most often showed itself through comments such as "*I'm not sticking my neck out*", "*I'm playing safe*", "*I'm satisfied with what I've got*", "*Don't aim high and you won't be disappointed.*" (Merton, 1957 p.150)

**The retreatist** response to anomic influences was characterised by a rejection of both the cultural goals and the institutionalised means of society. These individuals may well have once accepted both means and goals, but failure to succeed resulted in the rejection of both the accepted goals and the legitimate means for achieving them. Merton cited the examples of vagrants, tramps and 'chronic drunkards' adopting the retreatist way of life. But, perhaps the most common subject to whom this form of adaptation has been

applied is the drug addict (see, for example, the critique by Lindesmith and Gagnon 1964).

**Rebellion** was the final form of adaptation to the strains of anomie. This was felt commonly to occur when an individual responds to the anomic position by rejecting both cultural goals and institutionalised means and replaces them with allegiances to a new set of goals and means. Those turning to rebellion would therefore seek to introduce a new social structure.

These adaptations were considered by Merton in his 1938 paper to summarise and generalise the various forms of behaviour which could be generated from an anomic state. While retreatism and rebellion were adaptations which provided examples of deviant behaviour, an understanding of more mainstream criminal behaviour lay in analysing the 'innovative' adaptation. Given that a primary cultural goal of society was identified as the accumulation of money, it followed that 'innovative' measures would be adopted with this end in mind. Innovation therefore described a process of illegitimate acquisition of money and material possessions.

In Merton's theorising, involvement in crime was a result of the failure of the social system to provide sufficient legitimate opportunities to fulfil ambitions inspired by cultural goals. In comparing this theory to Durkheim's anomie, Box (1971) criticised Merton for "*...shifting from an under-emphasis on normative means to a discussion on the differential access to legitimate opportunity structures, particularly education and occupational opportunities. Anomie was no*

*longer a condition of deregulation or normlessness, but one of relative deprivation." (1971, pp.105-106).*

While Merton's anomie moved away from an emphasis on deregulation and concentrated more on the effects of the social structure, this does not mean that his theory avoided the issue of society's regulative function altogether. Indeed, the conformist and the ritualist adaptations describe circumstances in which members of society accept the normative framework and are consequently law abiding. In this sense, those falling into the ritualist and conformist categories could be described as well regulated.

Box's criticism that by concentrating on legitimate opportunity structures the theory was reduced to one of relative deprivation was based on the observation that Merton had (misguidedly in Box's view) determined that the majority of criminal behaviour occurred in the lower strata of society. Crime was thereby seen as essentially inversely linked to legitimate opportunities. It was more prevalent among the working classes where opportunities were fewer, than in the middle classes, where opportunities were relatively more abundant. Faced with the universally accepted cultural goals, but with limited life-chances to succeed in their attainment, working class individuals were more likely to turn to 'innovative' criminal behaviour to meet their desires than were middle class individuals. From Box's perspective, the nature of the relative deprivation involved defining Merton's theory as a class specific one. It was a relative deprivation in which one group could be defined as 'haves' while another group could be defined as 'have nots'. We can infer from Box's criticism that by, relative deprivation,

he meant an objective measurement of differences in wealth, or what we have previously called 'actual relative deprivation'.

Merton's version of the concept of anomie was important in criminological theorising. This can probably be assessed by the considerable level of criticism it encountered, most notably from Lemert (1964), Taylor et al (1973) and Besnard (1988). It continues to be the subject of criminological debate (see Adler and Laufer (1995)). There can be no denying that Merton's anomie provided a foundation for some of the most popular and influential criminological literature of the second half of the twentieth century. This influence was particularly important for the development of 'subcultural' theories which began to emerge in the 1950's and 1960's, as described later in this chapter.

#### *How relative deprivation could benefit anomie theory*

Despite the considerable criticism that has been cited towards Merton's anomie theory, it is likely that there are aspects of relative deprivation theory that could help revive the fortunes of anomie. The strength of anomie theory would seem to be in explaining crime rates at the societal level. The main problems appear to emerge when moving from the societal to the individual level of explanation. Once the unit of analysis moved away from society to the individual, identifying how anomie manifested itself became an elusive pursuit. However, there are aspects of relative deprivation theorising that may help to remedy some of these concerns, as the following pages show.

### *The class specific nature of anomie theory*

Taylor et al (1973) criticised Merton's theory of anomie for what they saw as the statistical fallacy which underpinned the concept. Drawing on official criminal statistics, Merton noted that the lower strata of society were responsible for the majority of recorded crimes cleared up. By stressing the restricted access to legitimate opportunities, anomie theory appeared to fit the 'facts' well. Those at the bottom of the social ladder were exposed to the cultural norms to succeed and were also the class of individuals apparently most likely to commit crime<sup>4</sup>.

However, Taylor et al. argued that official statistics were largely a function of police activity. Stereotypical views held by the police meant they were most likely to focus attention on the lower classes because they considered this social grouping to be more delinquent than others. By focusing attention on lower class delinquency, Merton's theory merely reinforces these police perceptions and practices. As noted earlier, Box (1971) criticised this aspect of Merton's anomie and accused him of reducing the theory to one of relative deprivation. Further criticism has been advanced by Katz (1988). He suggested that Merton had persisted with his focus on lower class delinquency despite evidence to the contrary. Katz viewed this as sentimental materialism and noted that the theory "...is so persuasive that the observable facts really do not matter..." (Katz, 1988, p.314). In response to criticisms of the lower class focus in his theory, Merton (1964) later refined the theory with the depiction of the "anomie of success" to explain deviant behaviour among the very wealthy, or very successful. The anomie of success was considered to result when individuals suddenly reached the goal they were striving for. Merton noted that success (whether monetary or otherwise) often brought with it a sense of depression as those

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<sup>4</sup> It is important to note here that Merton was not implying that offending was the preserve of the working classes only. He merely viewed offending as being more prevalent among the working classes than among the middle classes, and more serious in nature (e.g. street crime as opposed to white collar crime).

concerned sought to come to terms with their change in status. Often, this would be followed by a realisation that the achievement was just a stepping stone towards further goals and that which had once seemed a challenge was now considered mundane in comparison to the challenges ahead. Despite these developments, anomie theory failed to explain the presence of delinquency throughout the social strata, as found by control theorists (Hirschi, 1969; Kornhauser, 1978). However, this may partly have been a result of the nature of offending examined, with control theorists focusing on much weaker measures of delinquency<sup>5</sup>.

Although Box (1971) had negative views about anomie being reduced to a theory of relative deprivation, there seem to be benefits from incorporating the latter into the former. In examining the issue of the distribution of delinquents in society, relative deprivation theory provides a more flexible approach to understanding criminal behaviour. Relative deprivation can be perceived by those occupying any social position. It applies equally to the working classes, middle classes and even the wealthiest in society. All can compare themselves to others and feel deprived. Unlike Merton's anomie theory, the focus of concern is not located purely in the lower classes. Another important issue may be how strongly deprivation is felt. For example, offenders may feel deprived more intensely than do non-offenders. If delinquency is found to be more prevalent in some social strata than others, then this may be due to greater intensity of relative deprivation among that group (for whatever reason) than among others.

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As an antidote to the control theorist criticisms of anomie and strain theories in general, Bernard (1984) has reviewed a number of studies commonly interpreted to support control theory and suggests that the findings are by no means clear-cut. Self report studies such as those used by Hirschi (1969) use weak measures of delinquency in order to include middle class youth, whose offending tends to be relatively minor. Indeed, Downes and Rock (1988, p.237) state that these weak measures of delinquency mean that "...Hirschi's data strain credulity". They also note that school drop-outs, who were likely to be more delinquent, were excluded from Hirschi's study.

Furthermore, Bernard (1984) asserts that more serious criminal behaviour tends to be concentrated in the lowest social class. Indeed, even some self report studies have found a concentration of offending among the lower classes. For example, Reiss and Rhodes (1961) found that delinquency was more frequent and serious among lower class juveniles than among middle class juveniles.

### *Anomie and individual behaviour*

Although Merton (1964) viewed anomie as essentially sociological<sup>6</sup>, Passas (1995) has suggested that it is a socio-psychological concept that examines the relationship between individuals and society. Anomie *"bridges the gap between explanations of social action at the individual level with those at the level of social structure"* (Abercrombie et al 1988 p.11, quoted in Passas (1995) p.97). However, it would seem precisely this feature of anomie theory which causes the concept a great deal of trouble. Perhaps the fundamental problem is the attribution of observed behaviour at the individual level to societal influences. There are many paths to delinquency and the implications of anomie theory are that the path to crime is mediated through some psychological factor, which itself is influenced by societal level mechanisms.

If we were to accept that perceived relative deprivation may be the result of anomic pressures at the societal level, then perceptions of deprivation might be considered one of the intervening psychological mechanisms which foster delinquency. Indeed, Passas (1988) described the relationship between relative deprivation, anomie and deviance in the following terms:

*"Relative deprivation is regarded as an intermediary variable, as part of processes potentially conducive to deviant behaviour and anomie. Merton had postulated that disjunctions between valued goals and socially available means for their attainment together with cultural emphases on success make for strains towards anomie, a social state of things where the guiding power of established norms is diminished and people*

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<sup>6</sup> Merton was keen to draw a distinction between anomie as a malaise of society as a whole and anomia as experienced by the individual. Anomie was meant to describe societal level influences which were viewed as having an impact on individually felt anomia.

*tend to think that 'everything goes'. For such trends to come about, it is necessary that the actors themselves experience these discrepancies, judge them undesirable and/or unfair, and engage in deviant actions, which become known to other social actors. It is the historically specific socio-psychological mechanisms making this possible that relative deprivation helps bring to the fore." (Passas, 1988 p. 145).*

However, perceiving relative deprivation in the sense of recognising that one is deprived and considering it 'unfair' or 'undesirable' (to use Passas' terms) may also be an insufficient description of the socio-psychological mechanisms that explains the motivation for engaging in crime. Indeed, feelings of relative deprivation may be only one of several possible psychological states to stem from anomie. For example, Passas (1995 p.108) notes that "*Anomie has been referred to as meaninglessness, powerlessness, deregulation, a state of complete normlessness, lawlessness, even alienation in a huge list of studies.*" The recognition of being relatively deprived may itself lead to these other psychological states, which suggests that it acts as an intermediary variable in a complex chain of cause and effect. It would therefore be wrong to suggest that perceived relative deprivation was the only, or indeed, the most important mechanism by which anomie is transmitted to the individual and consequently influences behaviour.

Relative deprivation theory would seem to have much to offer as a complement to and possibly as a refinement of Merton's anomie theory. Most importantly it may provide an insight into the transmission mechanisms by which cultural goals are accepted by individuals. However, relative deprivation is by no means the "silver bullet" which solves the many noted problems with

anomie. Indeed, there are still many criticisms that cannot be countered in this way. For example, the problems with Merton's typology of modes of adaptations remain an issue (Lindesmith and Gagnon, 1964; Short and Strodtbeck, 1965; Katz, 1988) as does the treatment of "active social control" for regulating many aspects of a complex society, which seems to have been ignored in Merton's anomie (Lemert, 1964). Despite these continuing criticisms, the use of relative deprivation may go some way to resolving some of the inherent problems in the concept of anomie.

### **Traditional strain theories**

Traditional strain theory refers to the body of empirical and theoretical work which attempts to show how individuals are motivated to engage in crime as a response to societal pressures. The failure to achieve what society dictated they should strive for is alleged to cause a sense of strain in the individual. Engaging in deviant behaviour was one method of venting some of that experience of strain. In short, these studies view delinquency as a reaction to the dominant value system. Merton's account of anomie in causing crime is a prime example of a strain theory. However, anomie has been treated separately in this chapter because of the notable similarities between relative deprivation theory and anomie. Strain theories, of which the theory of anomie is one, have here been termed 'traditional' in order to differentiate them from the more recent developments in General Strain Theory, as detailed later in this chapter.

The criticism that anomie theory treated socially transmitted norms as universally accepted, resulted in a shift towards strain theories that focused on explaining the existence of delinquent

subcultures. Contrary to the notion of universal norms, subcultural theorists viewed society as a patchwork of separate cultures, with different norms and values. As viewed by an early exponent of differential subcultures (Albert Cohen, 1955), a dominant culture akin to that envisaged in Merton's anomie could create a delinquent subculture. For Cohen, such delinquent subcultures resulted from a rejection of middle-class standards, which were viewed as dominant in society. Indeed, *...through all the major media of mass indoctrination - the schools, the movies, the radio, the newspapers and the magazines - the middle-class powers-that-be that manipulate these media have been trying to "sell" [the working classes] on the middle-class values and the middle-class standard of living.* (Cohen, 1955 pp 124-125). Most working-class members of society would accept these middle class values (at least in part), even if they themselves were unable to achieve the desired standards. Working class parents would want their children to possess the middle class virtues which defined respectability, even if the opportunities for achievement were limited and this was as relevant to the "corner-boy" (where importance of having a good time now and for standing by one's friends were important facets) as it was for the "college-boy" (where educational and occupational achievement and ambitiousness were important). Cohen believed that both groups would be likely to internalise middle class standards. In contrast to corner-boy and college-boy cultures, however, a delinquent culture could emerge as a solution to failing to internalise middle class standards. While corner-boys may re-align their expectations to make the best of their situation, others may deal with their failure to achieve by rejecting middle-class standards altogether, in favour of a delinquent standard which is the antithesis of middle class values.

Delinquent subcultures were therefore formed as a result of experiencing status deprivation in comparison to the middle classes and as a reaction against the middle class values their members rejected. Success in the delinquent subculture could be assessed by the extent to which it would be frowned upon by middle class standards. By rejecting the dominant value system, those in the delinquent subculture were, essentially, freeing themselves from the stress which could result from their failure in the conventional world. It provided alternative goals into which to channel their energies; alternative goals in relation to which they were more likely to be successful. Cohen's thesis was considered by many to be particularly germane for explaining gang membership in the USA and provided a possible explanation for the fact that much of a gang's activity was non-utilitarian. Delinquency was not just about finding illegitimate means to rationally defined ends, but that often entailed purely irrational acts - stealing objects which would later be discarded, or smashing windows. In Cohen's analysis this could be explained purely by the fact that it was anti-social and counter to dominant middle class standards and therefore successful by the delinquent subculture standards.

This approach of viewing delinquent subcultures in opposition to conventional middle-class norms and values has been criticised by Matza (1964, 1969). He argued that a delinquent subculture was unlikely to be oppositional because of the very nature of that subculture. First, delinquent subcultures are made up of children who "*...have a curious way of being influenced by the society of elders which frequently includes parents, almost all of whom, whatever their own proclivities, are united in their denunciation of delinquent deeds.*" (Matza 1964 p.37). Second, Matza criticised the simplistic portrayal of conventional culture and noted that it was in fact a far more complex, multi-faceted concept. He concluded that over-emphasis on delinquent

subcultures over-estimated the incidence of delinquency, thereby accounting for more than exists. This criticism also applied to Cloward and Ohlin (1960), who provided an alternative explanation for gang membership.

Cloward and Ohlin's work involved a synthesis of two important criminological principles. On the one hand, they took Merton's anomie to explain the strains towards delinquency induced by the social system and, on the other hand, they introduced Sutherland's (1942 / 1973) theory of differential association to explain the access to and adoption of illegitimate opportunities to achieve socially prescribed goals. Building on Merton's theory, they viewed access to legitimate opportunities as a crucial factor in creating tendencies towards delinquency. Society promotes the concept of meritocratic selection for legitimate employment, whereby candidates for a job are chosen on the basis of objective criteria, with the most qualified and most suited person being offered the position. However, an excess of suitably qualified candidates means that other, more subjective, criteria come to play an important role in the selection process. Whereas in the meritocracy individuals are able to achieve by obtaining the appropriate qualifications for a job, the shift to subjective criteria, such as race, gender and class represent a shift to factors which a candidate can do little about. Cloward and Ohlin believed this could produce a sense of 'unjust deprivation' in the qualified, but unsuccessful individual. This is summed up in the following extract:

*"It is our impression that a sense of being unjustly deprived of access to opportunities to which one is entitled is common among those who become participants in delinquent subcultures. Delinquents tend to be persons who have been led to expect opportunities*

*because of their potential ability to meet the formal, institutionally established criteria of evaluation. Their sense of injustice arises from the failure of the system to fulfil these expectations. Their criticism is not directed inward since they regard themselves in comparison with their fellows as capable of meeting the formal requirements of the system.*" (1960, p.117)

The sense of injustice was therefore aimed at the failure of the system itself and those whom the system failed were therefore free to withdraw their support for it. The result was that those whom the system let down could seek to endorse the values of a delinquent subculture.

Referring to Merton's concept of 'adaptations', Cloward and Ohlin saw that individuals could adapt to one of a number of deviant subcultures - conflict, retreatist and criminal subcultures.

This can be contrasted with Cohen's (1955) theory of gang delinquency by viewing involvement in crime as a utilitarian response to strain. Cloward and Ohlin's typology was, however, considered by Taylor et al (1973) inadequate for explaining the wide range of social groupings which exist in modern industrial societies.

'Unjust deprivation' as used by Cloward and Ohlin could have been termed 'perceived relative deprivation'. Both could be used to indicate a comparison made by individuals of their own ability to do a job, to the formal and informal criteria required by the employer and to the attributes and qualifications of the successful candidates. This process involves a comparison of what Runciman (1966) called an individual's membership group (the unsuccessful) with the position of a reference group (the successful). The difference between the two concepts may lie, however, in the fact that unjust deprivation as used by Cloward and Ohlin results in blame being

placed on the system creating the injustice, while perceived relative deprivation could result in individuals placing the blame on either the system or upon themselves. In this context, unjust deprivation would seem to be clearly distinguished from relative deprivation. Indeed, it may well be that Cloward and Ohlin chose the term carefully in order to differentiate the two concepts. It is instructive to note that the example they cite for unjust deprivation was taken from work on the 'American Soldier' by Samuel Stouffer et al. (1949). This work and the example Cloward and Ohlin used from it, provided the first exposition of the relative deprivation concept.

I have touched briefly upon just two theories of delinquent subcultures because of their influence in the development of traditional strain theory and, indeed, because they continue to be regularly cited. These early theories were originally designed to explain the prevalence of gangs committing delinquent acts in the USA. Later, this school of thought broadened its scope to examine other aspects of delinquent subcultures and its applicability to other societies. Work by Downes (1966) in the context of the UK, for example, partially validated the work of Cohen through a process of elimination. In studying delinquency among working class youths from the East End of London, Downes found that the relative mildness of their delinquency was accompanied by an absence of working class youth aspiring to middle class values. If strain was relevant at all, it was in the leisure sphere. With the growth of the 'teen' culture in the 1960's, working class youths were being offered increased avenues for spending their leisure time and restricted access to these was likely to be a cause of anomie.

Each of these theories follows a similar format for defining the cause of delinquency. They are based on the premise that individuals compare their achievements to a dominant value system in order to measure their success. In the case of Cohen, Cloward and Ohlin, and Downes, inherent features of the social structure mean that many will be unable to achieve the desired standards. The important point about all these theories is that they assume that comparisons are being made. The potential delinquent is comparing his achievements with a standard set by society. Delinquency is closely associated with making this comparison and, indeed, is a product of the frustration, or strain on the individual that these comparisons produce. In this sense, traditional strain theories involving anomie or delinquent subcultures may encompass elements of perceived relative deprivation. This remains as an implied element of the theories but is nonetheless essential.

#### *How relative deprivation could benefit traditional strain theories*

Merton (1938), Cohen (1955) and Cloward and Ohlin's (1960) work formed the basis for traditional strain theory and were the foundations for a great deal of empirical testing and theoretical debate, which seemed to keep a generation of criminologists occupied. The following pages indicate how aspects of these theories may be more fully understood with reference to relative deprivation theory.

### *The role of opportunities*

Access to legitimate paid employment has been a central feature of some traditional forms of strain theory. For example, in Merton's notion of anomie, the sense of 'anomia' in the individual was caused by accepting the societal goals for success - the accumulation of money - but failing to have the means to achieve that success (Merton, 1964). The demand for well paid jobs that would give the desired standard of living far outweighed the supply of those favoured positions. Similarly, Cloward and Ohlin's (1960) thesis on opportunity structures depicted delinquency arising when access to legitimate employment was blocked, even when the formal requirements (such as qualifications) had been met by the applicant. Both Merton's and Cloward and Ohlin's theories viewed some forms of crime and delinquency to be a reaction to the frustrations induced by failing to gain access to the level of employment desired. However, relating delinquency to the failure to obtain suitable employment is problematic when the timing of offending is taken into account. As Katz (1988 p.314) pointed out, involvement in crime usually occurs some time before job opportunities become meaningful considerations. This appears to be borne out in this thesis, which, in common with other relevant research, shows that the onset of delinquency typically occurs while young people are still at school.

Unlike the work of Merton (1938) and Cloward and Ohlin (1960), the current study does not rely on restricted access to legitimate opportunities as the theorised means of generating a sense of strain in the individual. Indeed, in this study, strain is considered to occur independently of legitimate opportunities. It could result from feeling relatively deprived in comparison to others and this may occur regardless of the legitimate opportunities available.

In defence of traditional strain theory, it should be noted that attempts have been made to allow for the fact that the onset of offending typically occurs prior to experience of the labour market. A number of theorists have taken a prospective view by attempting to assess the likelihood that desired goals would be met in the future. This was an important development in strain theory as it shifted the orientation away from strain caused by experiences in the **past**, towards an emphasis on strain which results from how an individual views the **future**. To some degree, it also resulted in a shift from objective measures of strain (employment history) towards subjective measures (an individual's estimation of his future life-chances). Typically, these self-report studies of school students have attempted to show strain caused by the disjunction between aspirations and expectations (Short, 1964; Short et al., 1965; Rivera and Short, 1967; Spergel, 1967). These studies ask the respondents to look to the future and examine what they aspire to achieve and to examine their expectations of achieving those aspirations. Delinquency is considered to be most likely to occur when aspirations are high, but where expectations of achievement are low. Opponents of this approach have, however, found that delinquency is most common when both aspirations and expectations are low. For example, Liska (1971) reviewed four studies which measured the aspirations - expectations relationship with delinquency<sup>7</sup> and found that, when aspirations were high and expectations were low, delinquency was higher than when both aspirations and expectations were high. This finding was consistent with the traditional strain theory perspective. However, contrary to the predictions of strain theory, Liska found that three out of the four studies examined reported delinquency to be lower when there were high aspirations and low expectations than when there were low aspirations and low expectations.

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<sup>7</sup> The four studies reviewed by Liska (1971) were Clark and Wenninger (1963), Reiss and Rhodes (1961), Short (1964) and Spergel (1967).

While the incorporation of relative deprivation would do little to rebut such criticism, there are other aspects of the theory which have been criticised and in which relative deprivation can play a restorative role. Two of the most important relate to the use of long term, rather than immediate aspirations and the particular choice of success goals aspired to by delinquents.

### *Long term aspirations and expectations*

Many of the studies which have examined the sense of strain through the expectations versus aspirations approach have assumed that young people take a long term view in assessing their likelihood of being successful. Notions of aspirations and expectations are usually based on the perceptions of the likelihood of obtaining good grades on leaving school, or on obtaining a good job. For example, Rivera and Short (1967) examined occupational expectations among gang members by asking them what jobs they thought they would be doing in ten years time. However, there is some evidence to suggest that young people look only a short distance into the future when assessing their chances of success. Stinchcombe's (1964) study of high school delinquency found this. Similarly, Quicker (1974) tested Cloward and Ohlin's (1960) hypothesis that the important goal for explaining delinquency was occupational success, but found little evidence of this relationship. Instead, the more immediate goal of educational success was found to be related to delinquency among high school boys. Furthermore, Corrigan (1979) has noted that it is unrealistic to expect youths who are still at school to assess their future likelihood of occupational success. The link between working hard at school and gaining a well-paid job is based on a causal chain of events explained in the following terms:

*"If you behave yourself, you are more likely to work hard; if you work hard, you are more likely to do well at school; if you do well at school, you will get good qualifications and a good reference; if you get a good reference, you will get a good job; if you get a good job, then you are likely to get lots of money" (Corrigan, 1979, p.50)*

Unlike traditional strain theories, relative deprivation tends to imply measures of immediate, rather than long term goals. It seems sensible to assume that one would desire to have what one felt relatively deprived of at the time of the perceived deprivation. This is a common sense aspect of the concept. If I feel relatively deprived of my neighbour's new car now, it means I want to own the new car I feel deprived of now. It wouldn't make sense for me to feel deprived now but not want to own that new car for another year. I may *expect* to buy that car in a year's time, but I will *aspire* to own it now and will continue to aspire to own it until I take possession of one. By definition then, feeling relatively deprived implies immediate, rather than long term aspirations (or goals).

Replacing the notion of long term aspiration with immediately felt relative deprivation would not negate other aspects of traditional strain theory, however. For example, relative deprivation, as with long term aspirations, may be influenced by a dominant value system which places a strong emphasis on success. As with traditional strain theory, expectations may also play a role in shaping the decision on whether to use legitimate or illegitimate means to achieve what is desired. For example, if one felt relatively deprived but did not expect to obtain through legitimate channels that which was desired, or did not expect to obtain it within a reasonable

time, one might be more inclined to turn to illegitimate means. The use of perceived relative deprivation to explain involvement in crime may therefore require a short term view of expectations and aspirations.

### *Types of goal*

The focus on single goals for success has been criticised by those who have found that adolescents are more likely to follow a variety of goals and not just that of money or educational success. Agnew (1984) argued that individuals may follow a wide range of goals and failure to achieve some goals may be offset by success in others. Success in achieving some goals may be enough to avoid strain, regardless of failure in other spheres, and this could mean that strain theory "...may not be able to explain delinquency because very few adolescents are strained." (Agnew 1984, p.446)<sup>8</sup>.

Utilising relative deprivation does not require one to rely on single measures of aspiration and expectation. Both actual and perceived relative deprivation can be experienced by reference to a wide range of possible objects, attributes or values. For example, my study used a closed response format question that measured perceived deprivation towards 16 items, ranging from going out and following a hobby, to desired clothes and food. Further research utilising an open response format resulted in 17 different objects of relative deprivation being mentioned by a sample of offenders and 14 by a sample of non-offenders. Where immediate aspirations are

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Agnew came to this conclusion after examining the relationship between seven different goals and involvement in delinquency and finding little evidence of an association between goal achievement and delinquency. However, this is likely to have been due to his choice of success goals included in the study, rather than being due to no relationship.

concerned, young people (the focus of this study) may aspire to a range of short-term goals, rather than focusing exclusively on money or educational success.

Relative deprivation theory may therefore help to explain the processes by which societal values are turned into feelings of strain in the individual. However, it would seem more effective at explaining some types of strain. Indeed, relative deprivation theory may be best utilised to explain the disjunction between aspirations and expectations for material possessions, rather than intangible items such as sharing certain values or exhibiting a valued form of behaviour. As such, it may be more appropriate to apply relative deprivation to traditional strain theories which have a material basis - such as Merton's (1938) anomie, or Cloward and Ohlin's (1960) opportunity structure thesis - rather than to value based theories such as Cohen's (1955) theory of reaction formation.

### **General Strain Theory**

General strain theory has emerged in recent years as an expanded version of traditional strain theory. Its origins can be traced through a series of articles by Robert Agnew, who may be considered the founder of general strain theory. Agnew's (1984) failure to find a relationship between goal achievement and delinquency, even when immediate goals were taken into consideration, led him to reject traditional strain theory as an explanation for crime. He subsequently developed a revised strain theory of delinquency (Agnew, 1985) based on strain caused by blockage of pain-avoidance behaviour. Agnew hypothesised that strain in the individual may result when faced with unavoidable aversive situations and delinquency may be a

means of channelling that strain. Agnew used examples of the youth who has an unpleasant family life, or who dislikes school. These are aspects of the youth's life which are hard to avoid and involvement in delinquency - especially aggressive behaviour - may be a means of venting frustration at the situation the youth finds himself in. A test of this thesis found strong support, even when control theory and subcultural deviance theory variables were taken into account.

In a later paper, Agnew (1992) brought together the central components of traditional strain theory with his (1985) revised theory to produce a description of a general strain theory of crime and delinquency. The general strain theory viewed delinquency as a response to three generic types of strain. Strain could be caused by (1) the failure to achieve a positive goal (central to many traditional strain theories); (2) the withdrawal, or threat of withdrawal of positively valued stimuli; and/or (3) the presentation of or expected presentation of negatively viewed stimuli. Agnew argued that, while the first of these sources of strain had been the subject of much debate by criminologists, the latter two had received little attention. Faced with one of these three types of strain, the decision to engage in delinquency will depend on the coping strategies employed by those concerned. Reviewing psychology literature, Agnew identified three main coping strategies, based on cognitive, emotional and behavioural adaptations to strain, each of which conditions the likelihood of involvement in delinquency.

Since Agnew's (1992) paper, there have been a number of empirical tests of the theory. For example, studies by Agnew and White (1992) and Paternoster and Mazerolle (1994) have each used longitudinal data to show a positive relationship between general strain theory related variables and delinquency. In each study, involvement with delinquent peers was found to be an

important intervening variable for explaining how experiences of general strain were turned into delinquency. General strain theory has also been used to explain gender differences in rates of delinquency (Broidy and Agnew, 1997), while Hoffman and Miller (1998) have provided some further support for the theory through some complex statistical modelling. Although still in its infancy, general strain theory would appear to show promising signs of providing a means of resurrecting the fortunes of strain theory. The limited empirical evidence available has so far confirmed the relationship between aspects of general strain and delinquency.

#### *How relative deprivation could benefit general strain theory*

Relative deprivation can provide only limited support for general strain theory as the latter is a much larger theory with wider implications than the former. General strain theory attempts to explain the effects of a wide variety of sources of strain, while relative deprivation theory is much more limited in scope. Relative deprivation theory may provide an example of two out of the three general sources of strain. Firstly, relative deprivation can be viewed as a failure to achieve a positive goal and, in this respect, it stands alongside other traditional strain theories. Put simply, feeling deprived in comparison to others and failing to resolve those feelings of deprivation may lead to strain. Second, relative deprivation may in some circumstances arise from the 'withdrawal of positively valued stimuli' (Agnew's (1992) second source of strain). A youth who was at one time used to receiving whatever he asked his parents for, may later feel deprived - not in comparison to others, but in comparison to his own previous position - if his parents no longer provide him with what he wants. It should, however, be noted that the current study concerns itself only with the first source of strain identified by general strain theory and

not the second. There are many other aspects of general strain theory which are not covered by the current study. Most notable among these are the various coping strategies discussed by Agnew (1992) which help shape whether delinquent, or non-delinquent solutions are adopted. These coping strategies are an integral aspect of general strain theory, but are seldom considered in relation to relative deprivation theorising. Despite these shortcomings, relative deprivation could potentially be incorporated into general strain theory as a materialistic source of strain to stand alongside existing concepts (strain resulting from negative family relationships, or negative school experiences etc.).

### **Left realist criminology theory**

Left realism (Young and Matthews, 1992; Lea and Young, 1993; Young, 1994; Young, 1997) developed as a response to radical (or left idealist) schools of thought which often romanticised the role of the working classes and took a dogmatic view of the causes of crime - even when this appeared to be contradicted by the available evidence. Left realism attempts to explain crime in terms of the failure of the capitalist political economy. It takes what it sees as a more pragmatic approach to crime causality, even to the extent that it accepts biological factors may play a role in explaining crime rates. Much of the discussion about left realism centres on the 'square of crime'. Crime is seen as having four dimensions - an offender, a victim, the public and state agencies. These dimensions interact with each other, which means that, in order to understand crime, one must understand the social relations between each party. A holistic view is therefore required to studying crime. This can be contrasted with much of existing

criminology, which seeks to study individual elements of crime and the criminal justice system in isolation from other elements.

Relative deprivation is given a central role as a cause of crime in left realist criminology.

Previous theories from both left idealist and positivist schools of thought have attempted to explain crime rates through poverty. Such theories view crime in terms of absolute deprivation and predict that crime would be reduced by alleviating poverty. Left realist criminology argues that this approach fails to account for crimes of the middle classes (e.g. white collar crime) and ignores the fact that the vast majority of the poor are law abiding. From a left realist perspective, relative deprivation is defined as an "*excess of expectations over opportunities*" (Lea and Young, 1993 p. 218). Individuals engage in crime as a response to realising they will be unable to achieve what they wanted. In this sense, the relative deprivation of left realism draws heavily on Merton's (1938) anomie. As with anomie theory, this sense of deprivation is compounded by a culture which encourages its participants constantly to strive for success. Young (1994, 1997) has suggested that an understanding of these processes provides a solution to the aetiological crisis faced by theories which rely on absolute deprivation. He points to the fact that living standards have improved tremendously in recent decades, even for the poorest in society, yet crime has continued on an upward trend. Even though people are more affluent than they have ever been in absolute terms, more crime is being committed. Young argues that this can be explained by the fact that expectations have increased at an even greater rate than living standards, resulting in more perceived relative deprivation for more people. The welfare state with its improvements in education and working conditions<sup>9</sup> has had an important role to play in

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<sup>9</sup> Full employment was, until the late 1970's, viewed as a legitimate goal for successive governments. This too had the effect of raising expectations about what might be achieved.

this process by raising expectations. While there are now more opportunities than ever before, there are even higher levels of expectation.

In reviewing the literature on left realism (Young and Matthews, 1992; Lea and Young, 1993; Young, 1994; Young, 1997), there appears to have been a change in the nature of perceived relative deprivation envisaged as the theory has developed. Lea and Young's (1992) discussion of the theory would suggest a fraternalistic notion of the concept (see appendix C for a discussion on fraternalistic and egoistic relative deprivation). Opportunities were most restricted for those in the bottom social strata (especially marginalised groups such as ethnic minorities) and their failure would be blamed not on their own shortcomings, but on the failure of the social system to provide fully for their needs. Lea and Young (1992) determine this to be an aspect of the class struggle in which those most affected will take collective action in the fight for more resources. This collective action had traditionally taken the form of union action, although in the fragmented labour market of the post industrialised UK, collective action by united workers was viewed as being less common and was being supplanted by a trend towards street crime and public disorder (rioting).

#### *How relative deprivation could benefit left realism*

More recent discussions of left realism (Young, 1994, 1997) have taken an egoistic definition of perceived relative deprivation in which crime is viewed as more of an individual response to such feelings. This accords more closely to the type of perceived relative deprivation used in the current study, with individuals feeling deprived in comparison to similar others. There are,

however, areas in which the current study departs from left realist notions of relative deprivation. For example, left realism assumes comparisons are made to conventional (non deviant) values or reference groups. This need not necessarily be the case. Comparisons may be most relevant when made with others already engaging in offending behaviour. Improvements in the welfare state may not only have increased expectations, but also increased the propensity for evaluating one's position in comparison to others. If this is held to be true, then the choice of comparative reference groups may be vitally important in determining involvement in criminal activity. Left realism has also focused on what has been called the frequency of relative deprivation. The prevalence of offending is related to the prevalence of individuals who feel relatively deprived. However, this ignores the role that may be played by the *degree* of relative deprivation (see appendix C). Offenders may, indeed, *feel* relatively deprived more intensely than do non-offenders. This is an area of relative deprivation theorising that could be beneficial if added to the current left realist theorising.

Relative deprivation is just one of many aspects of left realism, along with others such the role of political marginalisation and the role of policing in labelling individuals as offenders. However, it does rely on the concept as a central component in explaining the causes of crime. The current study would suggest that there are a number of minor developments to the notion of relative deprivation used by this school of thought which might help to give left realism further credibility.

## **Social control theory**

Social control theory (Nye, 1958; Hirschi, 1969; Kornhauser, 1978) is the final school of thought to be examined here. This theory views crime as a result of weakened social bonds. Most people do not engage in crime because they are constrained from doing so by conformity to conventional values which have been internalised at an early age. These values define right and wrong and are supported informally by a series of social controls. These controls are considered to have most effect on those with greatest attachment to the conventional social order as it is this group which has most to lose, in social and material status, in being caught offending. According to Hirschi's version of social control theory, individuals form attachments to significant others, such as parents and teachers, who symbolise the social order which restrains them from engaging in delinquency. A weakening of these ties can release an individual to engage in crime.

Social control theory has risen in prominence since the 1970s. It provided an empirical and theoretical framework for virtually dismissing the claims of strain theory, which had previously dominated criminological debate. Social control and strain theories are generally considered to stand in stark contrast to each other. Social control theory assumes all individuals have an innate tendency for law breaking and that societal pressures prevent them from offending. By contrast, strain theory predicts that societal pressures motivate individuals to offend. In essence, control theory takes motivation out of the frame, but motivation is central to strain theory.

### *How relative deprivation could benefit social control theory*

The current study deals with identifying the extent to which one particular factor, relative deprivation, acts as a motivation for offending. As such, it must stand in opposition to social control theory if the two theories are considered in isolation. However, it may be possible to combine strain variables (such as perceptions of relative deprivation) and social control variables into an integrated theory of crime. For example, Agnew and White's (1992) test of general strain theory found that variables measuring general strain explained as much variance in offending rates as did social control variables. Furthermore, an elaboration of the causal mechanisms of general strain theory by Paternoster and Mazerolle (1994) showed that strain may be influential by reducing the levels of social control. It is therefore possible that relative deprivation may result in a reduction in social control, which in turn may increase involvement in crime. For example, if a youth feels relatively deprived as a result of failing to achieve something, he may attribute this to his parents' failure to provide for him, rather than on his own abilities or his own position in the social structure. The resentment felt towards his parents could reduce his attachment to them to the extent that he cares little about their likely reaction to him becoming involved in delinquent activities. An alternative possibility is that reduced parental attachment may in some way increase an individual's disposition for feeling relatively deprived (perhaps by increasing comparisons made with others in a bid to form new attachments) and involvement in crime provides the solution to the resulting sense of strain. The point of this is that the relationship between social control and relative deprivation (if this relationship exists at all) is unclear. This points to an area of the relative deprivation - crime relationship where further research would be beneficial.

## **Summing up the relationship with existing theory**

This chapter has reviewed the relationship between relative deprivation and five theories of crime - anomie theory, traditional strain theory, general strain theory, left realism and social control theory. This perhaps shows the potentially wide application of relative deprivation with the possibility that it could be woven into a number of schools of criminological theory, thereby enhancing some aspect of those theories. Indeed, the term 'relative deprivation' has often been used in relation to some of these theories (anomie, traditional strain, left realism) but has seldom been elaborated upon, or measured in empirical tests, although as the following chapter shows, there is a body of literature that has examined the (explicit) relative deprivation - crime relationship from an empirical perspective.

While it has the potential for wider application, it is important not to overstate the case for relative deprivation. Most of the theories of crime examined in this chapter could be classed as 'grand theories', which attempt to provide an explanation for all, or a large proportion of delinquent activity. No such claim should be made for relative deprivation in the form examined here. At best, we might hope that relative deprivation is relevant for explaining offending behaviour by some people, some of the time. However, it may still offer the potential for illuminating aspects of existing theory that have hitherto proven problematic for those theories. On this basis, it is perhaps worth proceeding to explore how relative deprivation has been tested in previous criminological studies, with a view to highlighting the ways in which it may be enhanced further in future.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Previous empirical research examining the link between relative deprivation and crime**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter reviews literature that has expressly used the concept of relative deprivation as an independent variable for explaining crime. The following pages therefore concentrate on empirically based studies with a view to identifying potential weaknesses and gaps in existing knowledge where additional research would be particularly fruitful.

Since the early 1950's, criminologists on a number of occasions have tested empirically the relationship between relative deprivation and crime. Relative deprivation has been invoked to explain a range of criminal behaviours, from shop-lifting to homicide. Although this thesis is primarily concerned with acquisitive crimes (especially burglary), it will nonetheless be instructive to examine all of the relevant literature in order to understand the methods used to measure the relative deprivation - crime link and to detail the conclusions reached about this relationship. Following the schema employed by Shukla and Bichler-Robertson (1996), previous research on the subject has been divided into three categories - violent crime, general crime and property crime.

## **Relative deprivation and violent crime**

Explicit theories of relative deprivation explaining involvement in violent crime are the most common. An early example of this was Henry and Short's (1954) work on suicide and homicide. They argued that high status whites who suffered a total loss of income during a recession had further to fall than lower status blacks (these two groups were chosen by Henry and Short to represent opposite ends of the status hierarchy). When added to the fact that the higher status whites' reference group (those with whom they compare themselves) would still be other high status whites, the loss of income would create frustrations in these individuals who would see others in their own group continuing to succeed. These frustrations were deemed instrumental in the decision to commit suicide. For the same reasons, contractions in the business cycle did not affect suicides among the lower status black population. As this group had limited resources to start with, a total loss of income did not necessarily have a major effect and, when compared to others in their reference group (other lower status blacks, or lower status whites) they would see relatively little change.

By contrast, growth in the business cycle was related to declines in suicide among the lower status white population and increases in homicide by the lower status black population. These were viewed as two aspects of the same process. As an economy begins to grow and employment expands, social forces restrict the access to jobs for the lower status black population, who, the argument goes, are only hired once the whites' demand for jobs has been met. Under such conditions, the status of the white population will rise relative to that of the black population. The effect of this will be to increase frustrations among the black population.

This will result in an increased rate of homicide among this group, while frustrations decline among the white population resulting in a lower suicide rate. It is clear from this brief synopsis of Henry and Short's work that relative deprivation theory was central to their understanding of suicide and homicide. Perceptions of relative deprivation were created by recognition that one is in a state of actual relative deprivation in comparison to others and was considered to create a sense of frustration which was vented in either suicide by white individuals, or homicide by black individuals. However, this relationship between perceived relative deprivation and homicide or suicide remains conjectural as Henry and Short's analysis did not include measurement of the extent of comparisons made or the resulting feelings of relative deprivation. Indeed, their analysis was based on actual relative deprivation, in which real differences in wealth between groups are compared to identify which groups are worse off relative to the others. From this analysis of actual relative deprivation, Henry and Short inferred a process of perceived relative deprivation. They themselves acknowledged that further work would be needed to test this.

The issue of economic inequality and homicide was picked up by Blau and Blau (1982). Using data from 125 United States Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas (SMSAs) for 1970, they found a strong positive relationship between economic inequality and violent crime. Furthermore, controlling for economic inequality removed the effect of poverty on violent crime. Blau and Blau concluded that:

*"Apparently the relative deprivation produced by much inequality rather than the absolute deprivation produced by much poverty provides the most fertile soil for criminal violence." (Blau and Blau, 1982 p.122).*

Examining the effect by race, Blau and Blau also discovered a positive association between violent crime and both intra-racial and inter-racial income inequality (the latter may provide some support for Henry and Short's theory of homicide explained above.) Economic inequalities in the United States' urban societies could therefore be considered to lie at the root of much the violent crime which pervades its major cities. A subsequent reanalysis of Blau and Blau's data, however, questioned their findings and concluded that the relationship between income inequality and homicide was not statistically significant (Williams, 1984).

Published around the same time as Blau and Blau's work, Messner (1982) came to very different conclusions in his study of urban homicide rates. In an analysis of 204 SMSAs for 1970, Messner found only a moderate association between family income inequality (a measure of actual relative deprivation) and homicide. This disappeared once demographic controls were introduced. By contrast, measures of absolute deprivation were significantly related to homicide. More importantly, the relationship was negative. Homicide rates tend to be lower in communities with a greater proportion of poor families. Such findings would appear to be at odds with previous research on both relative and absolute deprivation. However, further work by Messner (1983) also failed to find a significant relationship between homicide and relative deprivation (using the Gini index applied to income inequality), although (contrary to his earlier work) a *positive* relationship was found between poverty and homicide. These results were

replicated by Messner and Tardiff (1986) in a study of 26 New York neighbourhoods. Neighbourhoods were considered a more appropriate unit of analysis for investigating the effects of relative deprivation because they represent more realistic frames of reference. This was based on the assumption that individuals are more likely to compare themselves to others within their local community, rather than with the wider society represented by a large metropolitan area (as in SMSAs), or by an entire state. Once again, no association was found between economic inequality and homicide, although the relative size of the impoverished population was found to be significantly associated with homicide.

The neighbourhood level of analysis was also used by Taylor and Covington (1988) in their study of ecological changes in Baltimore over a ten year period. Unlike Messner and Tardiff (1986), their analysis of fifteen clusters of neighbourhoods suggested that measures of social status were inversely linked to levels of homicide in areas in decline. These areas were characterised by Taylor and Covington as minority, inner city, underclass neighbourhoods. As the extent of (actual) relative deprivation increased in these areas, so did the levels of violence.

Examining relative deprivation at the individual, rather than at the area level, James (1997) proposed a biologically based relationship between perceptions of relative deprivation and violence. Drawing on a number of medical studies, he explained how perpetrators of violence are often found to have low levels of serotonin. Furthermore, serotonin levels are influenced by comparisons with others, with negative social comparisons being related to low serotonin levels. James concluded that we are now more likely to experience perceived relative deprivation compared to the 1950's because we make more upward social comparisons. This increasing

sense of perceived relative deprivation lowers the levels of serotonin in the brain and makes depression and violence more likely.

Despite these various studies, the extent to which relative deprivation has an effect on violent crime is by no means clear. There is evidence both confirming and refuting this relationship. However, it is not within the remit of this research to explore further the relationship between relative deprivation and violent crime.

### **Relative deprivation and general crime**

In a study by Eberts and Schwirian (1970) relative deprivation was posited as a major factor in metropolitan crime rates. Relative deprivation was defined as:

*"the range of deprivations existing in the social system, and more specifically, the extent to which one segment of the population feels disadvantaged relative to other segments of the population in the same communities." (Eberts and Schwirian 1970 p.91)*

This definition indicates that Eberts and Schwirian were particularly concerned with the recognition of disadvantage, which springs from comparing one's own position to that of the more affluent. By comparing the distribution of wealth with the general rates of crime in 212 communities, the authors found that crime rates were high in communities where the lower income population was in a minority relative to a larger high income population. By contrast, in communities with a more equal balance between those in the high income and low income

populations, crime rates tended to be significantly lower. The explanation given for differing crime rates was that in communities where the low income population was in the minority, such people would readily be able to see a large population more affluent than themselves. The result would be that "*...this frustrating relative positional deficit produces aggressive behaviour among the population members experiencing the deprivation, and that a certain amount of these aggressive reactions will be translated into higher crime rates in these populations.*" (1970, p.91-92). Violence was therefore deemed to result from the frustrations that followed from the recognition of being in a position of relative deprivation.

Eberts and Schwirian's theory was later picked up and developed by Falkin (1979), who suggested that a cost-effective way to achieve a reduction in delinquency would be to reduce the extent of perceived relative deprivation felt by those most likely to commit crime. For Falkin, the most appropriate means by which to achieve a reduction in perceived relative deprivation was radically to revise the system of taxation to achieve a true re-distribution of income. By substantially reducing the inequality between rich and poor, a reduction in the actual relative deprivation among potential delinquents would be achieved. This, it was believed, would reduce the extent of perceived relative deprivation and, in turn, the extent of crime.

Empirical support for a policy of income redistribution was supplied by Braithwaite (1979), whose analysis of economic inequality proved fruitful from the perspective of the relative deprivation - crime relationship. A cross-sectional analysis of data from 193 SMSAs for the years 1967 to 1973 found a significant relationship between income inequality and crime. Measuring income inequality as the difference between the median income and the average

income for the poorest 20% of the population, a significant association was found with six types of crime (homicide, rape, robbery, burglary, grand larceny and auto theft). Increases in income inequality were positively associated with increases in these crime types and this was considered to result from the frustration of a lower income population seeing affluence all around. This was further consolidated in Braithwaite's review of literature using time-series analysis which highlighted a number of papers showing the link between income inequality and the rate of crime in terms of relative deprivation (Henry and Short, 1954; Danziger and Wheeler, 1975; Gurr et al, 1977).

Support for the relative deprivation - crime hypothesis has also come from an urban ecology perspective. In testing theories to explain differences in city centre - suburb crime rates, Farley and Hansel (1981) suggested that relative deprivation may be an important explanatory variable. With reference to earlier work by Skogan (1977)<sup>10</sup>, they explained the higher rates of central city crime in terms of lower status central city residence comparing themselves to those in wealthy, middle-class suburbs. As with Skogan's work, this explanation was not demonstrated by their research. However, empirical evidence of the relative deprivation effect on central city - suburb crime rates was later put forward by Farley (1987). A regression analysis of crime rates in 227 SMSAs in 1980 found a significant association between city-suburb income inequality (the measure of relative deprivation used by Farley) and two crime types - robbery and auto theft. These crimes were found to increase as income inequality between those in the city and those in the suburbs increased. He concluded that "...relative deprivation increases the level of crime in impoverished central cities surrounded by affluent suburbs." (Farley, 1987 p.

<sup>10</sup>

Skogan (1977) found that the increasing suburbanisation of cities since World War II had brought with it a spatial stratification along race and class lines. Those that could afford to - white middle classes - left the central city areas in favour of safer, cleaner suburbs, leaving behind a state of economic decline and increased poverty for the largely black, Latin and Southern white central city population.

695). It should, however, be noted that Farley was measuring actual relative deprivation, based upon real income differences, but was imputing perceived disadvantage being felt by those living in the less affluent central city areas.

While these studies are largely based upon analysis of aggregated data, there are a small number of studies (Reiss and Rhodes, 1965; Burton and Dunaway, 1994; Sanchez Jankowski, 1995) that have asked individuals whether they felt relatively deprived and have related this to their self-reported delinquency. Reiss and Rhodes (1965) surveyed 12,524 pupils across 41 schools in Tennessee and included a measure of status deprivation (based on housing and clothing). The study examined perceptions of status deprivation across sex, race, social class and social class context (the relative mix of classes in the respondents' school) and found that bottom class adolescents were most likely to feel that they had poorer housing / clothing. Where the relationship between perceptions of relative deprivation and crime was concerned, a significant association was found, although the strength of this relationship was low. Indeed, the majority of delinquents (72 %) did not feel relatively deprived of housing / clothing. When analysed by race and sex, the relationship appeared to be strongest among white males from the lowest socio-economic groups, who were most likely to feel relatively deprived of housing / clothing.

A more recent study by Burton and Dunaway (1994) was based on 263 high school students from the middle-class suburb of a large mid-western city in the USA. Respondents were asked to complete a questionnaire containing a number of scales designed to measure the extent of relative deprivation<sup>11</sup> and involvement in general delinquency, drug use and felony crimes.

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The scale used to measure relative deprivation employed four Likert-type questions which asked about experiences of deprivation in relation to the amount of money, the quality of the home, the clothes and the family wealth they saw others with.

These three measures were further divided into the prevalence and incidence with which they occurred, thereby creating six separate measures of delinquency. Analysis employing an Ordinary Least Squares multiple regression model found there was a significant relationship between the extent of relative deprivation experienced and all six measures of delinquent involvement. Burton and Dunaway noted about their findings that:

*"The individualistic measure of relative deprivation generated significant effects on all delinquency scales in this analysis. The results illustrate the usefulness of this conception of relative deprivation theory, which has been lacking in most previous studies assessing relative deprivation." (Burton and Dunaway, 1994, p. 93)*

While Reiss and Rhodes (1965) and Burton and Dunaway (1994) approached the relative deprivation - crime relationship from a survey perspective, Sanchez Jankowski (1995) has found evidence of such a relationship through ethnographic research. However, unlike Reiss and Rhodes, who found relative deprivation to be most common among 'bottom class' individuals, Sanchez Jankowski found it to be present among ethnic minority middle class individuals. African-American and Latino middle class professionals were found to turn to crime in response to the frustration at the length of time it took to acquire the material possessions or economic status desired. This sense of frustration would be fuelled by seeing their white colleagues promoted ahead of them, and by the sense that their own promotion always seemed to take longer in arriving. Participating in crime (either as an alternative to legitimate earnings, or as a supplement to them) was seen as an immediate means of achieving some of the material goods desired.

These studies are among the few that have measured the perceptions of relative deprivation in a sample of individuals. Furthermore, the results suggest that at least some of those who engage in general acts of delinquency are more likely to feel relatively deprived. It should, however, be noted that none of these studies has focused on burglary or, indeed, property crime more generally. This means that the nature of the relationship between perceived relative deprivation and burglary remains unclear from these individual based studies.

### **Relative deprivation and property crime**

While the links with violence and general crime rates are of some interest in showing the uses of relative deprivation theory, our main concern here is with property crime. As we have seen, the work on general crime rates found that certain property crimes were associated with levels of relative deprivation. For example, Braithwaite (1979) found relative deprivation to be associated with robbery, burglary, grand larceny and auto theft, while Farley (1987) highlighted the positive association with robbery and auto theft. In addition, a small number of papers have solely concentrated on the relationship between relative deprivation and property crime.

Chester (1976, 1977) considered perceptions of relative deprivation to be a major source of property crime. He argued that the importance of success is constantly propounded in western societies and in the USA particularly. Through media depiction, the high standard of living, which is supposedly achievable by everyone in society, is transmitted to the lower classes thereby increasing their awareness of the wealth which exists elsewhere in society. This is exacerbated by the close physical proximity in which classes tend to live in urban areas.

Members of lower classes can witness at first hand the wealth which is apparent in society and contrast this to their own position. They may well, as a result, be justified in feeling relatively deprived of economic status. In this sense, Chester's views were similar to those of other criminologists (Eberts and Schwirian 1970; Braithwaite 1979; Farley and Hansel 1981; Farley 1987) in characterising relative deprivation as being suffered by the lower classes, who go on to commit crime.

While Chester (1976, 1977) focused on property crime in general, there is some evidence to suggest that burglary is positively linked to relative deprivation. In addition to Braithwaite's (1979) conclusions that burglary rates were linked to increases in relative deprivation, a number of other studies have also shown, or alluded to, this relationship. A study of residential crime by Reppetto (1974) found that the primary motive for most burglary was the perceived need for money. However, most of the money obtained was spent on 'non-essential' goods such as drugs, alcohol and luxury items<sup>12</sup>. Reppetto concluded that increases in burglary may be a result of relative deprivation rather than absolute deprivation. Furthermore, he saw that this may be a result of the expectations of low income groups having increased out of proportion to actual income increases, with crime being perceived as a means to compensate for the deficit.

Relative deprivation has been found to be related to property crime and, indeed, burglary, when analysed on a macro-level (similar to the way homicide has been treated). A study by Jacobs (1981) analysed the relationship between actual relative deprivation (based on economic inequality measured by the Gini index) and the rates of property crime in 195 SMSAs in 1970.

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<sup>12</sup> This finding is supported by Bennett and Wright (1984) who found that over half of those who stated that money was a prime reason for burglary used it for the pursuit of pleasure and hedonistic purposes such as drink and drugs. A study of street robbery by Barker et al (1993) similarly found that the profits from crime tend to be spent on luxury items.

This analysis found a strong correlation between economic inequality and burglary and grand larceny.

The relationship between income inequality and property crime has been called into question by Stack (1984). In a cross national study of income inequality in 62 countries, Stack found no significant relationship between income inequality (measured by the Gini coefficient) and the rate of property crime in a country.

On a theoretical level, the use of relative deprivation to explain property crime has been suggested by Jones (1993). In developing a typology of car thieves, Jones identified the 'Relatively Deprived Driver'. Faced with increasingly restricted access of legitimate opportunities, youths are likely to have fewer and fewer chances to gain access to driving a car legally. As a result, taking and driving someone else's car becomes a means to solve this problem.

Other studies have not formally identified relative deprivation as a cause of crime, but have mentioned sentiments similar to those implied by the concept. For example, in a study of a group of boys engaged in delinquent acts in Liverpool, Parker (1974) noted, when talking about the boys' opportunities, that *"The evidence is before their eyes - they are dispensable, there are no decent jobs and no prospects of a secure future. They see affluence about them but cannot reach it."* (1974, p.107)

Parker is, essentially, making the same point as Eberts and Schwirian (1970), Chester (1976, 1977) and Hennigan et al. (1982) - that less advantaged individuals can see all around them the success of others and that this can create a sense of desperation and frustration that can be alleviated through recourse to crime.

Appendix A provides a table with summary information on 20 studies of the explicit relative deprivation – crime relationship. This table shows that most (14) of the studies reviewed used aggregate data for both relative deprivation (usually measured in terms of income inequality) and crime. Only three examined the relationship through the use of individual level data. Furthermore, the majority of studies examine actual relative deprivation and only three measure perceived relative deprivation. Interestingly, these three are also the ones that measure relative deprivation at the individual level.

### **So why should relative deprivation lead to crime?**

So far, we have noted that there is an intuitive logic for why relative deprivation should lead to property crime as the latter provides an instrumental solution to the former. The previous sections of this chapter also showed how many studies have examined the relative deprivation – crime relationship with mixed results. Now that we have seen how others formulate this relationship, it is worth returning to first principles and asking a fundamental question – why might we expect relative deprivation to be causally related to crime?

Conceptually, how might relative deprivation be related to crime? Figure 1 shows how actual and perceived relative deprivation may interact in their relationship with crime. Conceptually, there are four relationships to consider. The first is, perhaps, the easiest to deal with. In studies that do not address the relative deprivation – crime relationship in any form, it follows that, by definition, they must contain no conceptual link between relative deprivation and crime. As this study focused on examining the literature on the relative deprivation – crime relationship, none of the papers outlined in appendix A falls into this category.

**Figure 1: Conceptual classification of how relative deprivation may be related to crime**

		<b>Actual Relative Deprivation?</b>	
		NO	YES
<b>Perceived Relative Deprivation?</b>	NO	No relative deprivation – crime link	Lone actual relative deprivation – crime link
	YES	Lone perceived relative deprivation – crime link	Actual and perceived relative deprivation crime link

When actual relative deprivation is present without perceived relative deprivation (lone actual relative deprivation – crime link) this suggests there is something about being in a position of material disadvantage that is criminogenic. Furthermore, this occurs in the absence of recognition of such deprivation. There would appear to be two mechanisms by which this lone

actual relative deprivation may be related to crime. Firstly, it may lead directly to crime if individuals lack the basic necessities of life. Crime then becomes a solution to the immediate needs of survival, without reference to others. This clearly describes a position of absolute poverty. However, those in absolute poverty also suffer from actual relative deprivation as there are almost guaranteed to be others in the community with more material wealth. A second way in which actual relative deprivation may be related to crime is because it is correlated with another criminogenic factor. In this sense, actual relative deprivation may not lead to crime at all and any statistical association it may have with crime may be due to its association with other factors. For example, actual relative deprivation may be correlated with a cultural milieu among the working classes which makes those suffering it more inclined to commit crime (Miller, 1958). Similarly it may be that actual relative deprivation is associated with a 'culture of poverty' (Lewis, 1959) which encourages involvement in crime due to factors such as the failure to defer gratification, the presence of fatalism and machismo. Here it is the cultural factors that make crime more likely, not the actual relative deprivation. It is interesting to note that none of the studies described earlier attribute changes in crime to the effects of lone actual relative deprivation. They may *measure* actual relative deprivation but they do not tend to infer that it is the process of being in a state of actual deprivation *per se* that is criminogenic. It would therefore seem seldom to provide a plausible explanation for crime.

Lone perceived relative deprivation is, perhaps, the antithesis of lone actual relative deprivation. It represents a position in which perceptions of relative deprivation are created irrespective of actual relative deprivation. One can **feel** relatively deprived without **being** relatively deprived. Lone perceived relative deprivation also relates to a situation in which one may be in a state of

both actual and perceived relative deprivation but where there is no proof of actual relative deprivation, only opinions that one is disadvantaged in comparison to others. In this scenario, crime results from individuals feeling relatively deprived in comparison to others (regardless of whether they are deprived). Reiss and Rhodes (1965) and Burton and Dunaway (1994) are both studies of lone perceived relative deprivation in which individuals are asked to assess how relatively deprived they are compared to others, but no attempt is made to cross-reference this with objective measures of actual relative deprivation. While the strength of these studies is that they ask individuals whether they feel relatively deprived (unusual in studies of relative deprivation and crime), they are handicapped by the inability to assess the extent to which these perceptions are borne out in reality. Studies of lone perceived relative deprivation therefore employ a conceptual framework in which perceived relative deprivation is related to crime, regardless of whether individuals experience actual relative deprivation.

The final category in the typology illustrated in Figure 1 combines actual and perceived relative deprivation. In this scenario, crime results from individuals being in a state of actual relative deprivation and recognising that they are in such a position. Of the 20 studies examined in appendix A, 16 suggest this kind of relationship between relative deprivation and crime. This suggests that the process by which relative deprivation may be related to crime, as suggested by most authors of studies in this field, involves those in a position of actual relative deprivation perceiving themselves to be relatively deprived. In discussing the relationship with violent crime, Messner and Tardiff (1986) discuss the need for both actual and perceived relative deprivation in the following terms:

*"Economic inequality entails the deprivation of some relative to others. The experience of relative deprivation, in turn, generates feelings of resentment and hostility. Resentment and hostility stimulate aggressive impulses that are ultimately expressed in violent crime<sup>13</sup>...The theoretical link between inequality and crime thus depends upon a chain of postulated psychological processes which translate objective conditions of inequality into motivations for criminal attack. The most basic of these processes involves the generation of experiences of relative deprivation under conditions of inequality. If individuals do not perceive themselves as being disadvantaged relative to others, even though inequality might exist in the strict statistical sense, there is no theoretical rationale in the relative deprivation tradition for anticipating that the condition of inequality will generate high levels of violent crime."* Messner and Tardiff (1986) pp. 299-300.

It should be noted that in distinguishing between studies that are about lone perceived relative deprivation from those about actual and perceived relative deprivation, it has been necessary to classify studies into one of these categories based on what can be gleaned from the text. Often this may be a matter of emphasis within the relevant studies. For example, studies of lone perceived relative deprivation may assume actual relative deprivation but fail to measure it or even to acknowledge it as important in explaining the process by which relative deprivation leads to crime. Likewise, studies of actual and perceived relative deprivation assume that perceived relative deprivation is experienced but fail to measure it. The difference between the two, however, is that studies of actual and perceived relative deprivation always discuss how

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Messner and Tardiff were particularly concerned with violent crime, but there is no reason why this same understanding of the relative deprivation crime link cannot be extended to other forms of crime.

both actual and perceived relative deprivation need to be present, while studies of lone perceived relative deprivation do not discuss the importance of actual relative deprivation at all.

This analysis would suggest that an understanding of how perceived relative deprivation leads to crime (and not just actual relative deprivation, that is usually examined in isolation) is central to the explicit relative deprivation – crime relationship. However, despite the centrality of perceptions of relative deprivation, there are key problems in how this relationship has been conceptualised and operationalised in previous studies.

*Problems with studies that assume an actual and perceived relative deprivation – crime relationship*

As most of the previous studies fell into the conceptual category of an actual and perceived relative deprivation – crime link, it is worth examining some of the shortcomings of such studies, as this will help to identify the areas where further research is required.

The first and probably the most fundamental problem with previous studies in this area is the failure to measure the perceptions of relative deprivation. The theory underlying these studies assumes that both actual and perceived relative deprivation are present and that the former leads to the latter. Furthermore, the recognition (or perception) of being relatively deprived is the factor that inspires criminal involvement. While the theory underlying these studies suggests that both should be present and studies discuss how the two interact, they completely fail to measure perceived relative deprivation. (Appendix A shows that the relationship between actual and

perceived relative deprivation is almost always conjectural). These studies (including Eberts and Schwirian, 1970; Danziger and Wheeler, 1975; Braithwaite, 1979; Jacobs, 1981; Blau and Blau, 1982) measure actual relative deprivation (usually based on family income inequality) and infer that those who experience income inequality will also perceive themselves to be relatively deprived compared to others. As far as can be ascertained from the literature, no previous study has measured the extent of both actual and perceived relative deprivation.

The unit of analysis chosen to measure the concept has further handicapped research on relative deprivation. Studies frequently examine the extent of inequality over spatial areas (Braithwaite 1979; Jacobs 1981; Blau and Blau 1982; Messner 1982, 1983; Williams 1984; Messner and Tardiff 1986; Taylor and Covington 1988) and, most commonly, these have involved city wide areas (i.e. SMSAs) or local neighbourhoods. While individuals may evaluate their position with reference to others in their city, or local neighbourhood, there are plenty of other potential reference groups to choose from. These may include, friends, colleagues at work and relatives; all of whom may live within the individual's local area, but might equally live some distance away. Alternatively, a reference may be taken from images seen on television, which could have national or international coverage; or a reference group may be an individual's own position in the past. In each of these examples, the selection of a spatially based reference group would fail to identify the nature of the relative deprivation. These studies therefore measure only one possible form of relative deprivation among many others and it may well be that these other forms of relative deprivation have a greater criminogenic effect.

Previous studies of actual relative deprivation can similarly be criticised for concentrating solely on economic inequality. Indeed, many studies have focused on measures of income inequality (Braithwaite 1979; Jacobs 1981; Blau and Blau 1982; Messner 1982, 1983; Stack 1984; Williams 1984; Messner and Tardiff 1986; Taylor and Covington 1988). The implication of these studies has been that those with the lowest income levels will compare themselves to those with higher incomes and feel a sense of relative deprivation at the comparison. This implies that those most deprived know how much others in their community are earning. This ignores the fact that people tend to be quite secretive about how much they earn. It also ignores other forms of income, which might be considered 'perks of the job'. Petty theft of items from work and fiddling expense claims might be considered supplements to a worker's income, about which s/he would ordinarily prefer others not to know. Ditton and Brown (1981) have suggested that this 'invisible income' tends to reduce feelings of relative deprivation because one does not know the true amount others earn and, at the same time, the 'invisible' element helps to increase one's own income in comparison to the 'visible' income of others.

The fact that one will generally not know how much others earn means any comparison of economic gain must be based on more visible aspects of income inequality, such as what money is spent on. Even here, however, many of the purchases made by a family will be for private consumption (such as food and household items) or may be for services which are invisible to the outsider (such as life insurance, medical insurance, pensions or utilities like gas, water and electricity). Alternatively, a family may simply decide to save a greater proportion of its earnings for the future. Only the most conspicuous forms of consumption (clothes, cars, housing) are likely to be on view to those more deprived in the community. Measuring relative

deprivation in terms of income inequality is therefore flawed, since an increase in income does not necessarily translate into an increase in conspicuous consumption. As such, perceived relative deprivation may not follow if those most deprived in society do not see others markedly more affluent than themselves. Studies employing measures of income inequality can therefore be charged with over predicting the extent to which perceived relative deprivation might follow, as individuals may be in a position of actual relative deprivation by virtue of their lower incomes, but may not know that they are deprived.

If these studies can be criticised for over-predicting perceived relative deprivation, they can also be charged with under-predicting that very phenomenon. Income and material possessions are but two issues that may evoke perceptions of relative deprivation. The possibilities for things on which one could compare oneself with others are almost endless. A prime example is promotion prospects (Stouffer et al 1949; Sek-Hong Ng 1986), where individuals may feel relatively deprived by the fact that their colleagues are promoted more quickly. Other examples may be academic, or sporting success, or how tidy one's front garden is! The point is that these examples could all involve real differences between individuals, but they are not necessarily a product of income inequality. Concentrating analysis of relative deprivation on income inequality therefore limits the scope of these previous studies and may explain why the evidence (especially for homicide) is so often contradictory. It is quite possible that perceived relative deprivation based on non-income or non-material measures may have a greater influence on crime rates.

Many of the studies can also be criticised for the methodology they employ. The aggregate level of analysis has been particularly popular in relative deprivation research (Eberts and Schwirian 1970; Braithwaite 1979; Jacobs 1981; Blau and Blau 1982; Messner 1982, 1983; Stack 1984; Williams 1984; Messner and Tardiff 1986; Taylor and Covington 1988), but, as is common with this approach, it contains an 'ecological fallacy' (see Jupp 1989). This term relates to the practice of identifying an association between two (or more) variables using aggregate level data and then inferring that the relationship exists at the individual level without having tested whether this is the case. Perhaps, the most celebrated case of the ecological fallacy is to be found in Durkheim's work on suicide. Durkheim's study, based on officially recorded aggregated data, showed that the rate of suicide was higher in predominantly Protestant areas than in areas where Catholicism was the major religion. Durkheim concluded from this that Protestants were more likely to commit suicide than Catholics. This was, however, problematic because the religion of the suicide victims was unknown, which meant he could not be certain that the people committing suicide in the mainly Protestant areas were not Catholics. The unsubstantiated assumption was that Protestants were the ones committing suicide within largely Protestant communities.

If we take as an example the work of Eberts and Schwirian (1970), the ecological fallacy was that the high crime rates in communities with relatively small low income populations were a result of individuals on low incomes committing crimes. An alternative and equally unsubstantiated claim might be that the majority of crime was, in fact, committed by those in the high income population. The point of this is that the income level of those committing the crime was not known. The failure of this work to show the commonality of those feeling

relatively deprived and those committing the crime, means that the relationship between crime and relative deprivation in this study remains hypothetical.

*Problems with studies that assume a lone perceived relative deprivation – crime relationship*

With just three studies falling into this category, it is easier to discuss specific issues than generic problems. However, there is one problem that, by definition, affects all those under this heading. While they are all useful in measuring perceptions of relative deprivation at the individual level, none measure in any objective sense whether the same individuals who perceive themselves to be relatively deprived are experiencing actual relative deprivation.

The study by Sanchez Jankowski (1995) is perhaps the easiest to deal with of the three, as it does not really test the relationship between actual or perceived relative deprivation and crime at all. The ethnographic nature of this work means that the possibility that perceived relative deprivation leads to crime is raised, but little more can be said about this relationship. The study discusses the possibility that black and Latino individuals may engage in crime because they see their white colleagues progressing more quickly at work. Involvement in property crime is seen as a way to boost income and to rectify the imbalance of the system that promotes white colleagues more quickly. The study does not measure the extent of either actual or perceived relative deprivation. It merely highlights the possibility that among some black and Latino individuals, perceptions of relative deprivation may be a motivation for involvement in crime.

While Reiss and Rhodes (1965) attempt to measure the extent of perceived relative deprivation among young people, the measures they use do not seem adequate for that purpose. Perceived relative deprivation was tested with the question "Would you say that most of the students in your school have better clothes and houses to live in than you?" Five closed response categories were then offered to the respondent: 1. A lot better clothes and house. 2. A little better clothes and house. 3. About the same clothes and house. 4. Poorer clothes and house. 5. I never thought about this before. There are problems with this question wording. For example, the question is leading, asking a respondent to agree with the proposition that they are deprived. This would seem unnecessary when the response format offered a range of possible replies. Thus a similar (but not identical) response format could have been used for a question that asked "Compared to other students in your school, how would you describe the clothes and house you have?" Another problem with the question is the double-barrelled nature of the wording that asks about two sources of relative deprivation (clothes and house) in the same question (Payne, 1980 p.102; Oppenheim, 1992 p. 126). There is no differentiation between the individual who feels relatively deprived of one object but not the other from those relatively deprived of both. There is also the problem of the narrow definition of relative deprivation that focuses on just clothes and houses when there may be many other objects that are more likely to inspire relative deprivation. Finally, there is an imbalance in the response format. It offers respondents two categories that indicate they may be relatively deprived (options 1 and 2) and just one that indicates relative superiority (option 4).

Burton and Dunaway (1994) made a better attempt at measuring individual level perceptions of relative deprivation by asking respondents to indicate the extent to which they agreed with a series of statements on a Likert type scale (where 1 = strongly disagree and 6 = strongly agree). The statements presented to respondents were:

1. "In general, I don't have as much money as other students in this school"
2. "It bothers me that most students live in better homes than I do"
3. "In general, my family is not as rich as other families in [community]"
4. "It bothers me that I don't have as much money to buy nice clothes as other students do"

Even here, however, there are inadequacies in the measures used. For example, items 2 and 4 are qualitatively different to items 1 and 3 as they include reference to how they feel about the perceived relative deprivation (through the phrase "It bothers me that..."). This is attempting to build in a measure of how the perceived relative deprivation is experienced by the individual, but it does not allow one to identify those who recognise that, for example, most students live in a better home, but for whom this isn't bothersome. In the analysis provided in the study, the four items are aggregated to form a composite measure of relative deprivation. However, this would seem dangerous as it is mixing two forms of relative deprivation questioning. A second problem is one shared with Reiss and Rhodes (1965) in that, while the questioning is broader than in the earlier study, Burton and Dunaway (1994) still only ask about relative deprivation in relation to a home, money,

general wealth and clothes. As previously noted, there may be many other objects that inspire perceptions of relative deprivation.

There is, however, one criticism that can be levelled at all studies of explicit relative deprivation, regardless of whether they measure actual or perceived relative deprivation, or both. All fail to measure the psychological process by which perceptions of relative deprivation are translated into crime. Some studies (for example, Chester, 1976; Jacobs, 1981) suggest that perceiving one's self to be relatively deprived is a sufficient motivational force to encourage individuals to engage in crime. This tends to be related to the motivation for property crime, rather than violent crime.

In other cases (for example, Eberts and Schwirian, 1970; Braithwaite, 1979; Messner, 1982) perceptions of relative deprivation create consequent psychological states, such as frustration and dissatisfaction, that in turn lead to crime. However, no examples have been found in which these consequent psychological states have been measured.

### **Summing up the evidence from previous studies of the relative deprivation – crime relationship**

This chapter has examined explicit studies of relative deprivation and crime, which attempt to directly measure both phenomena and to draw conclusions of causation. Appendix A provides a summary of the main findings from such studies. A four-fold classification of the relationship between actual relative deprivation, perceived relative deprivation and crime was applied to

these studies. For relative deprivation to lead to crime, there would seem to be widespread agreement that perceptions of relative deprivation are important. Individuals are more susceptible to engaging in crime when they either misguidedly feel relatively deprived (and are not deprived in an objective sense) or when they are actually relatively deprived in an objective sense and perceive that they are too.

There are four failures of previous studies that are particularly pertinent to the current thesis:

1. *Measurement failure.* While some studies have measured actual relative deprivation and some have measured perceived relative deprivation, none have been found that measure both forms and then relate these to crime.

2. *Ecological fallacy.* Studies of the actual relative deprivation - crime relationship tend to use aggregate data sets that do not allow one to determine whether individuals who experience actual relative deprivation are the same ones who are likely to engage in crime.

3. *Narrow definitions of relative deprivation.* Studies employing both individual level data and aggregate level data have generally used narrow definitions of relative deprivation. This is particularly the case for studies of actual relative deprivation employing aggregate data where relative deprivation is measured in terms of income inequality. While two studies employing individual level data have attempted to include material measures based on such objects as nice clothes and homes, it is unclear whether these are the types of

objects that are likely to inspire relative deprivation among individuals and especially among offenders.

**4. *Insufficient specification of psychological consequences.*** Many studies have suggested that perceiving relative deprivation creates feelings of frustration or dissatisfaction that lead to crime. However, the description of such feelings and the mechanisms by which these motivate criminal involvement are often vague. Even more significant is the total absence of any attempt to measure the extent of frustration / dissatisfaction among those perceiving relative deprivation.

#### **Towards some research questions**

The most obvious problems with previous research of the relationship between explicit relative deprivation and crime identify a number of areas where additional research could be beneficial. These problems can be framed as a series of questions that the current study will seek to address:

1. Do individuals who experience actual relative deprivation also experience perceived relative deprivation?
  
2. Does actual relative deprivation affect the likelihood of an individual engaging in crime?

3. Does perception of relative deprivation affect the likelihood of an individual engaging in crime?
4. Which, if any, of the four conditions distinguished below are associated with involvement in crime:
  - a. where neither actual nor perceived relative deprivation are present?
  - b. where actual relative deprivation is present and perceived relative deprivation is absent?
  - c. where actual relative deprivation is absent and perceived relative deprivation is present?
  - d. where both actual relative deprivation and perceived relative deprivation are present?
5. How well does relative deprivation explain involvement in crime compared to other predictive factors?
6. What types of object or issue inspire the greatest sense of perceived relative deprivation and how do these differ between offenders and non-offenders?

7. Is it the perceptions of relative deprivation themselves that are the motivation for criminal involvement, or do they inspire other psychological processes that are criminogenic?

The following chapter moves on to discuss the methodology that was employed in attempting to answer each of these seven questions.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Methodology**

#### **Introduction**

Perhaps an appropriate sub-title for this chapter would have been “you live and learn”. The research design used in this study shows a process of evolution - both in terms of the conceptual understanding of the relative deprivation - crime relationship, the research questions to be answered and the approach to answering those questions. This chapter will start by outlining the research design that formed the basis for the original submission of this thesis for examination, followed by a detailed critique of the methodological problems that came to light with this approach. The chapter will then move on to describe the revised research strategy and the shortcomings of this approach.

#### **The original research design**

The original study set out to measure whether offenders involved in burglary were more likely than non-offenders to feel relatively deprived. This was an attempt to fill a knowledge gap in relative deprivation - crime research. As the previous chapter showed, many studies had inferred a relationship between perceived relative deprivation and crime, but few had measured it. The implication of these previous studies was that if relative deprivation were criminogenic,

one would expect it to be present more often among offenders than non-offenders. The research therefore aimed to compare the extent of relative deprivation among offenders and non-offenders.

The research design originally used has been described as a 'static group comparison survey' (Denzin, 1970, p.169). The essential features of this design are that there should be two groups selected for examination - a target sample and a control sample. In the original study, a group of individuals who had engaged in burglary constituted the target sample, while the control sample consisted of individuals who had not previously been involved in any form of acquisitive property crime. This research design was similar (although on a much smaller sample and less successfully executed) to that employed by Glueck and Glueck (1952), which compared the characteristics of 500 offenders and 500 non-offenders. The purpose of this design in the current study was to explain involvement in burglary in the target group by comparing them to the 'control'<sup>14</sup> group with reference to relative deprivation theory.

### *The offender sample*

The offender sample consisted of 50 individuals who had previously committed at least one burglary. The criteria used for selecting this sample was that they should be:

- Male
- Aged between 16 and 21
- Convicted of at least one burglary

The rationale for selecting exclusively male interviewees was the fact that burglary is predominantly a masculine offence, as noted by Shover (1991, p. 87) in his review of burglary related literature. Indeed, according to official statistics for England and Wales, 97% of those convicted of burglary in 1993 were male. This figure of course needs to be treated with some caution as it is dependent on a series of decisions made by the criminal justice system. For example, police officers may be more likely to apprehend a male than a female burglar because this corresponds more closely to their stereotype of such offenders (Moulds, 1980). Indeed, in her study of female offending, Player (1989) found that official figures masked the true level of burglaries involving women because they were seldom apprehended for the burglaries they committed. When female offenders are apprehended, they may be more likely to be cautioned or receive a lesser charge. Finally if the case reaches Crown Court, juries may be less likely to find females guilty of burglary. However, the view that women are treated more leniently by the criminal justice system has been challenged by Chesney-Lind (1978) who found that, under some circumstances, women are actually treated more harshly by the judicial system.

Studies of burglary offenders using sources other than official statistics have also tended to focus on males, suggesting the current study is in good company. For example, all of those interviewed by Walsh (1980), Maguire (1982), Bennett and Wright (1984) were male, as were the majority of Wright and Decker's (1994) sample of active burglars. Given the fact that most other studies of burglary have focused on male offending and as it appears to be largely a male offence, there was good reason for concentrating on burglaries committed by males.

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<sup>14</sup> The 'control' is a misnomer in the study of 50 burglary offenders examined here as the sample for comparison failed to undertake adequate controls that may have explained differences between groups. The term is used here to depict that to which the project aspired, rather than that achieved.

Age range in the study was chosen for a number of reasons. The focus of the research was on examining feelings of relative deprivation at the point when individuals committed their first burglary. The quality of the information obtained from the sample would be improved by interviewing the individuals as close to this event in time as possible. In a study of delinquency in Montreal, Canada, LeBlanc and Frechette (1989) found the average age of onset for burglary to be 14-15 years, while Farrington (1994) found the peak age of onset of offending to be 14. Similarly, Graham and Bowling (1995) found that the average age of onset of offending generally was 13.5 years with a peak age of onset at 15 years.

By interviewing those aged 16 to 21, the furthest distance between the oldest interview subject and the average age of first burglary would be about seven years. Attempts were made to interview juvenile offenders through a Social Service's youth justice team. In the event, this proved impractical due mainly to the unwillingness of social workers to refer their clients to be interviewed and the need to gain parental permission to interview such individuals. A similar issue was faced by Bennett and Wright (1984, p.9), who also decided to concentrate on offenders aged 16 and over. Sixteen therefore proved to be the youngest at which it was feasible to interview offenders. Even at this age it proved difficult to obtain interview referrals, and the final study sample included only two 16 year olds and three 17 year olds. The average age (mean, median and mode) of the 50 young men interviewed was 19 years. Table 1 indicates the frequency with which each age was interviewed and shows a range from 16 to 22. As this shows, one interviewee fell slightly outside the designated age span of 16 to 21. However, this individual had turned 22 just two weeks prior to the interview and as the cut off point was fairly arbitrary, he was included in the study because his experiences were

considered just as valid as someone two weeks younger who would have met the age criterion.

**Table 1: Age distribution of interview subjects in offender sample**

Years of Age	Number	Percent
16	2	4
17	3	6
18	4	8
19	21	42
20	14	28
21	5	10
22	1	2
Total	50	100

The mean age for onset of burglary was 14 years, which corresponds closely to previous studies of offending behaviour (LeBlanc and Frechette 1989; Farrington 1994; Graham and Bowling 1995). As table 2 shows, 14 years was also the peak age of onset of burglary. These figures differ somewhat from previous studies as here we are examining the onset of a specific type of offending, rather than offending in general. The average age for committing burglary may correspond closely to these studies of general offending, but this disguises the fact that burglary is seldom a first offence and many will have a criminal career before turning to burglary. Of the 50 offenders interviewed, 42 (84%) were found to have previously committed other types of offence before engaging in burglary.

**Table 2: Age of onset of burglary in offender sample**

<b>Years of Age</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
7	1	2
8	2	4
10	3	6
11	4	8
12	4	8
13	7	14
14	10	20
15	9	18
16	5	10
17	4	8
18	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

The duration between age at interview and age at first burglary was calculated for each individual and this was found to be, on average, 5.7 years. There was considerable variation among individuals. For example, four individuals had committed their first burglary in the year prior to being interviewed and 17 were interviewed within four years of their first burglary. At the other end of the spectrum, two individuals had commenced burglary 12 years previously and one individual had commenced 14 years before the interview. This latter individual was interviewed at the age of 21 and reported an event when he was seven. Despite the years that had elapsed, this individual apparently recalled clearly the events surrounding his first burglary.

The third criterion used to select interview subjects was that they should have been convicted of at least one burglary, although this need not have been the offence for which they were being processed through the criminal justice system at the time of the interview. The reason for this was largely pragmatic. The fact that an offender had been found guilty of burglary by a court suggested they were probably less likely to deny having committed such an offence than would someone asked on a purely self-report basis. In addition, using convictions for burglary

made it easy to select potential interview subjects as these convictions would be recorded on the offenders' list of previous convictions held by criminal justice agencies.

### *Contacting interview subjects*

The approach originally planned for this research was to contact individuals currently under the supervision of the probation service. This would include offenders who had been sentenced to probation, community service and combination orders as well as those currently in custody and those released on parole. The aim was to interview offenders either in their own home, or in a location of their choosing. It was assumed they would be more forthcoming with details of their offending if they were in an environment where they felt comfortable. In the event, using the probation service as a source of referrals proved problematic due to a lack of referrals. It eventually required a change of tactic. A decision was made to change the orientation of the fieldwork away from those supervised by the probation service, towards inmates of Young Offender Institutions (YOIs). Of the 50 offenders interviewed, 43 were serving custodial sentences. These were divided between two very different institutions, one on the outskirts of a large city while the other was in a rural location, six miles from the nearest town. A week was spent in each institution and interviews were conducted in visiting rooms on the prison wings, where inmates spend most of their time. Obtaining referrals while in the YOIs proved not be a problem as prison officers supplied a steady stream of willing participants. It should be noted that, while those selected adhered closely to the sample criteria, there were other factors which could not be controlled for. For example, both probation officers and prison officers may only have selected those they considered would be co-operative. Those individuals who were asked to take part in the research but refused may have introduced

another source of bias into the final sample interviewed. There is no record of how many refused to participate.

### *Interviewing the offender sample*

Interviews lasted between sixty and ninety minutes and were divided into two parts - a quantitative and a qualitative element. The quantitative element was a series of (mostly closed response) questions using a structured interview schedule (see Appendix B for an example). This part of the interview (which took approximately 15 minutes) focused largely on the offenders' circumstances at the time of their first burglary. This included questions on their age at the time, where they were living and with whom, whether they were at school, employed or unemployed and the types of offence they had previously committed. A range of questions was also asked about the interviewees' perceptions of relative deprivation before they committed their first burglary. The purpose of asking about relative deprivation early in the interview was three-fold. It provided an opportunity of measuring relative deprivation before respondents began thinking too much about their motivations for offending and rationalising their behaviour. If the measures of relative deprivation had been obtained later in the interviews, it is possible that more offenders would have decided they felt relatively deprived at the time of the first offence. A second reason for measuring relative deprivation early was that it provided a considerable amount of information to use as the basis for the interview. This left time to explore relative deprivation more fully and to test out various related issues. A third reason was consistency of approach. Interviews with the non-offender sample consisted solely of the structured, quantitative schedule and it was deemed important to ask both samples the same questions after the preamble, so that offenders did not see and

respond to questions about relative deprivation in the context of their offending, so that adequate comparisons could be made. Put crudely, offenders linking their responses to relative deprivation to their offending might retail 'sad tales' as mitigation for their offending.

The qualitative element of the interview was far less structured than the quantitative element and was tape recorded for later transcription and analysis. A topic guide was used to conduct the interview, but the semi-structured nature of the interview meant that new issues could be explored as they arose. The style of interview was what Wright and Bennett (1990) called a 'respondent interview' in which information is sought from subjects about their own thoughts and experiences. The framework of the interview was a form of event history in which the respondents were first asked to recall their first burglary and give a detailed description of what happened, including what type of property it was, who they did it with, what they took, how much money they made and so on. They were then asked to recall the period immediately prior to this time, including how much time they spent with those with whom they eventually committed a burglary and details of other offending they were involved in. They were also asked for a description of their home circumstances, their views on school and their experiences of work prior to the burglary. In addition, they were asked why they thought they committed their first burglary. The interviews then moved on to explore the individuals' burglary careers and how these developed over time. Where appropriate, issues of relative deprivation were examined at key points in the life histories. At the end of the interviews, a quantitative measure of the offenders' current feelings of relative deprivation was taken in order to examine how perceptions had changed since committing their first burglary.

### *The non-offender sample*

The non-offender sample in this study acted as a comparison group. To show that perceptions of relative deprivation were a motivation for burglary, it would be necessary to show that those participating in such activities felt more relatively deprived (either in magnitude, frequency or degree<sup>15</sup>) than non-offenders (the comparison group). First, it was important to identify the extent to which a group of offenders felt relatively deprived. Following this, it was necessary to measure the extent of relative deprivation in a similar group of individuals who were non-offenders.

### *Contacting non-offenders*

Non-offenders were contacted through a college of further education, with a large catchment area which drew students from greater London, as well as from the towns and villages of the county in which the college was situated. Respondents were initially contacted via the college's student common room. Prospective interviewees were approached and asked if they would be willing to participate in this research. Initially, the response rate from this approach proved quite high, with students from the common room being happy to be interviewed. The disadvantage of this approach was that students using the common room tended to be in what appeared to be close friendship groups and, at times, it proved difficult convincing them to separate themselves from their friends for fifteen minutes in order to be interviewed. The advantage, however, was that considerable interest in the research was soon generated among the students and interviewees were often eager to find out what the interview was about.

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<sup>15</sup>See Appendix C for a description of the differences between magnitude, frequency and degree.

During the first day, it became clear that the common room was used by only a small proportion of the students and those who did use it were a fairly well defined grouping who would return to this location during each break time. Other students preferred to use the refectory or to visit local shops during their breaks. To complete the comparison group, it therefore became necessary to extend the fieldwork beyond the common room. During lunch times, the student refectory was targeted as this provided a large pool of prospective interviewees in a single room. Students were approached and asked to participate in the research. If they met the required criteria, established by some preliminary screening questions, they were then interviewed. Following the interview, the respondents were asked to identify other individuals within the refectory who would meet the selection criteria and these would then be approached about taking part in the research. This basic form of snowball sampling was later refined. This was achieved by asking the individuals who were identifying potential interview candidates to introduce the interviewer to that person. This helped to reduce the extent to which the initial contact was viewed as a 'cold call' and helped to increase the overall response rate among those approached in the refectory.

Contacting students in the common-room and refectory proved successful for those on day-time courses and resulted in over half of the sample being completed by using this approach. It became clear, however, that day-time students were largely school-leavers who had gone directly to college for a one or two year full time course. This meant that most of those contacted were aged 16 to 19. The approach failed to identify adequate numbers of interviewees aged 19 to 22. To compensate for this, part time students studying in the evenings were targeted. However, these students rarely used the common-room or refectory, so it proved necessary to approach these students at the college's main entrance and to

interview them in the entrance lobby. As many of these students were in a hurry to attend their classes, the refusal rate for this group was much higher than for the day-time students, which made completing the sample a slow and laborious process. However, after numerous visits to the college over a five week period, an adequate sample was eventually constructed.

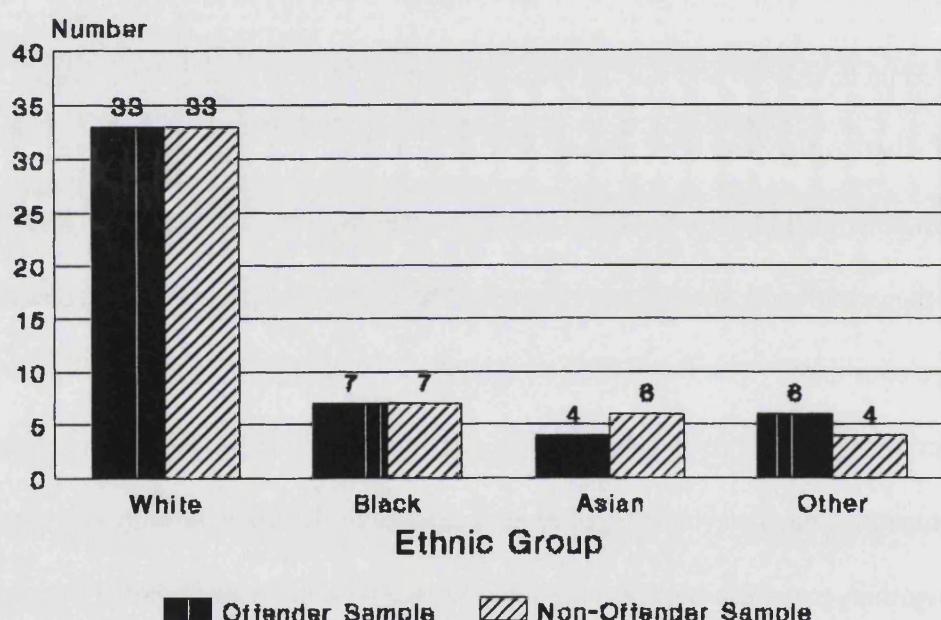
### *Selecting non-offenders*

The design of a static group comparison survey dictates that the 'control group' should be matched as closely as possible to the group of primary interest. In so doing, it can be assumed that observed differences between groups are real differences, rather than being an artefact of some attribute one group possesses which another does not. The sample of non-offenders was intended to match closely the characteristics of the offender sample. However, as we shall see later, the study failed to achieve this expectation. The strategy for matching the two samples was a matched pair design (Denzin 1970, p.170). This involved finding a non-offender with similar characteristics to each of the offenders. Three factors were used for matching the non-offender sample with the offender sample - current age, gender and ethnic grouping. Thus, if a 19 year old, white, male offender were interviewed, a 19 year old, white, male non-offender would be selected for interview. This process was conducted until all 50 offenders were matched with 50 non-offenders. The selection of non-offenders was undertaken on a quota sample basis, with individuals first being identified on the basis of physical characteristics (i.e. male and an initial attempt to identify ethnic grouping). They were then asked screening questions about their ethnic grouping and age to determine whether they could be matched with a corresponding offender. If they met the demographic screening criteria, they were asked whether they had been arrested for a property offence. It was recognised that this was a

sensitive question to ask at the beginning of the interview and would be in danger of receiving socially acceptable responses. To minimise this, respondents were handed a card with a list of property offences (theft, shoplifting, theft of motor vehicle, theft from motor vehicle, burglary, robbery) printed on it and were asked to respond with a simple "Yes" or "No" to whether they had ever been arrested by the police for any of these offences. Concentrating on arrests was chosen because it represented the middle ground between two extremes. On the one hand, convictions could have been taken as the measure of criminal involvement, although, as these are dependent upon a number of criminal justice processes, which could have resulted in failing to identify those who had been involved in property crime. On the other hand, respondents could have been asked if they had ever committed any of these offences, regardless of whether they had been caught or not. It is, likely, however, that some may have forgotten being involved in petty thefts, or included particularly trivial things which had happened in their childhood, thereby over-representing the number. Arrests for property offences were considered to be memorable events to the individual, yet representing an early stage in the criminal justice process. It is recognised, however, that some individuals in the non-offender sample may have committed serious property offences without having been caught, while others may have been wrongfully arrested. It should also be noted that the interview screening concentrated on property offences. The rationale for this was that the research was designed to distinguish differences in relative deprivation between serious property (burglary) offenders and those who had not been involved in property offences. As such, no control was made for other types of offending (violence against the person etc.). Indeed, some of the non-offender sample may have committed such offences, but these were not a focus of this study. Once the respondent successfully passed the screening criteria, an interview could be conducted.

Eventually, after numerous site visits, a matched sample was generated. For example, 100% of offenders were matched with non-offenders in terms of age at interview and sex. A close match was also achieved on ethnic grouping for the two samples, as Figure 2 shows. A 100% match was achieved on white and black respondents and a close match was also achieved on Asian and 'other' ethnic groups. This latter group also included five individuals who classified themselves as 'mixed race'.

**Figure 2: Distribution of ethnic groups in offender and non-offender samples**



### *Interviewing non-offenders*

The strategy employed for interviewing the non-offenders was quite different to that used for the offender sample. The purpose of the interview was to gain details of their demographic profile and information on their experiences of relative deprivation which could be used to compare the two samples. The interviews with non-offenders were based on the quantitative interview schedule used in the first part of the offender interviews. Interviews with non-offenders were therefore structured and took between ten and fifteen minutes to complete.

An important aspect of the interviews with non-offenders was examining the experiences of relative deprivation at an earlier stage in their life. The choice of age they were asked to recall depended on the offender they had been matched with. If a white, male, 19 year old offender committed his first burglary at the age of 14, a white, male, 19 year old non-offender would be asked to recall whether he felt relatively deprived when he was 14. In so doing, the average length of recall required by the two groups would, in theory, be held constant. A result of this process was that the distribution of ages at which non-offenders were asked about relative deprivation matched exactly the distribution of age of first burglary for the offender sample, so both groups were being asked to recall relative deprivation at similar times in their lives.

### *Specific questions asked about relative deprivation*

To gauge the nature and extent of the relative deprivation experienced by respondents, a series of four questions were asked. (Appendix B provides an example of the various interview schedules

used in the original research design, including the questions focusing on relative deprivation.) The first of these four questions asked the following:

*"Before you started burglary, did you ever feel there were things you wanted that your friends had?"*

This question was supposed to locate the point of interest at the time before the respondent committed his first burglary, but as we shall see later, there were problems with this. It also identifies the respondents' friends as the reference group. It contains three of the four preconditions for relative deprivation defined in Appendix C - does not possess X (either at all or in sufficient quantity), sees friends with X and wants X.

For those that indicated that they did see friends with things that they wanted, the next question asked was:

*"What sort of things did you want?"*

The purpose of this question was to identify the types of thing of which individuals felt relatively deprived. To keep this to manageable proportions, respondents were asked to identify up to five items. While the items mentioned were largely material possessions, the question did allow for intangible items and, indeed, some mentioned sporting ability as something they wanted. For each of the items mentioned, respondents were then asked:

*"Did you feel you should have them in some way?"*

The purpose of this question was to measure the fourth precondition of relative deprivation -feeling entitled to X. By asking this question of each of the items mentioned, it was possible to differentiate things of which an individual felt relatively deprived from things which they would merely have liked. Unlike previous research (Runciman 1966, Crosby 1982) the choice of issues or items the respondent felt relatively deprived of was left open, thereby allowing for a much wider range of possibilities.

The final question asked in relation to relative deprivation was;

*"On a scale of one to ten (where ten represents a great deal and one a little) how would you rate the extent to which you wanted each of these things?"*

The purpose of this question was to obtain a measure of what Runciman (1966) called the 'degree' of relative deprivation. This was a quantifiable measure of the intensity with which relative deprivation was felt. As the approach taken was item specific, it was possible to measure the extent to which each object mentioned was desired and to sum up the scores given across the items to afford an indication of total level of relative deprivation felt by a respondent.

### **Criticisms of the original design**

The original design was one that, with hindsight, was clearly flawed from a number of perspectives. The following pages document the nature of those flaws.

#### *Mis-specification of the relative deprivation - crime relationship*

The original research design was based on a failure to understand fully the nature of the relative deprivation - crime relationship. By concentrating on what individuals perceived themselves to be relatively deprived of in comparison to others, it suffered from the same pitfalls as Reiss and Rhodes (1965) and Burton and Dunaway (1994). As with these studies, the original design measured *lone perceived relative deprivation* and failed to take account of actual relative deprivation. This means it was not possible to assess whether any sense of relative deprivation experienced was misguided in reality, or whether there were individuals in a position of actual relative deprivation who did not perceive themselves thus. A study of this kind would therefore limit what could be said about relative deprivation to the realms of perceptions only.

The original design also assumed that it was the experience of perceived relative deprivation that was the criminogenic factor. Feeling relatively deprived, individuals would engage in crime as a rational solution to a perceived problem. This was perhaps, further fuelled by the adoption of Runciman's notion of relative deprivation 'degree' (discussed in more detail in Appendix C) that suggested that feelings of relative deprivation could vary in intensity. The assumption made in the original study was that greater levels of degree of relative deprivation were positively associated with involvement in crime. However, a re-reading of the literature suggested that the relationship between feeling relatively deprived and engagement in crime may be mediated by other psychological processes (see Appendix A for examples). For example, feeling relatively deprived may lead individuals to feel frustrated by their position of disadvantage and it is this experience of frustration that is the driving force for involvement in crime. The original research design failed to clarify this relationship and therefore failed to depict whether it was feeling relatively deprived that was the important motivator, or some

consequent psychological process. That's not to say that it is impossible to explore this issue in the original research. As we shall see later, some indications of how perceptions of relative deprivation lead to crime can be gleaned from qualitative analysis of offender interview transcripts obtained from the original study.

#### *Operationalisation of the perceived relative deprivation concept*

When it came to operationalising the perceived relative deprivation concept, there was a whole host of problems built into the design that may have been sources of error. The first potential problem was the narrow definition of the comparative reference group included in the study. Respondents were asked to compare their situation to that of their 'friends'. This tight definition of a comparative reference group was deliberate, in order to help ensure that similar sources of relative deprivation were being discussed. It was recognised that in reality, an individual may take many different groups as a point of reference, as highlighted by previous relative deprivation theorists (Merton and Kitt, 1950; Davis, 1959; Runciman, 1966). Operationalising a comparison group in such a tight way as in the original research design was justified on the basis of previous research on social comparisons which showed that comparisons are most likely to be made with similar others. Festinger's (1954) third hypothesis in his theory of social comparison processes stated that:

*"The tendency to compare oneself with some other specific person decreases as the difference between his opinion or ability and one's own increases." (Festinger 1954, p.120)*

This theory suggested that individuals were more likely to choose others who were similar to themselves in making a comparison, rather than choosing a group that was obviously different. Since Festinger's work, a number of studies have shown the importance of comparison with similar others (Zanna et al. 1975; Goethals and Darley, 1977; Suls et al., 1978) and have explained the conditions under which such comparisons are made. This approach was further refined by Suls (1986) who found that the choice of comparison group changed over one's life course. Adolescents and young adults were found by Suls to be particularly likely to make comparisons with similar others. Friendship groups were therefore chosen in the original study as the comparative reference group because they were considered to constitute the groupings most likely to be similar to the individuals participating in the original research. They were therefore likely to be used by those studied as the basis for comparison. However, this failed to take account of the fact that there are many groups (other than friends) that may be considered to constitute similar others. For example, we are likely to share common attributes with neighbours, work colleagues and relatives. Indeed, there is some evidence from the original study findings that at least two interviewees were treating their elder brothers as the frame of reference and felt perceived relative deprivation in comparison to them. This suggests that there may have been other interviewees who felt relatively deprived in comparison to members of their family, but, because they were not classed as friends, did not indicate that they felt relatively deprived. Furthermore, social comparisons are being made by individuals all the time and, while some will be conscious comparisons, many will be made unconsciously. This means that asking about relative deprivation in comparison to a defined group of others would only ever identify the most salient causes of feeling relatively deprived. For these reasons, the measure of relative deprivation used in the original study may therefore have under-estimated the frequency of relative deprivation.

The purpose of the original study was to examine perceptions of relative deprivation at the point when individuals commenced their burglary careers. As discussed earlier, it was not considered practical to interview offenders under the age of 16, but this meant there was often a significant gap (on average 5.7 years) between the time when an individual committed his first burglary and the point at which he was interviewed. Moser and Kalton (1989, p.331) noted that a respondent's ability to recall an event will depend on how long ago the event occurred and the significance of the event to the individual. While many offenders appear to have been able to discuss the nature of their relative deprivation (suggesting these experiences were well remembered), it is possible that they were subject to the two most common forms of memory error - omission error and telescoping error (Sudman and Bradburn, 1974, p.67). The omission error refers to the tendency for interviewees to forget events, either completely or in part. In the original research design, it is quite conceivable that the specific details related to the first burglary may have been forgotten, or merged into the events of subsequent offences. The extent to which this occurred could not be measured, although attempts were made to minimise this through probing the interviewee for details and challenging inconsistent accounts during the interview. Telescoping errors relate to the tendency for people to condense events into a shorter time period than that over which they really occurred, thereby making events seem as though they occurred more recently than they did. Telescoping errors may have influenced offenders' recall of when they committed their first and subsequent burglaries. If this is the case, then the average duration of 5.7 years between first burglary and interview may be much longer. Indeed, there were a number of examples of telescoping during the course of the study. On a few occasions, interviewees re-evaluated slightly the age at which events occurred as the interview proceeded. However, this was usually by no more than a year or two and generally related to events after their first burglary and not the burglary itself. One

cannot avoid the fact that these memory errors may have affected the validity of the relative deprivation measure employed. Where omission errors are concerned, it is quite possible that some individuals failed to recall their experiences of perceived relative deprivation, while others may have forgotten the range of objects of which they felt relatively deprived. Once again, these potential sources of error mean that the measure of the frequency of relative deprivation may have been an under-estimate. They may also reflect experiences of relative deprivation that occurred subsequent to becoming involved in burglary due to the effects of telescoping memory errors.

Given the context in which measures of relative deprivation were taken, they may have been open to techniques of neutralisation (Sykes and Matza, 1957). In recruiting the individuals for interview, offenders were told that the research was about how they got involved in committing burglary. Attempts were made to minimise the potentially biasing effects of neutralisation by asking about the extent to which they felt relatively deprived at the start of the interview as part of the structured interview schedule. However, the purpose of asking this question (i.e. to see if it was a relevant factor in explaining criminality) may have been transparent to the respondent, who may have then answered in such a way as to rationalise his behaviour. It is possible that some may at the interview have construed involvement in burglary as a response to the suggested experiences of relative deprivation.

In addition to these problems with the approach to asking about perceived relative deprivation, it is now clear that there were some fundamental flaws with the structure of the measures employed in the original study. As we saw earlier in this chapter, the measure involved a single question:

*Before you started burglary, did you ever feel there were things you wanted that your friends had?*

This was used to filter those experiencing perceived relative deprivation from those who did not. Experiences of perceived relative deprivation were only probed further among those who responded in the affirmative to the filter question. However, this approach did not allow for the possibility that, on further probing, some of those who initially felt they were not relatively deprived, may on reflection have remembered perceptions of relative deprivation. At best, the measure would identify those for whom the experiences of perceived relative deprivation were most salient. Perhaps a more stable approach would have been to ask all respondents whether they felt relatively deprived of a list of specified items, following a similar approach to Reiss and Rhodes (1965) and Burton and Dunaway (1994). However, this route was not taken as it was unclear what objects of perceived relative deprivation would be most relevant in explaining criminality. The route chosen was therefore to ask a filter question about whether or not perceived relative deprivation was felt, followed by open ended supplementary questions about what objects inspired such perceptions. Unfortunately, the open response format is also a source of error. It is likely to pick up only the most salient objects of perceived relative deprivation. These are likely to consist of material possessions rather than less tangible qualities, such as skills, talents, knowledge. This may explain why ten of the 17 items identified by offenders as objects of perceived relative deprivation were material possessions. However, these most salient of objects are not necessarily the best predictors of criminality. Indeed, there may be some less salient factors (e.g. the ability to maintain middle-class standards (Cohen, 1955) or access to legitimate employment (Cloward and Ohlin, 1960)) that may be more criminogenic.

The open response format is also particularly prone to memory omission errors. Without suitable prompts, it is quite likely that many will have forgotten about the objects they felt relatively deprived of, especially when, on average, they were being asked to recall events that had occurred almost six years previously. The way the questions were structured, with a preceding filter question, meant that this open response was not responsible for identifying whether individuals felt perceived relative deprivation at all. However, it quite probably restricted the range of items identified and the number of items identified per person. Where the range of objects of perceived relative deprivation was concerned, each respondent had the opportunity to list up to five items or issues that inspired perceived relative deprivation. With 50 offenders being interviewed, this meant that up to 250 objects of perceived relative deprivation could have been identified. In the event, only 17 objects were mentioned by offenders. Furthermore, offenders, on average, mentioned three objects of perceived relative deprivation.

The use of a closed response format in which individuals were prompted to identify objects of perceived relative deprivation from a list is likely to have reduced omission errors, with more offenders highlighting more objects of which they perceived themselves to have been deprived. However, there would clearly have been difficulties in constructing such a closed response format as it was unclear at the outset what objects were likely to inspire perceived relative deprivation among offenders. This is, perhaps, inevitable, given the paucity of research that has asked offenders what it is that inspires perceived relative deprivation. Furthermore, it is unlikely that the resulting measure would have included the full range of objects of relative deprivation that were elicited using the open response format. However, this defence can be countered by pointing to the fact that only seven of the 17 objects of relative deprivation

identified by offenders were mentioned by 10% or more of that sample. This is discussed further in chapter 5.

In addition to these structural, or design problems with the operationalisation of the perceived relative deprivation measure, there were weaknesses in the wording of the filter question. The problem lies in the temporal frame of the question. It asked "*Before you started burglary did you ever feel there were things you wanted that your friends had?*" (emphasis added). The question was intended to capture perceptions of relative deprivation just before engaging in burglary. However, the question used could be interpreted as feeling perceived relative deprivation at any point prior to engaging in burglary, including several years beforehand. While there was no evidence of this from the qualitative part of the interview, it is a possibility that cannot be ruled out.

#### *Problems with other questions asked of offenders*

While the most serious sources of error were focused on the measure of perceived relative deprivation, there were additional problems associated with other questions asked of offenders during the course of the interview. It became clear early on in the interviews that asking some questions was pointless because they were so prone to unrealistic responses. Indeed, it has previously been noted (Wright and Decker 1994 p.5) that offenders may only be willing to give answers which they perceive would meet with approval, for fear that their responses might affect their chances of early release. In the current study, when asked about offending in future, almost without exception they would respond that they had given up crime and would be 'going straight'. Whether out of hope for the future or a need to deceive the interviewer, it

is clear that these responses were unrealistic, given the fact that 57% of offenders commencing a community order and 53% of those discharged from prison in 1993 were reconvicted of an offence within 2 years (Kershaw, 1997). As the main focus of the interview was on events which had often occurred some years earlier, interviewees generally seemed willing to discuss their offending history candidly. Checks on the accuracy of the information received was possible through repeated checking of the sequence of events described and by challenging inconsistencies when they arose thereby ensuring that responses had an internal validity. However, it was not possible to make external checks on responses. This means it remains unclear how accurate were the responses obtained. The general impression gained was that individuals were comfortable discussing their past in great detail and happy to describe their involvement in offending (most of which was undetected) to a complete stranger. It is therefore likely that errors occurred as a result of unrealistic perceptions on the part of the respondent, rather than a systematic intent to deceive, although it is recognised that this may just be over optimism on the part of the author!

A second problem was the tendency to exaggerate about some issues. West and Farrington (1977) found 6.9% of youths interviewed in their longitudinal study exaggerated their accounts of offending. In the present study, when respondents were asked to estimate the number of burglaries they had committed, six respondents suggested that they had committed more than 1,000 in the course of their criminal career. Indeed, one of these estimated that he had committed as many as 1,500 burglaries. Although these figures seemed unrealistically high, they were not outside the realms of possibility if they had been offending for a long time. For these six offenders, the length of time between first burglary and interview was calculated, as was the average number of burglaries per year over the course of this time period. Table 3

indicates that five of these individuals would have needed to commit 200 burglaries or more per year, over a period of four or more years. This would mean they would have had to commit one burglary every two days. This is assuming they were not incarcerated for some of this period<sup>16</sup>, which would have meant their offending rate when released would have needed to have been even higher. We can conclude from this that these offenders were probably exaggerating about the number of burglaries they claimed to have committed. Indeed, their estimates were probably just large numbers they picked at random to make it clear that they were accomplished burglars.

**Table 3: Duration of offending, number of burglaries committed and average number of burglaries per year for those estimating more than 1,000 burglaries.**

<b>Estimated Number of Burglaries Committed</b>	<b>Years lapsed between first burglary and interview</b>	<b>Average number of burglaries per year</b>
1000	5	200
1000	8	125
1100	5	220
1000	4	250
1500	6	250
1000	5	200

Another example of exaggeration appears to have occurred when interviewees were asked how much money they estimated they had made from committing burglaries. During the

<sup>16</sup> Information on the length of time offenders spent in custody between their first burglary and the time of interview was not systematically collected, although some indicated that they had spent considerable periods of their teenage years in correctional institutions.

qualitative part of the interview, respondents frequently claimed they had made large sums of money from their offending. For example, respondent No. 3, a 21 year old white male, explained he was involved in a range of offences which netted him a considerable income, as the following extract illustrates:

*Interviewer: How much money do you reckon you were spending in a week?*

*No. 3: Seven grand. I had two little scams I used to do every week, that's to do with motor cars and all that. I used to go out burgling, say, two days, out of two scams I'd be earning about seven grand a week.*

*Interviewer: A week?*

*No. 3: Out of me burglaries, I'd say two or three grand a week.*

Another respondent, No. 10, a 19 year old white male indicated even greater profits from specialising in burgling retail outlets. On an average burglary, he stated he would make between £7,000 and £10,000, which he claimed would last him less than a week. Although it cannot be verified, sums of this magnitude are likely to be significant exaggerations of the true amount made from burglary. In exaggerating about the profits from burglary, respondents may have been attempting to rationalise their involvement. It made sense because the profits were so great. In attempting to provide an after-the-event explanation for participating in burglary, these respondents were reconstructing the behaviour as a rational decision (see Ehrlich (1973) for an example of the rational choice perspective of crime).

Given the fact that these questions contained the potential for considerable bias, analyses of the number of offences committed and the financial rewards of burglary should be treated with some caution.

### *Problems with the offender sample*

In addition to the problems with the questions asked, there were further sources of error arising from the way in which the offender sample was designed. One of the key criticisms was the size of the sample employed, containing as it did only 50 offenders. As we shall see later, this sample was more than sufficient for exploring the data qualitatively. However, much of the analysis originally undertaken was quantitative and would therefore have benefited from larger numbers. Indeed, given the fact that only half of the offender sample stated perceiving relative deprivation, this meant that much of the analysis was based on just 25 individuals. Even with a simple 2x2 contingency table, this often resulted in expected frequencies of less than five, which resulted in much of the analysis being disregarded due to the inherent unreliability of any resulting chi-square test. Furthermore, with such a small sample size, it was not possible to generalise to the population of burglary offenders as a whole.

One can also question the extent to which the sample was in any way representative on the grounds of the approach taken to recruiting the sample. The sample comprised individuals under the supervision of criminal justice agencies and there is a question over the extent to which this can be considered representative of offenders in general. In an ideal research design, interview subjects would have been randomly drawn from the general population to which they belong. In reality, this is virtually impossible in criminological research because little is

known about the general population of burglary offenders. The desire to avoid detection for the crimes they commit means offenders will often attempt to limit the number of people who know about their activities and will be unlikely to volunteer to complete strangers (even if they are mere researchers) information on their involvement in crime. One method which has been used to draw samples of active offenders from their own environment is 'snowball sampling' (Cromwell et al. 1991, Wright et al. 1992). This procedure involves identifying one active offender in the first instance, and then using this individual to refer other active offenders to the study. These new referrals are, in turn, asked to refer other offenders they know and so the procedure continues until an adequate sample has been constructed. Even then, such samples are far from random or representative. They will be bounded by the contacts offenders have in their own networks (Downes and Rock 1988 p. 38). Indeed, it is possible that more than one network may exist within a confined geographical area, yet have no contact with each other (Watters and Biernacki 1989). Snowball sampling via one of these networks could ignore a major proportion of offenders in an area and these may exhibit quite different characteristics to those being studied. Contacting offenders via this technique has also been found to be exceedingly time consuming and increasingly involves small monetary payments to encourage participation. Furthermore, there is no guarantee that an adequate sample will be drawn if offenders continue to be reluctant to come forward.

Due to the particular difficulties of contacting active offenders, referrals to the project were sought from criminal justice agencies. This can, however, introduce bias into the sample because those in particular institutions (such as prisons), may be different from the wider population of those being studied. For example, Watters and Biernacki (1989) found significant differences between intravenous drug users on methadone treatment programmes

and those receiving no treatment. Perhaps the greatest potential for bias is the fact that those offenders currently serving a sentence under the auspices of the prison and probation services are, by definition, unsuccessful (McCall 1978). The fact that they have been apprehended for their offending may mean they are less skilled, or less 'streetwise' than offenders who avoid detection. This may mean that the experiences of such a group are different to those of offenders generally, which could, in turn, affect the results of research focusing on such a sample. However, because characteristics of undetected burglary offenders largely remain unknown, it was unclear to what extent such biases were introduced into this study. The potential for such biases mean it was difficult to generalise to the wider population of burglary offenders.

#### *Problems with the non-offender sample*

One of the major problems with the non-offender sample was the failure to match it sufficiently with the offender sample in such a way as to control for other factors that may have influenced criminality. As discussed earlier, pairs were matched on age, sex and ethnic group. However, while they were matched on age and sex, they were not perfectly matched on ethnicity, with discrepancies in the proportions describing themselves as 'Asian' or 'Other'. However, this difference was not considered to be a major source of error compared to the problems arising from failing to match on other key variables. One of the clearest differences between the samples was the experience of education. The educational experiences of offenders were much poorer than those of non-offenders. The college students interviewed in the non-offender sample left school with at least one exam pass while few offenders had passed any formal examinations. While all 50 non-offenders gained qualifications from school,

only 13 (26%) offenders left school with any qualifications, although a further seven did obtain vocational qualifications while serving a prison sentence. These differences are largely because the non-offenders were drawn from a college of further education and will normally have shown an appetite or willingness to learn. Experiences of school and qualifications have been shown to be associated with criminality (Glueck and Glueck, 1952; Cohen, 1955; Wolfgang et al., 1972; Frease, 1973; West and Farrington, 1973; Stewart and Stewart, 1993). The failure to control for this important variable means it is not possible to determine the extent to which involvement in crime is influenced by school experiences, rather than due to perceptions of relative deprivation.

A second and more complex omission is the failure to control for social class. If educational experiences are related to social class, then it is quite likely that the non-offenders were from a different (higher) social class than the offenders. Taking the population as a whole, one would expect differences between social classes in the level of actual relative deprivation experienced. One might therefore anticipate offenders experiencing more actual relative deprivation in terms of wealth inequality than non-offenders. Those who experience acute actual relative deprivation may also be deprived in absolute terms, failing to afford basic necessities such as food and shelter. Almost by definition, those who are deprived in absolute terms will also be in a position of actual relative deprivation. If perceived relative deprivation is positively associated with actual relative deprivation (something to be tested in the study reported later in this thesis) one might expect some individuals to engage in crime not because they perceive themselves to be relatively deprived, but because they are deprived in absolute terms. Controlling for social class would therefore have been a means of keeping the likelihood of individuals experiencing absolute deprivation constant. This would have meant

that the difference in criminality between groups would not have been due to absolute deprivation and one could have been more confident that any difference in perceived relative deprivation could have explained involvement in crime. Without controlling for social class, it was not possible to make such assessments.

A final source of error was the different contexts in which the two samples were interviewed. Offenders interviewed in YOIs, by definition, had plenty of time on their hands. The interviews were conducted in fairly relaxed settings without the pressure to finish quickly. Offenders may therefore have thought more about their answers before responding. By contrast, interviews with the non-offenders were often quite hurried as respondents were frequently anxious to get on with what they were doing before the interview. This difference in approach may, for example, have affected the response to the questions on relative deprivation. With more time, one might be more likely to recall experiences of relative deprivation, so the greater number of objects of relative deprivation mentioned by offenders (on average, three, compared to two by non-offenders) may be a function of this. However, one might argue that the fact that the proportion of the relatively deprived is equal between groups is evidence that this bias is not present, although we do not know whether non-offender responses would have been even higher given a little more time.

It is clear from the description of the problems associated with the original research design that, as a method for identifying the criminogenic effects of experiencing perceived relative deprivation, it was fundamentally flawed to the point where it cannot be relied upon. However, there is plenty to be salvaged from the qualitative aspect of the study.

## **The revised research design**

With the findings of the original research design called into question, it was necessary to find alternative means of examining the relative deprivation - crime relationship. A partial solution to this was the use of data from the 1998 Youth Lifestyle Survey (YLS) (see Flood-Page et al. (2000) for details of the findings from the YLS). The YLS is a representative sample survey of 4,848 young people aged between 12 and 30. It asks questions about a wide range of issues, including social background issues, lifestyle issues and crime. Stratford and Roth (1999) provide a detailed description of the survey design and interview schedules employed in the YLS.

The YLS employed a split sample design, with one sample being administered the questions in traditional paper and pencil format, while the other sample were asked questions using a computer assisted format. The purpose of asking questions in two formats was to allow for direct comparisons to be made to the previous sweep of the survey in 1992/3, which was administered purely in paper and pencil format. Without the need for comparison, all respondents would otherwise have been surveyed using the computer assisted interview approach. In total, 1,029 (21%) respondents were asked questions with paper and pencil and 3,819 (79%) by the computer assisted method.

However, this use of two interview formats created difficulties when examining offending rates as the rate of 'ever offending' was found to be significantly lower among those completing the paper and pencil exercise compared to those responding by the computer assisted method. As one could not be certain that the differences between the paper and pencil

and computer assisted methods were not due to the data collection method itself, the paper and pencil sample was discarded for the purposes of analysis. This replicated the approach taken by Flood-Page et al (2000) in resolving this problem. All analyses presented in this thesis are therefore based solely on this sample of 3,819 individuals. The data were then weighted using the weighting variables ('WGTOFNDR' for analysis of the offending variables and 'FINALWGT' for all other analyses) as prescribed by Stratford and Roth (1999). WGTOFNDR was used for when analysing offending variables. This upweights 14-25 year olds in the sample, in order to restore representativeness. This was necessary because the (previously mentioned) 'paper and pencil' sample had consisted of 30% of all 14-25 year olds interviewed (the same age range as used originally by Graham and Bowling (1995) and with which changes in offending were planned to be examined between the two studies). As the CASI sample under-represented 14-25 year olds on the offending variables, it was necessary to use WGTOFNDR to rectify this. FINALWGT was the weight used in connection with other variables and was required to create a representative sample, based on key socio-demographic factors. This was necessary because of the biases that existed in the raw sample, resulting from some groups being over-sampled and others under-sampled. FINALWGT was an aggregation of a series of separate weights that included an inner city weight, a dwelling unit weight, an individual weight, a high crime area weight and a non-response weight. Stratford and Roth (1999) provide further details of how these individual weights were calculated.

### *Benefits of using the YLS*

There are a number of benefits to be derived from using the YLS:

- **Sample size.** The very fact that the sample size is almost 4,000 respondents rather than the 100 in the original study means that quantitative analysis can be conducted more reliably.
- **Representativeness.** The sample is designed to be representative of the population of 12-30 year olds. This means the offending patterns (both prevalence and incidence) should also be representative.
- **Coverage.** The YLS data set includes questions that can be used to derive variables for actual relative deprivation and perceived relative deprivation, allowing a more rigorous test of the relative deprivation - crime relationship.

### *Weaknesses of the 1998 YLS*

From the outset, it is important to be clear that the YLS is far from a perfect solution to the problems posed by the research questions. As with any secondary analysis of data that are collected for other purposes, there are problems with the use of the YLS:

- **Method of sample selection.** The YLS data were collected by visiting a sample of randomly selected households and interviewing those at home. This meant that it could

only survey those who were at home at the time of the visit. However, previous research has shown that those who are involved in offending are more likely to have weak parental attachment (Hirschi, 1969) and spend more time out of the parental home, on the streets with their peers. Approaches based on interviewing young people in their homes are unlikely to identify the most prolific offenders. As such the YLS is likely to give an under-estimate of both the prevalence and incidence of burglary and other crime types. However, this is a problem shared with all studies employing a methodology of this kind. It is arguable that these problems are less severe than those resulting from other sampling approaches. For example, self-report studies often employ school students as a sampling frame. These are biased more towards non-offenders than are studies which sample households as they fail to capture those truanting and those excluded from school who would be at higher risk of engaging in crime. The result of the sampling bias in the current study means that the frequency of relative deprivation among those involved in crime may be an under-estimate and may be greater than that apparent in the results presented in this thesis.

- ***Method of data collection.*** The YLS used a self-completed questionnaire as the basis for collecting information on offending. Some answered this on paper, while others used a computer assisted method. Regardless of input method (i.e. paper or computer) the questionnaire ran to many pages and was administered in a way similar to a school exam. This is likely to have put many young people off filling this in carefully and may have led to increased non-response, and / or responses that were not carefully thought through in the respondents' haste to complete the exercise.

- ***Definition of burglary.*** The question wording that operationalises burglary in the YLS is: “*Have you ever sneaked into a private garden, a house or a building intending to steal something? (not including abandoned or ruined buildings)*”. Although this would encompass the majority of the activities defined as burglary, there are some that are not covered. For example, the legal definition of burglary (which was last revised significantly in the 1968 Theft Act) defines such an offence as not only entering a building with the intent to steal, but also with intent to commit criminal damage, commit actual bodily harm or rape therein. However, the operational definition used in the YLS works in favour of the current study as we are interested in forms of behaviour involving the theft of property. Perhaps of greater concern is the possibility that distraction or artifice burglaries, where the offender tricks his/her way into someone’s home (e.g. pretending to read a meter, or workman needing to turn off the water) then steals property while the occupant is distracted, may not be covered by the term ‘sneaked into’. It would also seem to exclude those offences where the offender has blatantly broken in with little thought for whether he or she is observed. This suggests the operationalised measure of burglary may not include all forms of behaviour covered by the legal definition of the offence.
- ***Insufficient crime sub-samples.*** While the overall sample may be large, this rapidly declines when those without a history of offending are removed and declines even further when particular offences are focused upon. This is due to the relative rarity with which the commission of some offences is prevalent in the general population. This is a particular problem with burglary offenders. As table 4 shows below, 5.4% of males and 1.9% of females reported having committed a burglary. In YLS

unweighted CASI sample of 3,819 respondents this amounted to only 97 males (the focus of the current study) and 28 females. This is somewhat unfortunate, given that the focus of the current study is on burglary offenders. For the purposes of this thesis, it was necessary to identify other types of offence that could reasonably be considered to be similar to burglary and with which burglary offences could be combined to create a variable that related to offences like burglary. This posed a problem. How should offences be categorised according to their similarity to burglary? One approach considered was to group offences from what is known in the literature on offending behaviour about what other types of offences tend to be committed by burglary offenders. This was considered impractical as no previous study was found that examined the offending patterns of burglary offenders specifically in the kind of detail required. An alternative method was to group offences that appeared to have common attributes. For example, burglary could have been combined with offences such as theft of a pedal cycle and theft from cars, where the theft is likely to be followed by the sale of the stolen item to realise the cash value. However, this was felt to be an arbitrary way of assigning offences and was in danger of grouping offences that are not commonly committed by burglary offenders.

**Table 4: Prevalence of ever property offending in the YLS by males, females and total sample**

Crime type	Survey Question	Total sample		Male sample		Female sample	
		Percent	Unweighted N	Percent	Unweighted N	Percent	Unweighted N
Shop theft	Have you ever stolen anything from a shop, supermarket or department store?	22.2	791	26.6	455	17.8	336
Buying stolen goods	Have you ever brought anything that you knew or believed at the time to be stolen?	21.2	780	28.3	482	14.0	298
False expenses claim	Have you ever claimed expenses worth more than £5 which you knew you were not entitled to?	8.2	220	12.1	158	4.2	62
Selling stolen goods	Have you ever sold anything that you knew or believed at the time to be stolen?	7.2	246	10.9	185	3.5	61
Stolen from work	Have you ever stolen anything from the place that you work worth more than £5?	6.3	227	9.7	167	2.9	60
Stolen from home	Have you ever stolen anything from home or the place that you live worth more than £5?	5.4	192	6.4	111	4.4	81
False tax return	Have you ever not declared all of your income for tax purposes?	5.1	146	6.4	87	3.8	59
Stolen from school	Have you ever stolen anything in school worth more than £5?	4.9	174	7.7	133	2.1	41
Theft of item worth more than £5	Have you ever stolen anything worth more than £5, not mentioned already?	4.5	153	7.3	127	1.6	26
Burglary in a dwelling	Have you ever sneaked into a private garden, a house or a building intending to steal something? (not including abandoned or ruined buildings)	3.7	125	5.4	97	1.9	28
Theft from a gas / electricity meter, phone box etc.	Have you ever stolen money from a gas or electricity meter, public telephone box, vending machine, video game or fruit machine?	3.6	123	5.5	83	1.8	40
False benefit claims	Have you ever claimed social security benefits or housing benefits to which you knew that you were not entitled?	3.1	98	2.6	39	3.5	59
Theft from a car	Have you ever stolen something out of or from a car?	2.8	101	4.5	85	1.2	16
Theft of pedal cycle	Have you ever taken away a bicycle without the owners permission, not intending to give it back?	2.4	90	4.1	76	0.8	14
False insurance claims	Have you ever made a false insurance claim?	2.1	57	3.0	36	1.0	21

Crime type	Survey Question	Total sample		Male sample		Female sample	
		Percent	Unweighted N	Percent	Unweighted N	Percent	Unweighted N
Continued from previous page...							
Theft of motorbike	Have you ever taken away a motorbike or moped without the owners permission, not intending to give it back?	1.4	49	2.5	44	0.4	5
Theft of a car	Have you ever taken away a car without the owners permission, not intending to give it back?	1.2	38	2.1	34	0.3	4
Using stolen cheques	Have you ever used a cheque book, credit card or a cash point card which you knew or believed at the time to be stolen to get money out of a bank account?	1.1	40	1.5	26	0.7	14
Pickpocketing	Have you ever pickpocketed anything from anybody?	1.0	41	1.3	27	0.7	14
Snatch theft	Have you ever snatched anything from a person – a purse, bag or something else?	0.7	26	1.3	22	0.1	4
Selling stolen cheques etc.	Have you ever sold a cheque book, credit card or a cash point card belonging to you or someone else so that you could steal money from a bank account?	0.5	23	0.5	12	0.6	11

The approach taken to defining offences similar to burglary was a data driven one.

Acquisitive property offences were identified in the YLS data that were more frequently committed by burglary offenders than would have been expected from examining the sample as a whole. Those that were committed more frequently than expected by burglary offenders could be regarded as proxies for the tendency to commit burglary. Therefore, individuals who have previously committed an offence that falls into this category are similar to burglary offenders in at least part of their offending behaviour and it was deemed appropriate to group them together on this basis.

To identify the offences concerned, the odds ratio of the expected to actual proportion of individuals also engaging in burglary was computed for each of the other acquisitive property offences. The list of property offences used for this exercise was similar to that employed in Graham and Bowling's (1995) analysis of the 1992/3 YLS<sup>17</sup>. The **expected** rates were calculated for each property offence based on the proportion committing burglary multiplied by the proportion of all respondents committing the specific offence. The **actual** rate was calculated by deriving the proportion of respondents who committed both burglary and the specific offence. The odds ratio was then calculated by dividing the actual by the expected proportions. An odds ratio of greater than one would therefore indicate an offence type that burglary offenders actually commit more often than they are expected to. Odds ratios were calculated for males, females and the entire sample. As table 5 indicates, odds ratios were greater than one among both males and all respondents for all offences other than theft from a shop. One might reasonably have created an offence of all property offences related to burglary based on all property offences minus shop theft. However, a decision was made to limit those included in this variable to offences particularly likely to be committed by burglary offenders – relative to expectation. A cut-off criterion of odds ratios of 10 or above was therefore drawn, based on the entire sample data. This is somewhat arbitrary and could have been drawn at a number of different points. However, the benefit of this is that the group of offences that are included in this group are arguably more qualitatively similar to burglary than are many of the others

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<sup>17</sup> It should, however, be noted that the 1998 YLS, divided some of the 1992/3 categories of acquisitive property offences in to more discrete questions, allowing for a more detailed analysis of property offending. This was particularly the case for those offences involving some form of fraudulent claim of benefit / expenses. It should also be noted that the analysis of the 1998 YLS as published in Flood-Page et al (2000) separated property offences from fraud, which had been combined in Graham and Bowling (1995). The approach used by Graham and Bowling is followed here.

excluded. For example, almost all of those included would involve some kind of actual theft of items, rather than forms of fraud that are listed towards the bottom of table 5. In addition, of the seven offences represented in this group, six are in the top seven for both males and females. This means that when comparisons are made between sexes, one can be a little more certain that any differences are not due to qualitative differences in the types of other property offending between male and female burglary offenders.

Based on the above approach, a new variable was derived for offences similar to burglary. This consisted of those who had committed one or more among the following: burglary, theft of a pedal cycle, theft of a motorbike, theft from a car, theft of a car, using stolen cheques, theft of other items worth more than £5, and theft from a meter. To guard against the findings being a result of the arbitrary way in which offences were included into the 'property offences similar to burglary' variable, analyses were also conducted for those who had committed any of the acquisitive property offences listed in table 5. These are presented in the following chapter.

**Table 5: Odds ratios of expected vs. actual rates with which burglary offenders also commit other acquisitive property crimes**

Crime type	Survey Question	All	Males	Females
Theft of pedal cycle	Have you ever taken away a bicycle without the owners permission, not intending to give it back?	17.2	5.8	19.0
Theft of motorbike	Have you ever taken away a motorbike or moped without the owners permission, not intending to give it back?	17.2	5.8	22.2
Theft from a car	Have you ever stolen something out of or from a car?	15.9	5.0	20.0
Theft of a car	Have you ever taken away a car without the owners permission, not intending to give it back?	15.7	4.7	22.2
Using stolen cheques	Have you ever used a cheque book, credit card or a cash point card which you knew or believed at the time to be stolen to get money out of a bank account?	15.7	6.6	9.5
Theft of item worth more than £5	Have you ever stolen anything worth more than £5, not mentioned already?	13.6	4.8	8.9
Theft from a gas / electricity meter, phone box etc.	Have you ever stolen money from a gas or electricity meter, public telephone box, vending machine, video game or fruit machine?	10.8	3.9	7.8
Snatch theft	Have you ever snatched anything from a person – a purse, bag or something else?	9.9	3.6	0.0
Selling stolen goods	Have you ever sold anything that you knew or believed at the time to be stolen?	9.1	3.3	8.3
Stolen from school	Have you ever stolen anything in school worth more than £5?	8.8	3.1	7.0
False insurance claims	Have you ever made a false insurance claim?	8.6	4.0	0.0
Pickpocketing	Have you ever pickpocketed anything from anybody?	7.7	4.2	0.0
Selling stolen cheques etc.	Have you ever sold a cheque book, credit card or a cash point card belonging to you or someone else so that you could steal money from a bank account?	6.9	4.7	0.0
Stolen from home	Have you ever stolen anything from home or the place that you live worth more than £5?	6.1	2.3	5.0
False benefit claims	Have you ever claimed social security benefits or housing benefits to which you knew that you were not entitled?	6.0	3.5	2.6
Stolen from work	Have you ever stolen anything from the place that you work worth more than £5?	5.6	2.2	2.3
Buying stolen goods	Have you ever brought anything that you knew or believed at the time to be stolen?	4.2	1.7	3.0
False expenses claim	Have you ever claimed expenses worth more than £5 which you knew you were not entitled to?	3.8	1.7	0.0
False tax return	Have you ever not declared all of your income for tax purposes?	3.5	1.9	0.0
Shop theft	Have you ever stolen anything from a shop, supermarket or department store?	0.7	0.4	0.0

- **Problems with the measure of perceived relative deprivation.** The measure of perceived relative deprivation was based on the following questions:

*Which of the following, if any, do you (and the people you live with) have to go without because you cannot afford them?*

1. *Holiday*
2. *Car*
3. *Somewhere larger to live*
4. *A place of my own to live*
5. *Personal hobby*
6. *Eating out*
7. *Video recorder*
8. *Records / cassettes / CDS*
9. *Going out*
96. *Other*
97. *None of these*
98. *All of these*

*And which of the following, if any, do you (and the people you live with) have to go without because you cannot afford them?*

1. *Food for yourself*
2. *Food for your family*
3. *Clothes for yourself*

4. *Clothes for your family*
5. *A place to live*
96. *Other*
97. *None of these*
98. *All of these.*

The discussion on defining relative deprivation in Appendix C noted that to perceive oneself as relatively deprived, one should:

- i. Not possess X
- ii. See someone else possess X
- iii. Want X
- iv. Feel entitled to X

However, the above question does not associate perceptions of deprivation with comparisons to a reference group. In feeling that one has gone without a holiday, it is unclear with whom one is making comparisons on which to form this judgement. As Bonger (1969) noted, desires of this kind are generated with reference to what others have. In the case of the question included here, it is assumed that the deprivation is felt in comparison to some subjective assessment of how many of these things one **should** have, which presumably is made with reference to what others have. The disadvantage of the current measure is that the source of these comparisons is unknown.

A second dilemma with this question is the absence of a clear statement of deservingness (whether the individual feels entitled to X). This would appear central to the notion of perceived relative deprivation. One can only assume that the feeling that one had gone without these items implicitly includes the notion of feeling that one deserves to have more of the relevant item. However, this is an assumption that cannot be tested.

As previously noted, questions that use closed response lists of items against which to identify a sense of deprivation have their problems. For example, these may not be the items of which those who are inspired to commit crime feel relatively deprived. As will be discussed later, the fit between the list of items and the items identified spontaneously by offenders is quite close, although there are some notable omissions in the YLS questions that were raised by offenders in the original study.

### **Summing up the current research design**

The research design used in this thesis is one that now has a core in secondary analysis of the 1998 Youth Lifestyle Survey. This however, has been undertaken with a number of caveats regarding the research design and question wording. These need to be borne in mind when interpreting the findings. Of course, the greatest concern is that the YLS does not address the thesis title precisely, in that the sample size for burglary offenders was too small for meaningful analysis. However, the analysis that has been undertaken does shed further light on property offending in general.

The second strand to the research design involves a qualitative study with 50 burglary offenders. This enables an analysis to be undertaken on how relative deprivation was experienced. The following chapter now examines the quantitative findings on relative deprivation and crime obtained from the YLS.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Relative deprivation and crime:**

### **Findings from the Youth Lifestyle Survey**

#### **Introduction**

The following chapter examines the relationship between actual relative deprivation, perceived relative deprivation and crime using the data from the 1998 YLS (discussed in chapter 4). As previously mentioned, secondary analysis of this kind often requires variables to be derived from available measures and this proved necessary in the current study. Before analysing the relationship between relative deprivation and crime, it was first necessary to operationalise the relevant measures and to derive suitable variables from the dataset. This chapter therefore starts by providing a description of how these measures were operationalised.

#### **Operationalising relative deprivation**

It proved necessary to derive new variables to measure both actual and perceived relative deprivation. The following pages provide an explanation of the procedures used to produce measures of actual relative deprivation and perceived relative deprivation in turn.

### *Measuring Actual Relative Deprivation*

Following the approach taken in most previous studies of the relationship between actual relative deprivation and crime, the current study used total household income as the basis for comparison. The YLS itself did not ask its respondents about household income. This means that measures of household income were not gathered from those living with their parents, and possibly not in a good position to know about income. The 1998 YLS used the sampling frame for the 1998 British Crime Survey that had taken place nine months earlier. This meant that many of the respondents were interviewed for both Youth Lifestyle and British Crime Surveys. The two data sets were then combined so that questions from each could be analysed. In total, 2,969 (78%) of households surveyed for the YLS computer assisted interview had also previously been interviewed for the British Crime Survey.

The question that asked about household income used the following wording:

*The next question is on income. We want to know if this influences people's experience of crime. Choose the number from this card which represents the group in which you would place your TOTAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME in the last year, from all sources BEFORE tax and other deductions.*

*(EXPLAIN IF NECESSARY: GROSS INCOME FOR LAST 12 MONTHS)*

1. *Under £2,500*
2. *£2,500 - £4,999*
3. *£5,000 - £9,999*
4. *£10,000 - £14,999*

- 5. £15,000 - £19,999
- 6. £20,000 - £29,999
- 7. £30,000 - £49,000
- 8. £50,000 or more
- 9. *SPONTANEOUS Nothing*

Three measures of actual relative deprivation were derived from this question. The first (with a variable name of 'ARD') indicated the proportion of all other respondent households which had a greater household income than each respondent household. The hypothesis here is that one is more deprived relative to others, the more others there are with greater wealth than oneself. This was calculated by first producing a frequency table for income as set out above. A new variable was derived based on the cumulative frequency of households at each category. Each category in this new variable therefore indicated the proportion of the population of households earning less than a specified income. This was reversed in order to create a variable in which each category showed the proportion of households earning more than a given household, by subtracting the results from 100. As this thesis is particularly interested in males, a decision was made to devise separate variables of actual relative deprivation for males and females. The above exercise therefore resulted in a measure for males (variable name 'ARDMALE') and a measure for females (variable name 'ARDFEM'). ARDMALE basically shows the proportion of males resident in households which earn more than the male in question, while ARDFEM shows the proportion of females in households which earn more than the female in question. It should be borne in mind that these variables only examine the within-sex variation. They do not, for example, allow us to examine the position of each male relative to all respondents. The justification for this is that individuals

(especially the young) are most likely to compare themselves with similar others (Festinger, 1954; Zanna et al., 1975; Suls, 1986). Males are therefore most likely to make comparisons with other males and females with other females. Tables 6, 7 and 8 show the results for the total sample, for males and for females respectively. Table 6 shows that, for the sample as a whole, median household income is £20,000 - £29,999 and 27% of respondents live in households earning more than this. At the other end of the spectrum, 3% earn less than £2,500. The results for males and females show that the distributions are broadly similar to the total sample. This is what one would expect, given the fact that the choice of whether to interview a male or female was made independently of household income. One would therefore expect the household income of those where a female was interviewed to be broadly similar to that where a male was interviewed.

**Table 6: Proportion of all other respondents living in households with more income than each respondent in each income bracket (ARD)**

Household income bracket	Percentage of households with more income than this income bracket	Percent	Cumulative Percent
£50,000 or more	0.0	6.5	6.5
£30,000 to £49,999	6.5	20.5	27.0
£20,000 to £29,999	27.0	24.7	51.7
£15,000 to £19,999	51.7	14.4	66.1
£10,000 to £14,999	66.1	12.4	78.5
£5,000 to £9,999	78.5	11.8	90.3
£2,500 to £4,900	90.3	6.7	96.9
Under £2,500	96.9	3.1	100.0
<i>Unweighted N = 2,763</i>			

**Table 7: Proportion of all other males living in households with more income than each male respondent in each income bracket (ARDMALE)**

Household income bracket	Percentage of households with more income than this income bracket	Percent	Cumulative Percent
£50,000 or more	0.0	7.0	7.0
£30,000 to £49,999	7.0	21.3	28.3
£20,000 to £29,999	28.3	26.4	54.8
£15,000 to £19,999	54.8	15.5	70.2
£10,000 to £14,999	70.2	11.5	81.8
£5,000 to £9,999	81.8	11.6	93.4
£2,500 to £4,900	93.4	4.1	97.5
Under £2,500	97.5	2.5	100.0
<i>Unweighted N = 1,289</i>			

**Table 8: Proportion of all other females living in households with more income than each female respondent in each income bracket (ARDFEM)**

Household income bracket	Percentage of households with more income than this income bracket	Percent	Cumulative Percent
£50,000 or more	0.0	5.9	5.9
£30,000 to £49,999	5.9	19.8	25.6
£20,000 to £29,999	25.6	22.9	48.5
£15,000 to £19,999	48.5	13.4	61.9
£10,000 to £14,999	61.9	13.3	75.2
£5,000 to £9,999	75.2	12.0	87.1
£2,500 to £4,900	87.1	9.2	96.4
Under £2,500	96.4	3.6	100.0
<i>Unweighted N = 1,474</i>			

What will no doubt be clear at this stage is that these are far from perfect measures of actual relative deprivation, not least because they are based on banded income groups, which limits the degree of variation among individuals. This should be borne in mind when interpreting the results presented later in this chapter.

### *Measuring Perceived Relative Deprivation*

The measure of perceived relative deprivation was based on two questions asked of all respondents (see earlier discussion for details). These allowed 16 item based measures of perceived relative deprivation to be generated, based on the closed response format in the questions. Each of these was a dichotomous variable indicating whether or not an individual felt deprived of a sufficiency of the item in question. Table 9 shows the frequency with which each item was considered an object of deprivation.

Table 9 shows that almost two thirds of respondents felt relatively deprived of at least one item overall, suggesting that such perceptions are common among young people. There was clearly wide variation in the extent to which various items were considered to be sources of perceived relative deprivation. For example, a third felt relatively deprived of a holiday, while a quarter felt deprived of somewhere larger to live. At the other extreme, only 3% felt deprived of food for their family and just 2% felt deprived of food for themselves. It is interesting to note that the top four items involve major purchasing decisions that are likely to require a greater expenditure and are therefore more difficult to acquire than other items in table 9. This would seem to run counter to Runciman's (1966) conception of relative deprivation (see appendix C). Runciman considered that, in order to perceive relative

deprivation, it should be felt feasible to obtain that of which one felt deprived. If we assume that the greater the cost of something the less feasible it should be to obtain, then the results in table 9 are the opposite to what one might have anticipated from Runciman's theorising. The items that appear to be least feasible to obtain are the items most desired.

**Table 9: Frequency with each item of perceived relative deprivation was identified by sex**

	Male	Female	Total	Significance
	Percent	Percent	Percent	
Holiday	28.7	35.9	32.3	**
Somewhere larger to live	23.5	25.2	24.4	ns
A place of my own	22.6	22.8	22.7	ns
Car	15.7	20.9	18.3	**
Eating out	14.6	21.2	17.9	**
Going out	10.6	16.8	13.7	**
Clothes for self	7.0	14.7	10.8	**
Hobby	6.4	8.5	7.5	ns
Records / cassettes / cds	5.5	9.4	7.5	**
VCR	6.4	7.6	7.0	ns
A place to live	7.2	5.7	6.5	ns
Clothes for family	3.6	6.1	4.9	**
Other (mark 2)	4.2	5.0	4.6	ns
Other (mark 1)	4.5	4.5	4.5	ns
Food for family	2.7	2.6	2.7	ns
Food for self	1.3	2.2	1.7	ns
Any	61.2	67.7	64.5	**
Unweighted N	1,794	2,025	3,819	

Significance: ns = not significant , \*\* = p<.000, \* = p<.001

Table 9 also shows the significance of between-gender differences in felt deprivation by item type. It is clear that, overall, females are significantly more likely to feel deprived, with 68% indicating feeling deprived of at least one item, compared to 61% of males. Furthermore, there

were seven items where females felt significantly more deprived of the item than males. Conversely, there were no items where males experienced a significantly higher level of perceived relative deprivation than females. This is an interesting finding in itself. Why should young women be more likely to feel deprived on a range of items from holidays and cars to clothes and going out? This issue will be returned to later in this chapter.

The large number of items presented in table 9 posed a problem. If comparisons were to be made with the extent to which actual relative deprivation was also experienced, should one examine each item individually, or derive a new variable based on whether an individual was relatively deprived of *any* of these items? The former approach seemed inappropriate as it would be difficult to draw any conclusions from the wide range of measures involved. The result was likely to have been that there was an association with actual relative deprivation on some items but not others. This approach would anyway be hampered by small sample sizes in some cases. The latter approach is used in the following analysis, but on its own it was considered too blunt an instrument as it failed to discriminate between the quite disparate forms of deprivation presented in table 9. An additional approach was therefore required for reducing the items down to a number of key factors. This approach was based on the assumption that there were similar types of deprivation that could be grouped together. Indeed, from simply examining the range of measures of deprivation, it is clear that there are qualitative differences between items. An approach was therefore required that grouped similar types of deprivation together in a reliable and meaningful way. The approach taken was to examine the data to see if there were common items of deprivation that seemed to be mentioned together by respondents. If groups of items, that seemed to be clustered together by respondents could be found, it would be reasonable to aggregate these items into a composite measure on the basis that they were correlates of each other and that they were

likely to represent some underlying theme that explained the grouping of such items by respondents in the first place.

It was not possible to conduct factor, or principal components analysis on the data because the level of measurement was nominal (and dichotomous) rather than interval as would be required for such analyses. To resolve this, the following procedure was adopted. Chi square and phi coefficients were calculated between each pair of items to create the equivalent of a correlation matrix for nominal level data.<sup>18</sup> (See table 10 for the resulting matrix.) Next, the pair of items with the greatest strength of association (based on the phi coefficient) were selected on the basis that when one feels deprived of one item, one is also likely to feel deprived of the other. These were clothes for family and food for family, with a phi coefficient of 0.666. These were combined to create a new variable identifying those feeling deprived of clothes for family *and* food for family. This was then compared to those who were deprived of any of the other items. This created a significant relationship, but the phi coefficient was just 0.118. The procedure that then followed aimed to identify those in the remaining group of variables that were strongly associated with clothes for family and food for family. Additional variables would then be added to this group until either there was no statistical association between these and the remaining variables, or the strength of association became very weak.

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<sup>18</sup> The word 'factor' is used in the text as shorthand for the groupings derived from the procedure set out below.

**Table 10: Bivariate analysis of relationship between each pair of variables measuring perceived relative deprivation**

	Holi day	Car	Somewhere larger to live	A place of my own to live	Personal hobby	Eating out	VCR	Records / cassettes / tapes	Going out	Other mark 1	Food for self	Food for family	Clothes for family	Clothes for self	Place to live	Other mark 2
ay	*	11.4%, PHI=0.305, P<0.000	11.3%, PHI=0.168, P<0.000	10.8%, PHI=0.175, P<0.000	6.1%, PHI=0.302, P<0.000	13.4%, PHI=0.427, P<0.000	4.8%, PHI=0.218, P<0.000	5.3%, PHI=0.235, P<0.000	9.8%, PHI=0.332, P<0.000	2.9%, PHI=0.147, P<0.000	1.3%, PHI=0.115, P<0.000	1.4%, PHI=0.077, P<0.000	3.4%, PHI=0.179, P<0.000	7.7%, PHI=0.291, P<0.000	3.1%, PHI=0.91, P<0.000	2.5%, PHI=0.098, P<0.000
Car	*	7.0%, PHI=0.155, P<0.000	7.7%, PHI=0.218, P<0.000	4.0%, PHI=0.260, P<0.000	7.5%, PHI=0.282, P<0.000	4.1%, PHI=0.281, P<0.000	4.2%, PHI=0.274, P<0.000	5.6%, PHI=0.231, P<0.000	2.3%, PHI=0.188, P<0.000	0.7%, PHI=0.073, P<0.000	1.2%, PHI=0.117, P<0.000	2.2%, PHI=0.159, P<0.000	4.6%, PHI=0.215, P<0.000	2.5%, PHI=0.133, P<0.000	1.7%, PHI=0.107, P<0.000	
Somewh	*	8.0%, PHI=0.139, P<0.000	4.1%, PHI=0.199, P<0.000	6.8%, PHI=0.147, P<0.000	3.5%, PHI=0.163, P<0.000	3.3%, PHI=0.132, P<0.000	5.1%, PHI=0.116, P<0.000	2.8%, PHI=0.192, P<0.000	0.6%, PHI=0.023, P=0.154	1.1%, PHI=0.061, P<0.000	1.9%, PHI=0.080, P<0.000	3.6%, PHI=0.069, P<0.000	1.9%, PHI=0.028, P=0.090	1.9%, PHI=0.086, P<0.000		
	A place of my own to live	*	3.6%, PHI=0.172, P<0.000	6.2%, PHI=0.136, P<0.000	4.0%, PHI=0.227, P<0.000	3.7%, PHI=0.179, P<0.000	4.8%, PHI=0.115, P<0.000	2.3%, PHI=0.147, P<0.000	0.7%, PHI=0.063, P<0.000	1.1%, PHI=0.069, P<0.000	1.7%, PHI=0.070, P<0.000	3.3%, PHI=0.067, P<0.000	4.3%, PHI=0.276, P<0.000	1.5%, PHI=0.052, P=0.001		
	Personal hobby	*	5.2%, PHI=0.379, P<0.000	2.6%, PHI=0.304, P<0.000	3.1%, PHI=0.365, P<0.000	4.6%, PHI=0.400, P<0.000	2.1%, PHI=0.326, P<0.000	0.7%, PHI=0.169, P<0.000	0.7%, PHI=0.108, P<0.000	0.7%, PHI=0.201, P<0.000	1.5%, PHI=0.285, P<0.000	3.1%, PHI=0.084, P<0.000	1.0%, PHI=0.128, P<0.000	1.1%, PHI=0.128, P<0.000		
	Eating out	*	3.7%, PHI=0.252, P<0.000	5.1%, PHI=0.374, P<0.000	9.1%, PHI=0.508, P<0.000	2.6%, PHI=0.228, P<0.000	1.1%, PHI=0.159, P<0.000	1.0%, PHI=0.088, P<0.000	2.5%, PHI=0.192, P<0.000	6.0%, PHI=0.339, P<0.000	1.8%, PHI=0.070, P<0.000	1.8%, PHI=0.124, P<0.000				
	VCR	*	2.9%, PHI=0.351, P<0.000	3.2%, PHI=0.258, P<0.000	2.2%, PHI=0.355, P<0.000	0.3%, PHI=0.058, P<0.000	0.8%, PHI=0.141, P<0.000	1.3%, PHI=0.168, P<0.000	5.1%, PHI=0.374, P<0.000	1.1%, PHI=0.100, P<0.000	0.9%, PHI=0.107, P<0.000	0.9%, PHI=0.107, P<0.000				
	Records / cassettes / tapes	*	4.4%, PHI=0.371, P<0.000	2.1%, PHI=0.331, P<0.000	0.4%, PHI=0.085, P<0.000	0.7%, PHI=0.120, P<0.000	1.3%, PHI=0.168, P<0.000	3.1%, PHI=0.278, P<0.000	0.9%, PHI=0.072, P<0.000	0.9%, PHI=0.114, P<0.000	1.0%, PHI=0.114, P<0.000					
	Going out	*	2.4%, PHI=0.255, P<0.000	0.9%, PHI=0.152, P<0.000	0.8%, PHI=0.076, P<0.000	2.1%, PHI=0.195, P<0.000	5.4%, PHI=0.369, P<0.000	1.4%, PHI=0.066, P<0.000	1.2%, PHI=0.084, P<0.000							
	Other Mark 1	*	0.1%, PHI=0.00, P=0.988	0.7%, PHI=0.164, P<0.000	0.9%, PHI=0.164, P<0.000	1.4%, PHI=0.142, P<0.000	0.8%, PHI=0.093, P<0.000	1.4%, PHI=0.268, P<0.000								
	Food for self	*	0.2%, PHI=0.090, P<0.000	0.3%, PHI=0.073, P<0.000	0.2%, PHI=0.220, P<0.000	1.1%, PHI=0.055, P=0.001	0.3%, PHI=0.009, P=0.572	0.1%, PHI=0.009, P=0.572								
	Food for family	*	2.5%, PHI=0.666, P<0.000	2.1%, PHI=0.361, P<0.000	2.2%, PHI=0.512, P<0.000	1.9%, PHI=0.531, P<0.000	2.0%, PHI=0.394, P<0.000									
	Clothes for family	*	3.4%, PHI=0.432, P<0.000	3.4%, PHI=0.373, P<0.000	2.3%, PHI=0.373, P<0.000	2.4%, PHI=0.290, P<0.000										
	Clothes for self	*	2.8%, PHI=0.270, P<0.000	2.8%, PHI=0.270, P<0.000	2.4%, PHI=0.290, P<0.000											
	Place to live	*	2.1%, PHI=0.346, P<0.000	2.1%, PHI=0.346, P<0.000	2.0%, PHI=0.346, P<0.000											
	Other Mark 2	*														

Unweighted N = 3,819

Note: Shaded blocks highlight the items included in each of the factors.

Table 11 shows that the addition of the ‘other (mark 2)’<sup>19</sup> category (the next most strongly associated item) to ‘clothes for family’ and ‘food for family’ reduced the phi coefficient with the remaining items to 0.105. The addition of ‘a place to live’ and ‘clothes for self’ resulted in the loss of a significant association with the remaining items. This was interpreted as meaning there was something different about these items compared to the rest, while those selected were significantly related to each other. At this point, the procedure was terminated, creating a factor consisting of five items – ‘clothes for family’, ‘food for family’, ‘other (mark 2)’, ‘place to live’ and ‘clothes for self’.

**Table 11: Procedure for the inclusion of items in factor 1**

Items in factor	Additional item	Association between factor and additional item	Association between new factor and remaining items	Number of cases in factor
Clothes for family	Food for family	Phi=0.666, p<0.000	Phi=0.118, p<0.000	93
Clothes for family, food for family	Other (mark 2)	Phi=0.558, p=<0.000	Phi=0.105, p<0.000	73
Clothes for family, food for family, other (mark 2)	Place to live	Phi=0.532, p<0.000	Phi=0.105, p<0.000	73
Clothes for family, food for family, other (mark 2), place to live	Clothes for self	Phi=0.393, p=0.000	Phi=0.011, p=0.510	71

*Unweighted N = 3819*

To create the next factor, the matrix in table 10 was again examined to identify the two items (excluding those included in the first factor) that were most strongly associated with each other. These were found to be ‘eating out’ and ‘going out’, with a phi coefficient of 0.508.

<sup>19</sup> ‘Other (mark 1)’ and ‘Other (mark 2)’ refer to the two separate questions (listed above) from which the 16

The procedure outlined for factor 1 was then repeated until the strength of association fell sharply with the inclusion of 'car', as table 12 shows.

**Table 12: Procedure for the inclusion of items in factor 2**

Items in factor	Additional item	Association between factor and additional item	Association between new factor and remaining items	Number of cases in factor
Eating out	Going out	Phi=0.508, p<0.000	Phi=0.215, p<0.000	347
Eating out, going out	Hobby	Phi=0.439, p<0.000	Phi=0.153, p<0.000	152
Eating out, going out, hobby	Other (mark 1)	Phi=0.442, p<0.000	Phi=0.112, p<0.000	75
Eating out, going out, hobby, other (mark1)	Video recorder	Phi=0.480, p<0.000	Phi=0.108, p<0.000	70
Eating out, going out, hobby, other (mark1), video recorder	Records / cassettes / CDs	Phi=0.482, p<0.000	Phi=0.110, p<0.000	70
Eating out, going out, hobby, other (mark1), video recorder, records / cassettes / cds	Car	Phi=0.285, p<0.000	Phi=0.115, p<0.000	69
Eating out, going out, hobby, other (mark1), video recorder, records / cassettes / cds, car	Place of my own to live	Phi=0.247, p<0.000	Phi=0.132, p<0.000	68
Eating out, going out, hobby, other (mark1), video recorder, records / cassettes / cds, car, place of my own to live	Food for family	Phi=0.246, p<0.000	Phi=0.075, p<0.000	22
Eating out, going out, hobby, other (mark1), video recorder, records / cassettes / cds, car, place of my own to live, food for family	Other (mark 2)	Phi=0.347, p<0.000	Phi=0.076, p<0.000	22
Eating out, going out, hobby, other (mark1), video recorder, records / cassettes / cds, car, place of my own to live, food for family, other (mark 2)	Clothes for family	Phi=0.337, p<0.000	Phi=0.076, p<0.000	22
Eating out, going out, hobby, other (mark1), video recorder, records / cassettes / cds, car, place of my own to live, food for family, other (mark 2), clothes for family	Place to live	Phi=0.290, p<0.000	Phi=0.079, p<0.000	22
Eating out, going out, hobby, other (mark1), video recorder, records / cassettes / cds, car, place of my own to live, food for family, other (mark 2), clothes for family, place to live	Clothes for self	Phi=0.219, p<0.000	Phi=0.083, p<0.000	22
Eating out, going out, hobby, other (mark1), video recorder, records / cassettes / cds, car, place of my own to live, food for family, other (mark 2), clothes for family, place to live, clothes for self	Somewhere larger to live	Phi=0.134, p<0.000	Phi=0.109, p<0.000	22
Eating out, going out, hobby, other (mark1), video recorder, records / cassettes / cds, car, place of my own to live, food for family, other (mark 2), clothes for family, place to live, clothes for self, somewhere larger to live	Holiday	Phi=0.111, p<0.000	Phi=-0.01, p<0.000	22

Unweighted N = 3819

items were taken.

At this point, the procedure was terminated as far as variables included in factor 2 were concerned. Factor 2 therefore consisted of 'eating out', 'going out', 'hobby', 'music', 'other (mark 1)' and 'video'. However, the procedure was continued for all remaining variables in order to check how well the items included in factor 2 also loaded on to factor 1. As table 12 indicates, the items in factor 1 were more strongly associated with each other than with the items in factor 2. This provided at least some reassurance that the items included in factors 1 and 2 were different to each other and that the items included in each factor were not just a function of the order in which they were entered.

The procedure was again repeated for factor 3, as shown in table 13. Here, the scenario was slightly different. 'Car' and 'holiday' were found to have the strongest association among the remaining variables. However, the next most strongly associated variable was 'eating out', which had already been included in factor 2. Indeed, there were seven items more strongly associated with factor 2 than factor 3 before an item was found that had not been included in factor 2. This was 'a place of my own to live'. However, this was more strongly related to factor 2 than factor 3 but was nonetheless included as it had not been used elsewhere and was relatively strongly associated with factor 3. Similarly, there were six factor 2 items that were more strongly associated with factor 3 than was 'somewhere larger to live'. However, this item itself was at least more strongly associated with factor 3 than factor 2 (unlike 'a place to live of my own'). At this point, the procedure for including variables into factor 3 was terminated. Factor 3 therefore consisted of 'car', 'holiday', 'a place to live of my own' and 'somewhere larger to live'.

**Table 13: Procedure for the inclusion of items in factor 3**

Items in factor	Additional item	Association between factor and additional item	Association between new factor and remaining items	Number of cases in factor
Car	Holiday	Phi=0.305, p<0.000	Phi=0.257, p<0.000	434
Car, holiday	Eating out	Phi=0.357, p<0.000	n/a	243
Car, holiday	Hobby	Phi=0.336, p<0.000	n/a	139
Car, holiday	Records / cassettes / CDs	Phi=0.323, p<0.000	n/a	135
Car, holiday	Video recorder	Phi=0.308, p<0.000	n/a	125
Car, holiday	Going out	Phi=0.298, p<0.000	n/a	183
Car, holiday	Clothes for self	Phi=0.258, p<0.000	n/a	144
Car, holiday	Other (mark 1)	Phi=0.253, p<0.000	n/a	83
Car, holiday	A place of my own to live	Phi=0.201, p<0.000	Phi=0.194, p<0.000	200
Car, holiday, place of my own to live	Other (mark 1)	Phi=0.371, p<0.000	n/a	74
Car, holiday, place of my own to live	Hobby	Phi=0.361, p<0.000	n/a	95
Car, holiday, place of my own to live	Video recorder	Phi=0.344, p<0.000	n/a	88
Car, holiday, place of my own to live	Records / cassettes / CDs	Phi=0.341, p<0.000	n/a	91
Car, holiday, place of my own to live	Eating out	Phi=0.288, p<0.000	n/a	129
Car, holiday, place of my own to live	Going out	Phi=0.273, p<0.000	n/a	107
Car, holiday, place of my own to live	Somewhere larger to live	Phi=0.223, p<0.000	Phi=0.227, p<0.000	130
Car, holiday, place of my own to live, somewhere larger to live	Other (mark 1)	Phi=0.449, p<0.000	n/a	70
Car, holiday, place of my own to live, somewhere larger to live	Hobby	Phi=0.437, p<0.000	n/a	89
Car, holiday, place of my own to live, somewhere larger to live	Video recorder	Phi=0.419, p<0.000	n/a	83
Car, holiday, place of my own to live, somewhere larger to live	Records / cassettes / CDs	Phi=0.395, p<0.000	n/a	81
Car, holiday, place of my own to live, somewhere larger to live	Going out	Phi=0.312, p<0.000	n/a	92
Car, holiday, place of my own to live, somewhere larger to live	Eating out	Phi=0.294, p<0.000	n/a	101
Car, holiday, place of my own to live, somewhere larger to live	Clothes for family	Phi=0.240, p<0.000	n/a	42
Car, holiday, place of my own to live, somewhere larger to live	Food for family	Phi=0.202, p<0.000	n/a	26
Car, holiday, place of my own to live, somewhere larger to live	A place to live	Phi=0.180, p<0.000	n/a	39
Car, holiday, place of my own to live, somewhere larger to live	Clothes for self	Phi=0.172, p<0.000	n/a	51
Car, holiday, place of my own to live, somewhere larger to live	Other (mark 2)	Phi=0.166, p<0.000	n/a	30
Car, holiday, place of my own to live, somewhere larger to live	Food for self	Phi=0.019, p=0.235	n/a	4

Unweighted N = 3819

The next step was to compute two variables for each of the factors. One represented whether or not an individual felt relatively deprived of any of the items in the relevant factor. The other measure contained the number of items an individual felt deprived of in each factor. These were called RDFACT and RDSCORE respectively. The three factors for each type of measure were then correlated with each other. If the above procedure had worked, one would have expected a low correspondence between factors. The findings presented in tables 14 and 15 demonstrate that the relationship between factors was moderate between factors 1 and 2, and between 1 and 3. (However, it should be noted that the strength of association was slightly lower between 1 and 3 than 1 and 2 in table 14.) The highest level of correlation was between factors 2 and 3 in table 15 and this is, perhaps, unsurprising given the fact that many of the individual items included in factor 2 also correlated highly with factor 3.

**Table 14: Strength of association between nominal level measures of perceived relative deprivation factors (RDFACT)**

	<b>Factor 1</b>	<b>Factor 2</b>	<b>Factor 3</b>
<b>Factor 1</b>	*	Phi=0.349, p<0.001	Phi=0.249, p<0.001
<b>Factor 2</b>		*	Phi=0.328, p<0.001
<b>Factor 3</b>			*

**Table 15: Strength of association between interval level measures of perceived relative deprivation factors (RDSCORE)**

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
Factor 1	*	Rho=0.367, p<0.001	Rho=0.295, p<0.001
Factor 2	*		Rho=0.420, p<0.001
Factor 3		*	

Given the fact that one item in factor 3 was more strongly associated with factor 2, that the strength of association between items in factor 3 were weak and that the association between factors 2 and 3 was fairly high, a decision was made to exclude factor 3 from further analysis. This was because the within factor associations were weak, while the between factor associations were relatively high. The loss of factor 3 is, however, problematic as the items it contained were also the ones most likely to inspire perceptions of relative deprivation, as table 9 indicates. For this reason, it was important to maintain an additional measure of all items combined, which would take account of the items that were in factor 3.

As a further justification for grouping the items included in factors 1 and 2, table 10 indicates that the bivariate associations between items in each factor are fairly high relative to other associations in the table. The lowest phi coefficient is for 'eating out' with 'other (mark 1)' with a phi coefficient of 0.228.

### *Interpreting the factors*

As factor 1 and 2 were generated from statistical analysis, it was necessary to provide an interpretation of what each factor seemed to represent. Factor 1 consists of items that describe basic necessities such as food, clothing and shelter. By contrast, factor 2 describes items associated with ways of spending leisure time, such as going out, pursuing hobbies, listening to music and watching videos. Factor 1 will hereafter be termed 'deprivation of bare necessities', while factor 2 will be termed 'deprivation of leisure pursuits'.

As factor 1 consisted of bare necessities, one might expect to find that this type of deprivation is seldom mentioned as one would presume that the majority of the population would feel they had sufficient food, clothing and shelter. Furthermore, one would expect to find that this factor was associated with actual relative deprivation in the sense that those on the lowest income would be most likely to feel that they lack these bare necessities. In this sense, factor 1 consists of items that could be proxies for absolute deprivation, which almost by definition can be described as acute actual relative deprivation. This, however, assumes that perceptions match actuality. The process by which one perceives oneself to be lacking in necessities need not perfectly match material circumstances. Those who feel deprived of necessities may be relatively affluent in material terms, but may be comparing themselves to others who are even more affluent, or who make perverse purchasing decisions, favouring luxuries over necessities. For example, while one might feel one has been unable to afford clothes for the family, this might be in relation to other families who could afford more, or better quality clothing. Alternatively, one may not perceive oneself to be deprived of these things because one is not making the comparisons to others that would engender such feelings. The point of this is that

even where the most basic needs are concerned, there may be a difference between what one perceives and 'reality'. Absolute deprivation does not necessarily equate to perceptions of absolute deprivation and vice versa, although one would expect them to follow a general linear pattern in which greater actual relative deprivation determines an increased likelihood of feeling relatively deprived of bare necessities. The extent of the association between perceiving oneself to be deprived of bare necessities and the extent of actual relative deprivation experienced, is an issue that will be explored later in this chapter.

From initially examining the sixteen items of deprivation used to create the two factors, the bare necessities group of items is one that was more expected than the leisure pursuits factor. This leisure pursuits factor is one that is arguably less cohesive in its constituent items than is the bare necessities factor. However, the items in factor 2 share the common need to have additional spending power with which to purchase them. For most of us, factor 2 consists of luxury items that will ordinarily only be obtained with disposable income. They are also items over which the perceptions of deprivation are likely to be more 'elastic' in the sense that one might expect perceptions of such deprivation to be found across socio-economic groups. Unlike deprivation of bare necessities, the items of leisure deprivation are more likely to be desired regardless of wealth and perceptions of deprivation in relation to these items are unlikely to be the preserve of the poor. For example, one might always wish one could afford to eat out more (whether it be just a Big Mac and fries or a dinner in a fine restaurant), or to spend more on one's hobby regardless of how much one earns. Perceptions of relative deprivation of leisure pursuits may exist when in reality one is not deprived compared to the majority of others. These are issues that will be explored later in this chapter. This discussion on the relationship between actual and perceived relative deprivation again points to the

importance of taking the comparative reference group into account. The analysis of the YLS was unable to account for this issue, which means that in examining the mismatch between perceptions of relative deprivation and actual relative deprivation, it is assumed that comparisons are being made to general others. This is certainly the case for perceptions of relative deprivation, while for actual relative deprivation it has at least been possible to focus on gender groups which, arguably, are more likely than the general population to be the focus of comparisons. This means that in comparing actual and perceived relative deprivation, there may be cases where, on the measures used, an individual appears to perceive relative deprivation when he is relatively affluent in comparison to most others. However, the reference group with which he is comparing may be more affluent in actual terms and so he is justified in perceiving relative deprivation. This should be borne in mind when examining the following analyses. The analysis does, however, provide an indication of the extent of mismatch between perceptions of relative deprivation in general (that may be affected by a range of comparative reference groups) and actual relative deprivation in comparison to households nationally.

**Do individuals who experience actual relative deprivation also experience perceived relative deprivation?**

Now that we have constructed our measures of actual and perceived relative deprivation, we can begin to explore the first of the research questions. Do those who experience actual relative deprivation also experience perceived relative deprivation, as assumed by earlier studies? To simplify the analysis, the actual relative deprivation variables were collapsed into high and low levels of ARD. This would make it easier to identify a difference in levels of

perceived relative deprivation between high and low groups, especially when represented in tabular form. It was also the precursor of further analysis that divided individuals into four groups of relative deprivation experience, based on whether or not perceived and actual relative deprivation were experienced. As will be clear later, the ordinal level variables were not excluded entirely. Analysis of the strength of association between ordinal measures of actual and perceived relative deprivation are also presented.

The decision on where to divide the categories was based on where the median category was located. Those with up to and including the median category (starting from those with the lowest actual relative deprivation and working up) were designated as low actual relative deprivation and the remainder were high actual relative deprivation. For the ARD variable, this placed 48.3% in the high category and 51.7% in the low category. For ARDMALE and ARDFEM, 45.2% and 38.1% were in the high categories respectively.

Table 16 shows the results of a number of different analyses. Analysis of males employed ARDMALE and analysis of females employed ARDFEM. RDANY indicates perceptions of relative deprivation on any of the 16 items of deprivation examined. The results show that, overall, almost three quarters (73%) of those in households experiencing high actual relative deprivation also perceive relative deprivation of at least one item. This compares to just over half (55%) of those in the low actual relative deprivation group. The fact that such a high proportion of the comparatively affluent also consider they do not have enough of something underlines the fact that such perceptions are not just based on how much one earns and that regardless of income one may feel one wants more of something. However, the issue here is one of degree. Although many of the low actual relative deprivation group may feel deprived

of something, in every analysis presented in table 16, a higher proportion of those in the high actual relative deprivation group feels deprived in comparison to the low actual relative deprivation group. In every case, these differences are statistically significant (based on chi square tests and applying Yates's correction for continuity to 2x2 contingency tables). These findings are reassuring, as they suggest that the measures are operating in the correct direction. Greater levels of actual relative deprivation are associated with an increased likelihood of perceiving relative deprivation, and perceiving it in respect of more things. Table 16 shows that individuals in both high and low actual relative deprivation groups are more likely to feel deprived of an item in factor 2 (deprivation of leisure pursuits) than factor 1 (deprivation of bare necessities). However, the differences between high and low actual relative deprivation were more marked with factor 1 than factor 2. This is what one would expect. As factor 1 consists of items that could be proxies for absolute deprivation, it follows that one would expect a much higher proportion among those experiencing high actual relative deprivation (and by implication could also be absolutely deprived) than among those in the low actual relative deprivation group. The differences between factors 1 and 2 may also be partly attributed to perceptions of factor 2 being more 'elastic'. More low ARD individuals are likely to feel deprived of such items (compared to factor 1) because they consist of the type of things that, regardless of how much one earns, one is likely to want more of, especially if compared to others. Indeed, the fact that well over a third of those in the low ARD category felt deprived of an item in factor 2 bears testament to that fact.

**Table 16: Percentage of those in high / low actual relative deprivation groups who also feel deprived of an item in factor 1, factor 2 or any item.**

	Males			Females			All		
	RDFACT1	RDFACT2	RDANY	RDFACT1	RDFACT2	RDANY	RDFACT1	RDFACT2	RDANY
Low ARD	9.2	18.3	53.5	16.1	25.9	58.2	12.0	21.1	54.8
High ARD	17.7	31.1	68.0	33.7	49.6	82.4	24.2	38.4	73.1
Significance	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**
Unweighted N	1289	1289	1289	1474	1474	1474	2763	2763	2763

\*\* = p<0.000

It would also appear that females are more likely than males to perceive deprivation. Across each of the three aggregate variables, a greater proportion of females than males *feel* deprived. Furthermore, this peaks among those in the high actual relative deprivation group who feel deprived of any of the 16 items. Eighty two percent of females in the high ARD group feel such deprivation compared to 68% among the male sample<sup>20</sup>.

The analysis comparing actual relative deprivation and perceived relative deprivation was repeated on ordinal level variables, being the number of different items of which one was or felt deprived, with Spearman's Rho being used to test the strength of association. The results presented in table 17 were similar to those in table 16. In essence, the more actual relative deprivation one experiences, the more things one is likely to perceive oneself to be deprived of. The strength of association was weakest for factor 1 (deprivation of bare necessities) and

<sup>20</sup> In examining the grouped measure of ARDFEM, there was concern that the results in table 16 may have been due to the proportionally smaller high ARD group for females resulting in identifying a group who particularly feel perceived relative deprivation. The unequal grouping had been due to the median falling into a rather wide category that stretched from 48.6% to 61.9%. The analysis was therefore repeated on a measure of ARDFEM that divided high / low at the previous category, which placed 48.5% in the low ARD category and 51.5% in the high ARD category. This was a little closer to the divisions on the ARD and ARDMALE variables. This new variable resulted in similar results to those presented in table 16. For example, among those in the high ARD category, 29.9% felt deprived of an item in factor 1, 44.9% felt deprived of an item in

strongest for RDTOTAL (a measure of the total number of items that individuals feel relatively deprived of from the total group of 16). This may be because of a 'floor' effect, ie that variation in the number of bare necessities of which people were deprived was slight, and masked by idiosyncratic responding. Across the board, the associations were stronger for females than for males.

**Table 17: Strength of association (based on Spearman's Rho) actual relative deprivation by perceived relative deprivation using ordinal level variables**

		ARDMALE	ARDFEM	ARD
Male	<b>RDSCORE1</b>	0.150***		
	<b>RDSCORE2</b>	0.181***		
	<b>RDTOTAL</b>	0.244***		
Female	<b>RDSCORE1</b>		0.200***	
	<b>RDSCORE2</b>		0.276***	
	<b>RDTOTAL</b>		0.336***	
All	<b>RDSCORE1</b>			0.174***
	<b>RDSCORE2</b>			0.223***
	<b>RDTOTAL</b>			0.296***
Unweighted N		1289	1474	2763

Significance: \*\*\*=p<0.000

The fact that females perceive higher levels of relative deprivation on all measures examined here and the stronger association between actual and perceived relative deprivation that they exhibit, underlines the importance of keeping females in the analysis. In the remainder of this chapter, data on females will be included separately for analysis. Although the original purpose was to explain burglary committed by young men, the high incidence of perceived relative deprivation among young women suggests it may be more relevant for explaining female criminality than male criminality. It may alternatively be an indication of the weakness of

factor 2 and 77.8% felt deprived of any of the 16 items. Furthermore, all differences between high and low

perceived relative deprivation as an explanation for crime. If perceived relative deprivation is more prevalent among young women, yet crime is more prevalent among young men, then perceived relative deprivation may simply be a poor measure for discriminating between those that commit crime and those that do not.

One of the criticisms that could be cited at the analyses presented in tables 16 and 17 is that they take no account of how disposable income is shared within a household. While the analysis of actual relative deprivation examines inter-household comparisons, it fails to account for intra-household comparisons. The extent to which one perceives relative deprivation may partly be a function of the share of the household income that is spent on one. Therefore, one might expect that individuals who receive a smaller share of the household income to be more likely to perceive relative deprivation compared to individuals who live in households receiving a similar level of income but who receive a greater share of that household income. One response to this would be to point out that at least this analysis attempts to examine the extent of perceived relative deprivation, rather than just assuming it exists, as is the case with most other studies in this field. However, it was possible to test one of the most likely causes of unequal shares of household income. One might hypothesise that for a given level of income, individuals in smaller households would be *less* likely to perceive relative deprivation than would larger households, on the basis that they receive a greater proportion of the income and are therefore more able to acquire that of which they perceived they were deprived. Stratifying the analysis in table 16 by size of household produced the opposite to that anticipated.

**Table 18: Proportion of individuals in high / low ARD households who perceived relative deprivation by size of household**

		Proportion perceiving relative deprivation					
Number in individuals in household	Level of actual relative deprivation	RDFACT1	Test of association (Cramers V)	RDFACT2	Test of association (Cramers V)	RDANY	Test of association (Cramer
1-2	Low	10.3% (36)	V=0.23, p<0.001	20.7% (72)	V=0.29, p<0.001	53.4% (186)	V=
	High	28.8% (122)		48.8% (207)		79.0% (335)	p<
3-4	Low	12.5% (92)	V=0.18, p<0.001	16.8% (124)	V=0.19, p<0.001	51.2% (377)	V=
	High	26.8% (203)		33.8% (256)		71.9% (545)	p<
5 or more	Low	10.8% (23)	V=0.10, p=0.03	16.9% (36)	V=0.21, p<0.001	51.2% (109)	V=
	High	17.8% (50)		35.6% (100)		71.2% (200)	p<

Table 18 shows that for each of the three measures of perceived relative deprivation, individuals in small households experiencing high actual relative deprivation are *more* likely to perceive relative deprivation than are individuals living in large households that experience high actual relative deprivation. For example, 22.8% of those in high ARD households with 1-2 individuals perceived relative deprivation of an item in RDFACT1 (bare necessities), compared to 17.8% of those in households with five or more members. Furthermore, the strength of the association between actual and perceived relative deprivation is stronger for small households than it is for large households across all three measures. These findings indicate that, rather than large households being associated with a greater prevalence of perceived relative deprivation (as hypothesised), they are associated with lower levels. This is, however, a complex area that would require a significant amount of further analysis to explore why this should be the case. For the purposes of the present thesis, it is suffice to conclude that the criticism that perceived relative deprivation is mediated by household size, in the sense of larger households experiencing more perceived relative deprivation, is not borne out by the data.

## **Does experience of actual relative deprivation affect the likelihood of an individual engaging in crime?**

We now begin to examine the relationship between relative deprivation and crime. As chapter 3 highlighted, many previous studies which examined the relationship between relative deprivation and crime at the aggregate level operationalised relative deprivation in terms of household income inequality. The assumption behind these studies was that those in households suffering from the highest income inequality were most likely to commit crime. Here we put this assumption to the test by examining whether individuals who live in households with low incomes compared to others are generally more likely than the comparatively affluent to be involved in crime. It should be noted that this is by no means a perfect test as it is based on nationwide income inequalities as the YLS survey was itself a nationwide study. However, most of the previous studies have been based on local / community wide income inequalities. The nationwide approach is perhaps less relevant as it would be reasonable to assume that income differences and comparisons based on such differences would be more likely to occur at the local community level. One is more likely to compare oneself to one's neighbour than to others in far away towns<sup>21</sup>. The following analysis examines whether having less income compared to others nationally affects the likelihood of involvement in crime.

Analysis was undertaken of the prevalence of offending in relation to burglary, offences similar to burglary (as defined in chapter 4), all property crime and any crime. Both crime committed ever and crime committed in the last year were examined in separate analyses. These results

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<sup>21</sup> Stack (1984), however, argued that nationwide comparisons are relevant, but found no significant statistical association between income inequality and crime at the national level.

were then further subdivided by age and sex. The age groups were designed to represent key stages of development. Those aged 12 to 16 consist of those who are (at least in theory) attending school, those aged 17 to 21 consist of those in their early years of employment and represent the period of transition from school to work. Those aged 22 to 30 represent those who are likely to be setting up their own households. These groups also coincide with the legal and penal differentiation of age groups. However, they differ slightly from those used by Flood-Page et al (2000), who tended to combine 12 to 17 year olds. Here it was felt important to draw the divisions at 12 and 16 years because examining relative deprivation among those (in theory at least) still at school, was felt more relevant than achieving consistency in all respects with the previous report. The results of this analysis are presented in appendix D.

Of the 96 analyses of differences between those who were and those who were not in a position of actual relative deprivation, only six produced statistically significant results (based on Chi Square tests and applying Yates's correction for continuity to 2x2 contingency tables). This is almost precisely what one might expect if the results had been random. For example, at the 95% level of confidence (although 99% is used through most of this report) one might expect to find an association in five out every 100 tests examined. Here, six significant results were found out of 96 conducted, so one should conclude there is little to read into these results, and indeed they show a resounding lack of association between actual relative deprivation and crime. The paucity of significant results is interesting when contrasted with the results for perceived relative deprivation, presented later in this chapter.

The six statistically significant results in relation to crime and actual relative deprivation are presented in Table 19. Just one of these related specifically to burglary. Among 12 to 16 year

olds (of both sexes combined) 2.4% of those experiencing actual relative deprivation had committed burglary in the last year, compared to 0.2% of the non relatively deprived. Those experiencing actual relative deprivation are therefore 12 times more likely to have engaged in burglary in the last year than are relatively non-deprived 12 to 16 year olds. Tempting as it is to interpret this, the temptation should be eschewed, for the reasons set out above.

**Table 19: Groups of respondents who experience actual relative deprivation and their offending prevalence (statistically significant results only)**

Sex	Age	Offence Type	Prevalence of offending among low ARD group	Prevalence of offending among high ARD group
Both sexes	12 to 16	Burglary in the last year	0.2%	2.4%
Females	17 to 21	Property crime ever	24.9%	40.9%
Both sexes	22 to 30	Property crime ever	47.6%	40.1%
Both sexes	22 to 30	Any crime ever	52.6%	44.6%
Both sexes	22 to 30	Any crime in last year	17.0%	11.2%
Both sexes	22 to 30	Any property crime in last year	14.6%	9.5%

Table 19 also shows that there was only one gender specific result. Females aged 17 to 21 who experienced actual relative deprivation were considerably more likely to have 'ever committed' a property offence than were others (40.9% compared to 24.9%). The remaining four significant results are also interesting. They each show significant results for those aged 22 to 30 (for both sexes combined). However, these results are not in the anticipated direction. All four results indicate that the more affluent are more likely to commit crime than those experiencing actual relative deprivation. This runs counter to what one would expect, given the relative deprivation-crime theory.

### **Does perceived relative deprivation affect the likelihood of an individual engaging in crime?**

The relationship between actual relative deprivation and crime can be contrasted with the position of perceived relative deprivation. While the former does not generally appear to be related to crime, the latter was found to be related to crime in numerous instances. Perceived relative deprivation was examined using the three dichotomous variables - RDFACT1 (deprived of bare necessities), RDFACT2 (deprived of leisure pursuits) and RDANY (deprived of any of 16 items). These were then analysed in terms of the prevalence of offending in a similar manner to that employed for actual relative deprivation. The results of this analysis are presented in Appendix E.

Of the 288 tests of significance (based on Chi Square tests) conducted in Appendix E, 57 were found to yield statistically significant results. Furthermore, unlike the results for actual relative deprivation, every one of the 57 results were in the expected direction, with the presence of perceptions of relative deprivation being associated with

higher prevalence of offending. This is an important finding and points to the likelihood of an association between perceived relative deprivation and crime. It also provides the first indication that perceptions of relative deprivation may be more important than actual relative deprivation in explaining involvement in crime. While very few (5%) of the tests for relationships between actual relative deprivation and crime reached a conventional level of statistical reliability, many more were found for the relationship between perceived relative deprivation and crime (accounting for 20% of significance tests carried out). Furthermore, the fact that the findings are so uniform in direction is remarkable and inspires confidence that the pattern is based in reality. In no case is a high level of perceived relative deprivation associated with a low level of criminality. Perceived relative deprivation is associated with higher levels of offending and this holds true regardless of age and sex and across a range of offence types. The findings that were found to be statistically significant have been presented in tables 20 to 22.

**Table 20: Groups of respondents who feel relatively deprived of an item in factor one (deprived of bare necessities) and their offending prevalence (statistically significant results only)**

Sex	Age	Offence Type	Prevalence of offending among PRD group	Prevalence of offending among non PRD group
Males	All ages	Property crime ever	47.2%	57.2%
Females	All ages	Property crime ever	30.2%	37.1%
Both sexes	All ages	Property crime ever	39.2%	45.0%
Males	17 to 21	Any ever	63.4%	78.0%
Females	22 to 30	Any ever	33.3%	43.6%
Females	All ages	Any ever	34.7%	43.1%
Males	17 to 21	Offences similar to burglary last year	1.9%	9.0%
Males	17 to 21	Property crime last year	18.1%	32.3%

**Table 21: Groups of respondents who feel relatively deprived of an item in factor two (deprived of leisure pursuits) and their offending prevalence (statistically significant results only)**

Sex	Age	Offence Type	Prevalence of offending among PRD group	Prevalence of offending among non PRD group
Female	12 to 16	Burglary ever	1.6%	7.8%
Female	22 to 30	Burglary ever	0.5%	3.0%
Female	All ages	Burglary ever	1.0%	3.4%
Both sexes	12 to 16	Burglary ever	2.6%	6.5%
Both sexes	All ages	Burglary ever	3.2%	4.9%
Female	22 to 30	Offences similar to burglary ever	2.4%	6.3%
Male	All ages	Property crime ever	46.8%	54.1%
Female	12 to 16	Property crime ever	24.1%	42.3%
Female	22 to 30	Property crime ever	28.9%	39.3%
Female	All ages	Property crime ever	28.4%	38.3%
Both sexes	12 to 16	Property crime ever	28.9%	42.3%
Both sexes	All ages	Property crime ever	38.3%	44.9%
Female	12 to 16	Any ever	31.4%	46.8%
Female	22 to 30	Any ever	30.9%	43.5%
Female	All ages	Any ever	32.9%	43.7%
Both sexes	All ages	Any ever	45.7%	51.0%
Female	12 to 16	Burglary last year	0.2%	3.5%
Male	17 to 21	Offences similar to burglary last year	1.5%	7.8%
Female	12 to 16	Offences similar to burglary last year	0.6%	4.2%
Female	12 to 16	Property crime last year	7.8%	17.9%

**Table 22: Groups of respondents who feel relatively deprived of any item and their offending prevalence (statistically significant results only)**

Sex	Age	Offence Type	Prevalence of offending	Prevalence of offending among PRD group
Female	12 to 16	Burglary ever	0.9%	4.5%
Female	All ages	Burglary ever	0.7%	2.4%
Male	17 to 21	Property crime ever	42.9%	59.6%
Male	22 to 30	Property crime ever	46.8%	59.7%
Male	All ages	Property crime ever	41.8%	53.0%
Female	12 to 16	Property crime ever	20.9%	34.7%
Female	17 to 21	Property crime ever	18.5%	38.8%
Female	All ages	Property crime ever	22.7%	36.1%
Both sexes	12 to 16	Property crime ever	27.4%	35.4%
Both sexes	17 to 21	Property crime ever	32.3%	49.0%
Both sexes	22 to 30	Property crime ever	39.1%	45.9%
Both sexes	All ages	Property crime ever	32.9%	44.2%
Male	17 to 21	Any ever	54.3%	71.5%
Male	22 to 30	Any ever	56.1%	66.4%
Male	All ages	Any ever	51.9%	61.5%
Female	12 to 16	Any ever	27.0%	42.3%
Female	17 to 21	Any ever	23.1%	45.0%
Female	All ages	Any ever	26.9%	41.1%
Both sexes	17 to 21	Any ever	40.9%	58.1%
Both sexes	All ages	Any ever	40.6%	50.8%
Male	17 to 21	Property crime last year	11.3%	25.1%
Male	All ages	Property crime last year	14.5%	20.1%
Female	All ages	Property crime last year	6.3%	10.6%
Both sexes	17 to 21	Property crime last year	9.8%	20.1%
Both sexes	All ages	Property crime last year	10.8%	15.2%
Male	17 to 21	Any crime last year	23.3%	37.1%
Male	All ages	Any crime last year	22.4%	28.5%
Both sexes	17 to 21	Any crime last year	17.7%	26.7%
Both sexes	All ages	Any crime last year	16.3%	20.1%

Where an examination of sex is concerned, 25 (44%) of the significant results were attributable to females, while 16 (28%) were from males (the remainder being for both sexes combined). Therefore, just as females are more likely to perceive themselves to be deprived, those who do perceive themselves to be deprived are more likely to engage in crime. Furthermore, Table 21 above shows that over half of the significant results for females are in relation to feeling relatively deprived of leisure pursuits. This would suggest that, for females, there may be something particularly criminogenic about feeling deprived of leisure pursuits, or that the criminally inclined are more demanding of leisure activities. Where age was concerned, tables 20 to 22 show that 12 (21%) of significant results were attributable to the 12 to 16 year old group, 14 (25%) to 17 to 21 year olds and 8 (14%) were attributed to 22 to 30 year olds. These would suggest that there are not major differences between age groups in the prevalence of offending among those who perceive themselves to be relatively deprived. As a further test of this assertion, analysis was undertaken to examine whether there were any statistically significant differences in the prevalence of offending between age groups among those perceiving relative deprivation. Table 23 shows that, on the whole, there were not significant differences between ages in the prevalence of offending of those perceiving themselves as deprived. The exceptions to this were for those who felt deprived of any item, where the prevalence of property offending and any offending was significantly lower among 12 to 16 year olds and higher among 17 to 21 year olds.

**Table 23: Differences between age groups in the percentage of individuals feeling relatively deprived who have ever committed an offence**

	12 to 16	17 to 21	22 to 30	Significance	Unweighted N
<b>RDFACT1</b>					
Burglary	2.0	1.8	4.0	ns	706
Offence similar to burglary	5.8	9.9	9.8	ns	719
Property offence	35.9	50.2	45.4	ns	719
Any offence	42.8	57.5	50.0	ns	706
<b>RDFACT2</b>					
Burglary	6.5	4.7	4.3	ns	1080
Offence similar to burglary	11.7	10.2	12.3	ns	1106
Property offence	42.3	42.3	47.1	ns	1106
Any offence	46.2	52.4	52.1	ns	1080
<b>RDANY</b>					
Burglary	4.1	4.1	4.3	ns	2394
Offence similar to burglary	9.3	12.1	11.6	ns	2446
Property offence	35.4	49.0	45.9	**	2446
Any offence	42.9	58.1	50.6	**	2395

*Analysis of offence type*

Tables 20, 21 and 22 also show which type of offence group the significant findings involved. Where burglary was concerned, eight (14%) results were significant. Six of these were involved feeling relative deprivation in relation to RDFACT2 - leisure pursuits, five of which were in relation to committing burglary ever in the past. Of the eight significant results for burglary, six were for females while the remaining two were for both sexes combined.

Offences similar to burglary produced just four significant results, three of which were in relation to offences committed in the last year. Three of the four results were also in relation to feeling relatively deprived of an item in factor 2 - leisure pursuits.

Property crime in general was by far the most common offence to generate significant results, with 26 (46%) of the significant results relating to this category. Only seven of these were for offences committed in the last year. Over half of the significant results for property offending were in relation to feeling relatively deprived of any item.

Finally, offending of any kind generated 19 (33%) statistically significant results. Most of these (12) were in relation to feeling relatively deprived of any item. Furthermore, 15 of the significant results were for offending ever and only four for offending in the last year.

*Summarising the results of the relationship between actual and perceived relative deprivation and crime.*

On the whole, actual relative deprivation as operationalised in the current study is a poor variable for discriminating between offenders and non-offenders. Indeed, where it does, it runs in the opposite direction to that expected in the majority of cases. For the purposes of the current study, an important result relates to 12 to 16 years olds involved in burglary. However, even here the result was only significant when both males and females were combined, which suggests that actual relative deprivation as defined here is not an important factor in explaining young men's involvement in crime.

Perceived relative deprivation would appear to be a much more strongly related variable to involvement in crime than is actual relative deprivation. All the significant results found were in the expected direction, with those who perceive themselves to be deprived being most likely to engage in crime. The results failing to meet conventional

levels of statistical confidence nonetheless were in the predicted direction. Perceived relative deprivation appears to be even more relevant for female than for male criminality. Where burglary and offences like burglary are concerned, feeling deprived of leisure pursuits seems to be the most relevant type of perceived deprivation. This stands in contrast to property offending in general and any offending, where feeling deprived of any item is most common.

### **Perceived relative deprivation and opportunity**

In this chapter so far, we have seen that perceived relative deprivation is more frequently associated with involvement in crime than actual relative deprivation. This analysis has not taken account of the income the individual has to purchase the items that are desired and thereby negate the feeling of deprivation. As we have already seen, there is a weak but significant relationship between actual and perceived relative deprivation, but are those who are deprived and who feel deprived more likely to commit property crime? Previous theory would suggest that this is the case. Studies of actual relative deprivation employing aggregate level data have assumed that those with the least income relative to others are most likely to engage in crime. Theories such as Merton's (1938) anomie and Cloward and Ohlin's (1960) delinquency and opportunity are based on the assumption that individuals perceive themselves to be deprived relative to others and find that their legitimate opportunities for acquiring that which they desire are blocked. Involvement in crime is one method of resolving this problem. These theories assume that crime will be concentrated in the lowest socio-economic groups because they are least likely to have access to methods of legitimate income generation that would generate sufficient income to obtain that which is

desired. One would therefore expect to find that those on the highest income are less likely to engage in crime when they feel perceived relative deprivation because they are most likely to have the income to purchase goods and services to resolve this sense of deprivation. In the language of anomie theory, the legitimate opportunities of higher income earners are by definition less blocked than those of low income earners.

To explore this issue, analysis was undertaken of the relationship between perceived relative deprivation and property crime ever for high and low income households. Households were divided into those with an income above £15,000 per year and those with an income below that figure. The results were quite different from those anticipated from anomie theory. Table 24 shows the results of significance tests (using Chi Square) of the relationship between three measures of perceived relative deprivation and property crime ever. The table shows, for example, that among males in households earning less than £15,000, those who perceive themselves to be deprived of any item (RDANY) are more likely (51.5%) to have committed a property crime ever, than are those who do not feel deprived of any item (38.3%). The interesting issue is that this difference holds for those earning more than £15,000 too, where 55.8% of those who feel deprived of any item have committed a property offence ever, compared to 44.2% among those who do not feel deprived. The important finding to emerge from this table is that there is a statistically significant relationship between perceptions of relative deprivation and crime on at least one of the three measures employed for the total sample and for males and females separately. Where the total sample is concerned, a greater proportion of those who felt deprived of leisure pursuits or any item, had previously engaged in property crime, compared to those who didn't feel deprived of such items. Furthermore, this relationship held regardless of household

income. Both those in relatively affluent and relatively deprived households were more likely to engage in property crime when they felt deprived of leisure pursuits or any item.

As just noted, among males, this relationship held for RDANY. Those feeling deprived of any item were more likely to have committed a property offence than those who didn't feel deprived in this way. This held for both high and low income households. For females, the common factor was feeling deprived of leisure pursuits, where such perceptions were associated with high rates of property offending. These were consistent across income bands.

These findings call into question the traditional perspective from the anomie and strain schools of thought. If the findings had corresponded to these theories, one might have expected those who feel deprived but who have low incomes to have been more likely to engage in property crime than the non deprived because such offending could be considered a legitimate response to perceived need in the absence of other legitimate channels of acquisition. One would not have expected those on the higher incomes to be as likely to engage in property crime, even when they perceived relative deprivation, because they were more likely to acquire that of which they were deprived legitimately. This was not the case. Indeed, there was very little difference in the offending prevalence of those experiencing perceived relative deprivation in the high and low household income groups.

**Table 24: Proportion of respondents committing a property offence ever who feel / don't feel perceived relative deprivation by household income**

Household income	Feel relatively deprived?	Male			Female			All		
		RDFACT1	RDFACT2	RDANY	RDFACT1	RDFACT2	RDANY	RDFACT1	RDFACT2	RDANY
Less than £15,000	No	53.1	43.0	38.3	38.8	26.0	25.7	43.4	34.7	32.
	Yes	45.4	56.6	51.5	28.3	39.9	34.3	36.5	45.7	41.
	Significance	Ns	**	*	*	***	ns	ns	***	
£15,000 or more	No	53.7	49.3	44.2	31.6	27.2	23.8	40.8	39.5	35.
	Yes	50.2	56.3	55.8	29.1	36.1	33.5	40.7	45.6	45.
	Significance	ns	ns	***	ns	**	**	ns	*	**

**Which of the four conceptual relationships between relative deprivation and crime are best at explaining involvement in crime?**

Chapter 3 set out four possible groupings of people according to actual and perceived relative deprivation:

- a. where neither actual nor perceived relative deprivation are present?
- b. where actual relative deprivation is present and perceived relative deprivation is absent?
- c. where actual relative deprivation is absent and perceived relative deprivation is present?
- d. where both actual relative deprivation and perceived relative deprivation are present?

The question is, which one of these groups is most likely to engage in crime? The assumption of previous studies has been that those in group d. – who experience both actual and perceived relative deprivation - are most likely to engage in crime. To explore this issue, a series of analyses were undertaken, the results of which are presented in Appendix F due to the volume of tables involved. The four groups were created by taking the ARD, ARDMALE and ARDFEM measures of actual relative deprivation (for analyses of all respondents, males and females respectively) and using the high / low categorisation of these as previously used in table 16 above. For the perceived relative deprivation measures, RDFACT1 RDFACT2 and RDANY were used which indicate whether or not an individual felt deprived of any of the items in factor 1 or 2 or any item respectively. These two types of measures were used to create four categories of relative deprivation experience as follows:

***ARD Low & No PRD*** is used to represent the position where neither actual nor perceived relative deprivation are present.

***ARD Low & With PRD*** is used to represent the position where actual relative deprivation is absent and perceived relative deprivation is present.

***ARD High & No PRD*** is used to represent the position where actual relative deprivation is present and perceived relative deprivation is absent.

***ARD High & With PRD*** is used to represent the position where both actual relative deprivation and perceived relative deprivation are present.

Overall, 144 tests for statistically significant results were undertaken to explore for associations between the four relative deprivation groups and the prevalence of involvement in crime ever. Of these, 22 (15 %) yielded significant associations.

The most common pattern in the significant results involved respondents who experienced low actual relative deprivation where perceived relative deprivation was present having the highest prevalence of offending. Twelve of the 22 significant results conformed to this pattern. The remainder of the significant results (10) related to the highest offending prevalence among those with high actual relative deprivation where perceived relative deprivation was present. The findings show that (ever) offending prevalence would always appear to be highest when perceived relative deprivation is experienced. Furthermore, while half conform to what previous studies on the relative deprivation – crime relationship would have predicted (offending prevalence highest where both actual and perceived relative deprivation is experienced), half of the results do not. With the assumption of many other studies in this area being that actual relative deprivation inspires perceptions of deprivation which inspires involvement in crime, the finding that many of the highest offending prevalence rates are among those experiencing low actual relative deprivation runs contrary to these earlier studies and is therefore an important finding. Equally important is the absence of statistically significant results involving the highest offending prevalence where perceived relative deprivation is absent. These overall results may suggest that, in explaining offending

ever, the presence of perceived relative deprivation may be more important than actual relative deprivation.

Separate analyses were conducted to see whether males, females and all respondents falling into each of the four groups were likely to have ever been involved in various types of crime. Appendix F shows the full results, while Table 25 summarises the statistically significant findings. Overall, there were 10 (28%) statistically significant results out of the 36 tests that were conducted when the findings were broken down by sex. Where burglary is concerned, Tables F1 to F3 in Appendix F show that there is no statistically significant difference in the proportion of each group who have ever been involved in burglary. Those who perceive relative deprivation are therefore no more likely than those who don't experience such deprivation to be involved in burglary. These findings hold for both males (of particular interest in this study) as well as females. Therefore, one can assume that the frequency with which relative deprivation is perceived is unrelated to burglary committed by young men. This provides evidence to refute one of the main hypotheses of this study – that young men are motivated to engage in burglary as a result of perceptions of relative deprivation. However, it should be noted that these findings are based on very small sample sizes and this is likely to have hampered the possibility of obtaining significant results.

The analysis was repeated to see if there was any association with individuals who had committed similar property crimes to burglary (see chapter 4 for a description of how this was derived). These results, shown in Tables F4 to F6, in Appendix F demonstrate

that, as with burglary, involvement in these other related offences is not influenced by relative deprivation.

A third analysis involved those who had ever committed any form of acquisitive property offence, based on the list in table 5. Table 25 shows that for the sample as a whole, as well as for males and females separately, those who feel deprived of any of the 16 items of deprivation (RDANY), but who experience low actual relative deprivation were most likely to have ever committed a property crime. Least likely to have ever committed a property offence were those who experienced actual relative deprivation without perceiving themselves to be deprived. These findings run contrary to previous thinking on the relative deprivation - crime link, which had assumed that those most likely to engage in crime were those experiencing high actual relative deprivation. Here we see that those most likely to engage in property crime have low actual relative deprivation, but do perceive themselves to be deprived. This is a group that most previous studies would have failed to identify because they were concentrating on actual, rather than perceived relative deprivation. The fact that such offending is least likely when actual relative deprivation is high and perceived relative deprivation is absent also lends support for the need to examine perceptions of deprivation and not just household income disparities as dealt with by most other studies in this field.

**Table 25: Statistically significant associations between the ARD / PRD classification and the prevalence of involvement in crime ever by sex**

Sex	Type of PRD	Type of offence	ARD low /	ARD low /	ARD High /	ARD High
			no PRD	with PRD	no PRD	/ with PRD
			Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Male	RDANY	Property crime ever	44.2	56.2	39.5	51.9
Female	RDANY	Property crime ever	24.0	33.5	24.4	33.3
Both sexes	RDANY	Property crime ever	34.9	45.9	33.0	41.2
Male	RDFACT2	Property crime ever	49.7	54.8	43.6	57.9
Female	RDFACT2	Property crime ever	27.3	35.5	24.6	38.9
Both sexes	RDFACT2	Property crime ever	39.8	44.5	35.0	45.6
Male	RDANY	Any crime ever	54.5	64.9	50.5	58.3
Female	RDANY	Any crime ever	28.2	39.0	29.2	37.5
Both sexes	RDANY	Any crime ever	42.1	52.4	41.9	46.9
Female	RDFACT2	Any crime ever	31.9	41.7	29.1	43.1

Table F9 (and Table 25 above), however, shows a quite different result when the analysis focuses on those who feel deprived of an item in factor 2 – leisure pursuits. Across all groups, those who experience high actual relative deprivation and perceive themselves to be deprived are most likely to have previously committed a property offence. This peaks for males, where 58% of those experiencing both actual and perceived relative deprivation have previously committed a property crime. These figures are higher than the property offending prevalence for males as a whole. Indeed,

48% of males had previously committed a property offence – considerably below the prevalence rates noted above.

A fourth analysis was conducted for those ever committing any crime, with the findings presented in Tables F10 to F12 in Appendix F and summarised in Table 25 above. F10 (based on perceived deprivation of any item) shows that there are significant differences between groups in the proportion ever offending for males, females and all respondents. In each case, those with low actual relative deprivation but where perceived relative deprivation is present were most likely to commit any crime. By contrast, Table F12 (based on perceptions of deprivation of leisure pursuits) shows a significant difference in the offending rates of females, with those experiencing both actual and perceived relative deprivation most likely to be involved in offending of any kind.

*What can we conclude from the differences between sexes in Appendix F?*

From the findings presented in Appendix F and summarised in table 25, we can draw a number of general conclusions. In every case where there are significant differences between groups, those with the highest offending prevalence rates involve groups where perceived relative deprivation is present. Furthermore, the patterns for males and females show very similar results. For both males and females there are significant differences between groups in terms of the rates of committing any property crime. When perceived relative deprivation involves an item in factor 2 (leisure pursuits), the pattern is in the expected direction, with those experiencing both actual and perceived relative deprivation most likely to engage in property crime. However, these are the

only cases that exhibit the expected pattern. Both males and females who experience low actual relative deprivation and perceive themselves deprived of any of the 16 items of deprivation are more likely than other groups of relative deprivation experience to engage in property crime, or indeed, any crime. The only difference between males and females can be found in Table F12. Females who experience high actual relative deprivation and perceive themselves deprived of leisure pursuits are significantly more likely to engage in any type of crime than are other groups of females. The corresponding analysis for males did not produce significant results.

From these findings we can conclude that burglary may be too specific an offence on which to examine relative deprivation, at least when analysed in the small numbers available from the YLS. However, among both males and females who commit acquisitive property crime in general, offending prevalence rates are highest among those who experience high actual relative deprivation and who perceive themselves as deprived of leisure pursuits. These findings are in line with what would be expected from previous area based studies employing aggregate level data. This is an important result. It does not necessarily refute the general theme of this thesis. As outlined in chapter 1, burglary was chosen for this study as it represented the epitome of an acquisitive property offence. The fact that acquisitive property crime in general shows significant results would indicate that being deprived relative to others and feeling a sense of deprivation in relation to leisure pursuits may be instrumental in motivating young men and women into this form of offending.

Perhaps as important a finding is the fact that there were more significant analyses involving the highest offending prevalence where actual relative deprivation was low and perceived relative deprivation was present. Of the ten significant results, six involved patterns of this kind. Traditional analyses of relative deprivation and crime would have failed to identify such results. This would seem to add weight to the importance of examining this relationship at the individual level and of measuring perceived relative deprivation directly.

There are, however, a number of deficiencies in this analysis. For example, it only takes account of differences in what Runciman (1966) called the frequency of relative deprivation and ignores other facets such as the magnitude and degree (see Appendix C for a discussion on the definition and categorisation of relative deprivation). Chapter 6 attempts to examine some of these issues in more detail. There is also a question over whether there are differences between age groups. For example, would one expect a closer relationship between relative deprivation groups and crime among school children who face the peer group pressures of the play ground, or among young adults who are in the workplace and who may have their own families to provide for? Analysis of actual and perceived relative deprivation on their own uncovered many significant results for specific age groups, although overall the number of such results were similar between ages. The following pages therefore repeat the above analysis for different age groups.

Tables F13 to F24 provide an analysis of sex by age group. The analysis of age groups produced some interesting findings. Of the 108 separate analyses undertaken to produce

tables F13 to F24, 12 (11%) of these produced statistically significant results and these are summarised in Table 26 below. Six of these significant results were for the female sample, while only one was for the male sample (the remainder being for *all* respondents). Of the six involving females, four exhibited the expected pattern of highest offending prevalence among those experiencing both actual and perceived relative deprivation. The only significant finding for the male sample showed that offending prevalence was highest when actual relative deprivation was low and perceived relative deprivation was present.

**Table 26: Statistically significant associations between the ARD / PRD classification and the prevalence of involvement in crime ever by age and sex**

Age	Sex	Type of PRD	Type of offence	ARD low	ARD low /	ARD High	ARD High /
				/ no PRD	with PRD	/ no PRD	with PRD
				Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
17 to 21	Both	RDANY	Property crime ever	30.0	46.5	46.9	49.7
	sexes						
22 to 30	Male	RDANY	Property crime ever	50.5	65.1	42.5	58.5
22 to 30	Both	RDANY	Property crime ever	41.2	52.4	35.8	40.7
	sexes						
22 to 30	Female	RDFACT1	Property crime ever	34.7	34.6	19.6	39.8
12 to 16	Female	RDFACT2	Property crime ever	20.6	39.5	25.5	48.7
12 to 16	Both	RDFACT2	Property crime ever	26.1	36.1	25.7	50.0
	sexes						
22 to 30	Female	RDFACT2	Property crime ever	32.8	38.3	18.3	35.3
22 to 30	Both	RDFACT2	Property crime ever	46.9	50.0	37.0	43.1
	sexes						
22 to 30	Both	RDANY	Any crime ever	47.1	56.8	42.5	44.6
	sexes						
22 to 30	Female	RDFACT1	Any crime ever	37.1	40.5	21.7	44.8
12 to 16	Female	RDFACT2	Any crime ever	26.9	41.9	31.9	55.3
22 to 30	Female	RDFACT2	Any crime ever	34.9	44.2	21.4	39.4

Where specific age groups were concerned, Table 26 shows that 12 to 16 year old females who experience high actual relative deprivation and feel deprived of an item in factor 2 (leisure pursuits) were more likely than others with different experiences of

relative deprivation to commit an acquisitive property offence (Table F21) or any crime (Table F24).

Where 17 to 21 year olds are concerned, the only significant difference was on all respondents who feel deprived of any item. This showed the expected pattern, with those experiencing high actual relative deprivation who also perceive themselves to be deprived being most likely to engage in an acquisitive property offence.

Those aged 22 to 30, however, demonstrated a quite different pattern compared to younger respondents. There were more significant results among this age group than others, with eight of the 12 statistically significant findings falling to 22 to 30 year olds. Furthermore, six of the eight analyses involved highest prevalence of offending where actual relative deprivation was low and perceived relative deprivation was present.

#### *Analysis of offending in the last twelve months*

All of the analysis of the four relative deprivation groups up to this point has been based on whether an individual has *ever* offended. This is convenient from a statistical analysis perspective as it increases the sample sizes with which to examine associations (more people have committed an offence ever than have committed an offence in the last year). However, it is less easy to justify on theoretical grounds. The questions on household income and perceived deprivation are based on current experiences and these may have been quite different when individuals committed their offending, especially if that offending was some time ago. A more realistic analysis would be to examine current

levels of relative deprivation with recent offending patterns. One could then conclude more reasonably that any relationship between relative deprivation and crime involved the individuals experiencing relative deprivation before they engaged in crime. The following pages therefore repeat the analysis on *offending in the last year*.

Appendix G provides analysis of relative deprivation groups by involvement in crime in the last year. The results were similar to those seen for offending ever in that perceived deprivation was more strongly associated with offending than actual relative deprivation.

Where the analysis was broken down by sex, there were only six (17%) significant results out of the 36 tests conducted. These results are summarised in Table 27. Only two of these displayed the expected pattern of crime prevalence being highest among those experiencing both actual and perceived relative deprivation. The remainder involved the highest prevalence where actual relative deprivation was low and perceived relative deprivation present. Where particular crime types were concerned, no significant results were found for burglary or for other offences similar to burglary. However, four significant results were found for *any property crime*. Among those feeling deprived of any item, males and the sample as a whole demonstrated significant differences. In each case, those experiencing low actual relative deprivation where perceived relative deprivation was present were most likely to be involved in property crime in the last year. By contrast, among those feeling deprived of an item in factor 2 (leisure pursuits), males and the sample as a whole were most likely to engage in property crime when they experienced both actual and perceived relative deprivation.

**Table 27: Statistically significant associations between the ARD / PRD classification and the prevalence of involvement in crime in the last year by sex**

Sex	Type of PRD	Type of offence	ARD low /	ARD low /	ARD High /	ARD High
			no PRD	with PRD	no PRD	/ with PRD
			Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Male	RDANY	Property crime	15.9	23.5	9.7	19.5
		in last year				
Both	RDANY	Property crime	10.6	16.5	9.3	13.8
sexes		in last year				
Male	RDFACT2	Property crime	20.8	15.8	12.8	25.0
		in last year				
Both	RDFACT2	Property crime	14.7	10.7	10.0	16.8
sexes		in last year				
Male	RDANY	Any crime in	21.8	31.6	17.2	27.7
		last year				
Both	RDANY	Any crime in	14.9	21.5	14.7	18.6
sexes		last year				

Where involvement in any crime was concerned, the only significant results were for males and the sample as a whole feeling deprived of any item. In each case, those experiencing low actual relative deprivation where perceived relative deprivation was present were most likely to engage in any crime in the last year.

There were more significant results when analysis was undertaken by age group. Of the 11 significant results presented in Table 28, four were among 12 to 16 year olds, one

among 17 to 21 year olds and six among 22 to 30 year olds. The 12 to 16 year age group was most likely to conform to the expected pattern of highest offending rates among those with high actual relative deprivation where perceived relative deprivation was present. All four significant results conformed to this pattern. The one significant finding for 17 to 21 year olds was for males deprived of any item and committing any property offence. Here, offending was also highest among those with high actual relative deprivation where perceived relative deprivation was present.

**Table 28: Statistically significant associations between the ARD / PRD classification and the prevalence of involvement in crime in the last year by age and sex**

Age	Sex	Type of PRD	Type of offence	ARD low /	ARD low /	ARD High /	ARD High
				no PRD	with PRD	no PRD	/ with PRD
				Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
17 to 21	Male	RDANY	Property crime	14.3	25.5	8.6	35.0
			in last year				
12 to 16	Male	RDFACT1	Property crime	16.0	4.5	10.7	36.8
			in last year				
22 to 30	Both	RDFACT1	Property crime	15.3	8.7	9.9	8.2
	sexes		in last year				
12 to 16	Both	RDFACT2	Property crime	10.6	4.9	8.1	24.5
	sexes		in last year				
22 to 30	Male	RDANY	Any crime in	20.8	30.1	10.3	19.7
			last year				
22 to 30	Both	RDANY	Any crime in	13.8	18.8	7.8	11.8
	sexes		last year				
22 to 30	Both	RDFACT1	Any crime in	17.8	8.7	10.2	12.4
	sexes		last year				
12 to 16	Female	RDFACT2	Any crime in	10.8	11.6	10.1	31.6
			last year				
12 to 16	Both	RDFACT2	Any crime in	16.9	18.6	15.7	31.1
	sexes		last year				
22 to 30	Male	RDFACT2	Any crime in	26.5	22.5	12.7	25.6
			last year				
22 to 30	Both	RDFACT2	Any crime in	17.2	15.1	8.8	13.3
	sexes		last year				

Those aged 22 to 30 however, demonstrated a quite different pattern of offending prevalence. All six of the significant results involved the highest rates of offending in the last year where actual relative deprivation was low. Furthermore, four of these involved low actual relative deprivation where perceived relative deprivation was absent. These are interesting cases as they are the only analyses conducted overall that show the highest offending where both actual and perceived relative deprivation are low. These run contrary to any theory on a relative deprivation – crime link. However, it is unclear why 22 to 30 year olds in particular should demonstrate this relationship. It may be that these are simply individuals who are past the transient criminal career stage and are people who are just now inclined to commit crime

From examining the results in Appendix G, it is clear that relative deprivation is not as relevant for explaining female offending in the last year as it is for female offending ever. Indeed, there is only one significant finding for females in the 24 tables included in Appendix G compared to nine in the tables on offending ever in Appendix F. So why should the relative deprivation groups analysis in appendices F and G be better at explaining female offending ever? Part of the answer may lie in the low level of offending in the last year by females, which generally lessen the likelihood of finding significant results. However, it may also be that females who have previously had a disposition for involvement in crime (and property crime in particular) have a heightened sense of awareness of what others possess, which itself may in some way be a result of the previous offending. However, this is currently unclear and is an area where further research might prove fruitful.

## **How well does relative deprivation explain involvement in crime compared to other predictive factors?**

This thesis has so far been concerned with examining a single issue – the relationship between relative deprivation and crime. The danger of presenting material in this way is that it may appear that relative deprivation is the only factor in explaining offending patterns. This is clearly not the case. The question remains whether relative deprivation is as good as, or better than, other relevant factors at explaining criminality. While perceived relative deprivation would seem better at explaining property offending than actual relative deprivation, it may be that neither is particularly strong at explaining criminality when compared to some of the more tried and tested predictive measures. If measures of relative deprivation were found to be much poorer than others, then it would call into question the utility of the concept as any part of a central explanation for criminal involvement. Taking this issue one step further, it may be that relative deprivation has no predictive capacity at all, once other predictive factors are taken into account. For example, relative deprivation may be strongly correlated with another variable (which itself is associated with crime) and the association found between relative deprivation and crime may be spurious, resulting from the correlation with that other independent variable. These are issues that will be examined in the forthcoming section.

In the following pages, a series of logistic regression models are examined, which test the influence of various variables on offending prevalence. These models replicate those

undertaken by Flood-Page et al. (2000). These were designed to explain 'serious and persistent offending'. Two logistic regression models were produced that explained offending among 12 to 17 year olds and 18 to 30 year olds respectively. The factors that were found to be significantly related to offending for 12 to 17 year olds were:

- ◆ Drug use in the last year
- ◆ Feeling disaffected from school
- ◆ Hanging around in public places
- ◆ Having delinquent friends or acquaintances
- ◆ Having parents who rarely or never know of respondent's whereabouts
- ◆ Truanting from school at least once a month

The factors that were found to be significantly related to offending by 18 to 30 year olds were:

- ◆ Being temporarily or permanently excluded from school
- ◆ Having delinquent friends or acquaintances
- ◆ Having no qualifications
- ◆ Using drugs at least once a month
- ◆ Drinking at least five times a week

The factors that were significantly related to offending for each age group were applied to a dependent variable that measured whether respondents had ever committed a property offence. The analysis focused on property offending ever as it was the offence

type with which measures of relative deprivation were most frequently associated. To these models, measures of actual and perceived relative deprivation were added. However, as there was a fairly high correlation between the three measures of perceived relative deprivation (especially between RDANY and the other two), a decision was made to produce separate models for each of the three measures to identify which was a better predictor of offending behaviour independent of the other two. The measure of actual relative deprivation was applied to all of the models constructed. A number of additional changes were made to the models included in Flood-Page et al (2000). Age was divided into three categories in line with other analyses in this chapter. These consisted of those aged 12 to 16, 17 to 21 and 22 to 30 years<sup>22</sup>. This was considered important because they represent different life stages, which bring with them different economic fortunes – a factor that may be important when considering the role of relative deprivation. These age groups were further sub-divided by sex to produce six age / sex categories. Three models (one for each of the three measures of perceived relative deprivation) were then computed for each of these six age / sex groups, creating 18 logistic regression models in total. The results of this analysis are presented in appendix H. The following pages comment on the findings in relation to each of the six age / sex groups.

#### *Factors affecting property offending among 12 to 16 year old males*

Tables H1 to H3 show the results of logistic regression models in which each of the three measures of perceived relative deprivation have been examined separately.

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<sup>22</sup> Factors significantly related to offending by 12 to 17 year olds were applied to the 12 to 16 year group, while factors relevant to 18 to 30 year olds were applied to both the 17 to 21 and 22 to 30 year groups.

Truancy stands out as by far the most important factor (among those examined) for predicting property offending ever. Those who had truanted from school at least once a month were more than twenty times as likely as the average respondent to have engaged in property crime at some time in the past. Other factors that were entered into the model produced a much less dramatic effect, producing results on relative risk of offending with an order of magnitude of two or three times the average. Where relative deprivation was concerned, only one measure was found to have a predictive capacity.

Table H2 shows that individuals who feel deprived of leisure pursuits are twice as likely to have committed a property offence than the average respondent. This would appear to be similar to the effect that other, more widely accepted correlates of criminality (such as parental supervision and associating with delinquent peers) have on involvement in property offending. These three variables could be treated as measures of three different criminological perspectives. The lack of parental supervision could be treated as a measure of social control theory (Hirschi, 1969). Associating with delinquent friends or acquaintances could be treated as a measure of differential association theory (Sutherland, 1942 / 1973). Relative deprivation of leisure pursuits could be treated as a measure of strain theory. Where 12 to 16 year old males are concerned, this might suggest that there are aspects of the three criminological traditions that are complementary, rather than contradictory in explaining property offending among this group. While in their totality, the three theoretical traditions may come from very different standpoints and are far more comprehensive than suggested here by the three variables, there may be elements of each that are relevant in explaining offending among this group.

The finding that feeling relatively deprived of leisure pursuits is associated to property crime among 12 to 16 year old males, once other factors had been controlled for, is particularly interesting. Examination of the other analyses conducted on this group in this chapter shows that few significant associations could be found. Only one statistically significant result was found for this group. Table G20 shows that those experiencing high actual relative deprivation and perceived relative deprivation of bare necessities were much more likely than others to have committed a property offence in the last year. As table H1 shows, feeling deprived of bare necessities is not significantly related to crime when other factors are taken into consideration. Furthermore, in no analysis undertaken in this chapter is feeling deprived of leisure pursuits associated with higher levels of offending by 12 to 16 year old males. The significant result in table H2 therefore comes as a surprise and may suggest that the other significant factors in table H2 were masking the effect of this variable on property offending. Conspicuous by its absence was actual relative deprivation, which had been included into the model at the analysis stage. However, none of the analyses undertaken in this chapter indicated that actual relative deprivation on its own was a relevant factor in explaining criminality among this group.

#### *Factors affecting property offending among 12 to 16 year old females*

The relationship between relative deprivation and crime appears to be stronger for 12 to 16 year old females than it is for their male counterparts. Table H4 shows that actual relative deprivation is a relevant factor in explaining property offending when feeling deprived of bare necessities is added to the model, but is not relevant when either of the

other two measures of perceived relative deprivation are added. This may be due to the association between being in a position of actual relative deprivation and feeling deprived of bare necessities. It is clear that actual relative deprivation is not as strong a predictive variable as others in table H4 so that while it is relevant, it has only a small effect of offending behaviour. Appendix D shows that actual relative deprivation on its own was not significantly related to any form of offending examined among this group. When combined with perceived relative deprivation to form the four ARD / PRD groups, high actual relative deprivation was associated with high offending prevalence on three occasions (see table F21, F24 and G24). In each case, the high actual relative deprivation was linked with feeling deprived of leisure pursuits. It is, perhaps, therefore less surprising that feeling deprived of leisure pursuits was also associated with property offending (see table H5). The relative strength of this factor was greater than that of actual relative deprivation (or feeling deprived of any item) and on a par with drug use and associating with delinquent others.

In examining the earlier analyses undertaken on this group, it would appear less surprising that feeling deprived of leisure pursuits should be related to property offending by 12 to 16 year old females. Those among this group who felt deprived of leisure pursuits were significantly more likely (than those not deprived of leisure pursuits) to engage in burglary ever, property crime ever, any offence ever, burglary in the last year, property crime similar to burglary in the last year and property crime in the last year. Feeling deprived of leisure pursuits therefore appears to be a particularly relevant factor in explaining property offending among 12 to 16 year old females.

Although not as strongly related to property offending, feeling deprived of any item (from the list of 16 presented) was also a relevant factor. As table H6 shows, this was not as strongly associated as other factors included in the model. Previous analyses in this chapter showed the relationship between this factor and offending. Tables E17, E19 and E20 showed that those who felt deprived of any item were more likely (than those not feeling deprived) to commit burglary ever, a property offence ever and any offence ever.

#### *Factors affecting property offending among 17 to 21 year old males*

Tables H7 to H9 show that only one measure of relative deprivation is associated with property offending once other factors have been taken into consideration. As with 12-16 year olds (both males and females), this related to feeling deprived of leisure pursuits. However, unlike those other groups, 17 to 21 year old males who felt relatively deprived of leisure pursuits were *less* likely to engage in property offending than were other respondents. This runs counter to the theory on how one would expect perceived relative deprivation to influence involvement in crime.

The fact that deprivation of leisure pursuits was found to be significantly related at all to property crime was a surprise. Earlier analysis in this chapter identified just one significant association between feeling deprived of leisure pursuits and crime among this group. Table E14 shows that 17 to 21 year old males who feel relatively deprived of leisure pursuits are four times more likely to engage in a property crime similar to burglary than are those who do not perceive such relative deprivation. In contrast,

there were three significant findings in relation to feeling deprived of bare necessities and four in relation to feeling deprived of any item. One would therefore have expected to find one of these two measures significantly related to involvement in property crime. This, perhaps, underlines the importance of undertaking the logistic regression modelling as this had not only identified a variable that would otherwise have been considered unimportant, but has also shown that the relationship is in a different direction to that expected. It is unclear why this relationship should be a negative one, but must presumably be due to the interaction with the other independent variables in the model, all of which are positively associated with property crime.

#### *Factors affecting property offending among 17 to 21 year old females*

Analysis of 17 to 21 year old females produced a very different result to that for their male counterparts. Tables H10 to H13 tell a consistent story in which none of the measures of perceived relative deprivation entered into the models are significantly related to property crime. However, experiencing high actual relative deprivation is positively related to property offending in all three models. Those experiencing high actual relative deprivation are two and a half times more likely to engage in such offending relative to the average respondent. However, this factor is weaker than others represented in the same models. Associating with delinquent peers, being excluded from school, and drug use are all more strongly related to involvement in property crime than is actual relative deprivation.

In one respect the findings for 17 to 21 year old females are similar to their younger counterparts. For females aged 12 to 16 years, one of the models (table H4) found a

significant and positive relationship between experiencing actual relative deprivation and property crime.

As with other results from the logistic regression modelling, the positive association between actual relative deprivation and crime was not altogether expected. There were few significant results for this group. Two were related to positive associations between perceived relative deprivation and crime and one in relation to a positive association between actual relative deprivation and crime. That being said, the one significant relationship that was found between actual relative deprivation and crime related to ever committing property crime, in which those experiencing high actual relative deprivation were much more likely to commit such offences than were those experiencing low actual relative deprivation (see table D3).

#### *Factors affecting property offending among 22 to 30 year old males*

Among 22 to 30 year old males, only one significant association was found between relative deprivation and property crime, once other factors had been taken into account. Table H15 shows that feeling relatively deprived of any item is positively associated with involvement in property offending. However, this is the weakest of the four relevant factors in this model. Associating with delinquent peers, drinking at least five times a week and drug use at least once a month all have a stronger influence of property offending than does feeling deprived of any item.

These findings are not unexpected. Previous analysis in this chapter showed that there were no significant results for this group where actual relative deprivation was

concerned. Of the two significant results in relation to perceived relative deprivation, both were concerned with feeling deprived of any item. Furthermore, one of these was in relation to property offending ever (table E19), which is the same offence type being examined in the present analysis. The other significant result was in relation to any offending ever.

*Factors affecting property offending among 22 to 30 year old females*

Tables H16 to H18 indicate that actual relative deprivation is associated with property offending among 22 to 30 year old females. However, these are in the opposite direction to that expected from the relative deprivation – crime theory. Actual relative deprivation is negatively related to property crime so that being in a position of actual relative deprivation reduces the likelihood of engaging in property crime compared to the average respondent. In the light of other findings for this group, this result was not unexpected. Although there were no statistically significant results for 22 to 30 year old females that showed a negative relationship of the kind found here, analysis of 22 to 30 year olds of both sexes combined found a negative relationship between actual relative deprivation and property crime ever, any offence ever and property crime in the last year. Furthermore, in each case, females aged 22 to 30 were more likely to engage in these crime types when experiencing low actual relative deprivation, although these results were not statistically significant.

### *Summing up the results of the logistic regression models*

To summarise the results of the 18 logistic regression models, it would appear that feeling relatively deprived of leisure pursuits is the best measure of relative deprivation (both actual and perceived) for explaining involvement in property crime. This measure was found to be a significant factor for four of the six age / sex groups examined. This compares favourably with measures of actual relative deprivation, feeling deprived of any item and feeling deprived of bare necessities, which were related to property crime in three, two and none of the age / sex groups respectively.

It is also interesting to note that actual relative deprivation was only found to be a significant factor among females (although not always in a consistent direction). Indeed, actual relative deprivation was a significant factor for females in all three age groups. Where perceived relative deprivation was concerned, two of the four groups in which deprivation of leisure pursuits was present consisted of females and one of the two groups in which deprivation of bare necessities was present consisted of females. These findings suggest that, when other factors are controlled for, *feeling* relatively deprived is equally likely to be associated with involvement in property offending ever among young women as it is among young men. However, experiencing actual relative deprivation would appear to be only relevant for explaining property offending among young women. In two of the three age groups where actual relative deprivation is significant, a measure of perceived relative deprivation is also present. In the case of 12 to 16 year olds, being deprived may inspire *feeling* deprived. In the case of 22 to 30 year olds, relative affluence may inspire feelings of deprivation as discussed earlier in the chapter. The exception is the group of 17 to 21 year old females, where

perceptions of relative deprivation are unrelated to involvement in property crime. For this group, being in a position of economic disadvantage may provide the climate that facilitates other relevant factors, such as associating with delinquent friends and drug use.

To conclude on these points, perceptions of relative deprivation are more frequently related to property crime (when controlling for other relevant factors) than are experiences of actual relative deprivation. It is important not to over-emphasise this finding. On the whole, measures of actual and perceived relative deprivation, while often significantly related to property crime, are not as effective in explaining involvement in property crime as other factors entered into the logistic regression models shown in appendix H.

### **Summing up the findings on the relationship between relative deprivation and crime from the YLS**

As this chapter has shown, the YLS proved to be a very useful source for examining the relationships between actual relative deprivation, perceived relative deprivation and crime. The chapter has provided an insight into many of the research questions that this thesis set out to explore in relation to relative deprivation. While these have been explored in detail in the preceding pages, the purpose of this section is to provide a general overview of some of the key points to emerge from the research up to this point.

*Is actual relative deprivation associated with perceptions of relative deprivation?*

Most previous studies of the relationship between relative deprivation and crime have measured actual relative deprivation and assumed that this leads to perceptions of deprivation. Without this connection, the underlying assumptions of a significant number of studies that have relied on aggregate data for measuring the actual relative deprivation – crime relationship would be brought into question. If perceptions were found to be unrelated to being relatively deprived, one would need to ask how it is that actual relative deprivation might be expected to lead to involvement in crime.

This study has confirmed that actual and perceived relative deprivation are related and that the association is in the correct direction. Increased actual relative deprivation is associated with the presence of perceived relative deprivation. The proportion of relatively deprived individuals who feel deprived is higher for females than it is for males and this is consistent across the three measures of perceived relative deprivation (see table 16). This is also consistent with the finding that females are more likely to feel relatively deprived regardless of how much actual relative deprivation is experienced (see table 9).

Although there is a relationship between actual and perceived relative deprivation that is consistent across a range of measures, the strength of that relationship is weak. Correlation coefficients (based on Spearmans Rho) of the relationship between ordinal measures of actual and perceived relative deprivation range from 0.174 to 0.336. This may suggest a certain degree of 'elasticity' in the measures of perceived relative

deprivation. Increased economic hardship may not necessarily lead to increased perceptions of deprivation. Furthermore, perceptions of deprivation can still exist among the relatively affluent. While the two are related, there is by no means a perfect match between being relatively deprived and feeling so.

*Is actual or perceived relative deprivation a better measure for explaining involvement in crime?*

Actual relative deprivation on its own was found to be rarely associated with involvement in crime. Appendix D shows that only five out of 96 tests for associations between actual relative deprivation and crime produced significant results. Three of these related to 22 to 30 year olds and were not in the direction anticipated. Involvement in crime was more common among those experiencing low levels of actual relative deprivation. This was later confirmed in logistic regression models which showed that actual relative deprivation reduced the prevalence of offending among 22 to 30 year old women. In contrast, the logistic regression models showed that actual relative deprivation had a positive influence on property offending among 12 to 16 year old females and among 17 to 21 year old females.

The findings of limited impact of actual relative deprivation stand in contrast to the findings on the relationship between perceived relative deprivation and crime. Among a series of 288 tests for bivariate association between perceived relative deprivation and crime, 57 produced significant results. Furthermore, all were in the correct direction,

with perceptions of relative deprivation being associated with increased prevalence of offending.

Feeling deprived of leisure pursuits was found to be particularly related to offending behaviour. Indeed, four of the six age / sex groups on which logistic regression models were produced found a significant association between feeling deprived of leisure pursuits and engaging in property crime. Furthermore, this factor produced the most statistically significant bivariate associations between perceived relative deprivation and burglary – the offence of primary interest in this thesis. Six significant results were found between deprivation of leisure results and burglary (see table 21), although none of these related to young men. Perceived relative deprivation of leisure pursuits may (ironically, given the title of this thesis) be related to involvement in burglary by young women. However, where property offending in general is concerned (most of whose individual offences are more likely than average to also be committed by burglary offenders), feeling relatively deprived of leisure pursuits was equally likely to have a significant influence on the prevalence of offending among males as it was among females.

As a further test of the importance of perceived versus actual relative deprivation, the two variables were combined to produce a new variable that described four mutually exclusive states of relative deprivation. These were high actual relative deprivation where perceived relative deprivation was absent; low actual relative deprivation where perceived relative deprivation was absent; low actual relative deprivation where perceived relative deprivation was present; and high actual relative deprivation where

perceived relative deprivation was present. Significant findings were most frequently found when either actual and perceived relative deprivation were present, or when actual relative deprivation was low, but perceived relative deprivation was present. (It is important to note that none of these related to committing burglary.) The exception appeared to be among 22 to 30 year olds where a number of results showed that offending prevalence was highest where there was low actual relative deprivation and perceived relative deprivation was absent. On the whole, however, significant findings were found when perceived relative deprivation was present.

The analysis conducted in this chapter has allowed us to make a number of claims about how actual and perceived relative deprivation would appear to be related to crime. By its very nature, this statistical analysis is limited in what it can say about this relationship. The ways in which perceptions of relative deprivation and, in particular, deprivation of leisure pursuits may be associated with crime are discussed further in the following chapter.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Relative deprivation and crime: Findings from interviews with young offenders**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter focuses on the experiences of perceived relative deprivation among a sample of 50 convicted burglary offenders. While the YLS examined the relationship between relative deprivation and crime among both men and women, this study focuses on the relationship for men only. The following chapter discusses perceived relative deprivation in terms of frequency, magnitude and degree, as expounded by Runciman (1966). In addition, it attempts to explore two of the research questions by exploring differences in the type of perceived relative deprivation between offenders and non-offenders and the psychological processes that translate relative deprivation into motivations for burglary.

It is important to note at this stage that the analysis of the responses from 50 burglars does not form a logical progression from the earlier analysis of the YLS. Chronologically, the research on the 50 burglars preceded the analysis of the YLS and this may help to explain why, at some points, it appears to contradict the YLS findings. It is therefore best to consider these two quite different lines of enquiry as parallel streams that at times converge while at others conflict.

## **Frequency of perceived relative deprivation**

As outlined in chapter 4, each of the 50 offenders interviewed were asked whether they had experienced perceived relative deprivation prior to committing their first burglary. Twenty five (50%) of the offenders indicated that they had experienced perceived relative deprivation. This result differed somewhat to the analysis of the YLS, which found that, among those males who had committed burglary in the past, 69% responded to feeling deprived of at least one item (out of 16 presented). This compared to 65% of those who had committed a property offence similar to burglary and 67% among those who had ever committed any property offence. The lower figure among those interviewed in the current study may be due to the limitations of the way in which the measure was operationalised, as outlined in chapter 4. However, the extent of the difference is not as great as might have been anticipated, given the potential problems with the measure used.

Among a comparison group of non-offenders asked similar questions, slightly more (28 (56%)) perceived themselves to be relatively deprived, although the differences between offenders and non-offenders were not statistically significant. (See chapter 4 for further details of the comparison group). The YLS found that the frequency of perceived relative deprivation among those who had never committed burglary, an offence similar to burglary or property crime was 61%, 60% and 56%<sup>23</sup> respectively.

**What types of object or issue inspire the greatest sense of perceived relative deprivation and how do these differ between offenders and non-offenders?**

The measure of perceived relative deprivation used in this study allowed respondents to indicate what it was that inspired such feelings. Chapter 4 outlined the advantages and (more importantly) the disadvantages of the operationalised measures and these should be borne in mind when interpreting the results. In total, 17 items were mentioned as sources of perceived relative deprivation and all 25 offenders who experienced perceived relative deprivation, were able to indicate at least one item / issue of which they felt relatively deprived. While four were highlighted by just one individual, a further six were mentioned by five or more offenders.

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<sup>23</sup> Ever committing a property crime was the only statistically significant differences (Chi Square = 22.6, P<0.001).

**Table 29: Frequency of relative deprivation by object<sup>24</sup>.**

Object of relative deprivation	Number	Percent <sup>25</sup>
Clothes	14	56
Money	13	52
Car	8	32
Jewellery	6	24
Drugs	5	20
Motorcycle	5	20
Bicycle	3	12
Computers	2	8
Trainers	2	8
Going out	2	8
Girlfriend	2	8
Nice home	2	8
Eating out	2	8
Toys	1	4
Audio equipment	1	4
Lifestyle	1	4
Shopping	1	4

Another interesting point to arise from table 29 is the presence of a number of items that could not simply be purchased. For example, two offenders mentioned wanting a regular girlfriend. These issues help to show that, while the lives of these young offenders were largely bound up with material possessions, there was still another, less materialistic presence of relative deprivation, albeit in low frequencies.

<sup>24</sup>

Here we refer to "objects" in their widest sense, meaning those things seen as the focus for feelings. This includes material possessions as well as non-material items, such as personal attributes, opportunities etc..

<sup>25</sup>

Respondents were asked to indicate up to five things they felt relatively deprived of, hence the figures in table 22 total to more than 100%.

## **Comparison of frequency of objects of perceived relative deprivation between offenders and non-offenders**

Table 30 shows the range of items mentioned by offenders and non-offenders and indicates which were shared and which were unique to the group concerned. Ten of the 21 items were mentioned by both groups. Eight of these can be classed as consumer durables that can be purchased, while the remaining two – girlfriend and nice home – may not just be bought, although even here money can help to obtain them. The types of items listed could in many ways be considered to represent the focal concerns of adolescent boys and the things that a typical teenager might be expected to desire.

### *Objects of relative deprivation mentioned by offenders only*

Seven objects were mentioned by offenders only. Three of these were items that were mentioned by an above average (four or more) number of offenders – jewellery, drugs and motorbikes. These may be consumer products that, for some reason, are particularly desired by offenders. The remaining items could all be considered aspects of leisure pursuits and together, the seven items may characterise a lifestyle led by many of those interviewed. Drugs, going out to parties and raves and eating in fast food restaurants are all indicative of a “life as party” enjoyed by many offenders, while the jewellery and motorbikes are part of the all important image creation, which helped offenders develop their identity (discussed in more detail later in this chapter). The shopping sprees were a means to achieve the image through conspicuous consumption of expensive clothes and jewellery, with which to show off to friends (also discussed later).

*Objects of perceived relative deprivation mentioned by non-offenders only*

Table 30 also shows that four objects of perceived relative deprivation were mentioned by non-offenders only – video recorder, sporting success, holidays and strength. Two of these – sporting success and strength – consisted of things which could not be bought, but required personal investment in time and effort. Where sporting success was concerned, one individual wanted to be more skilful at football, while another wanted to be signed up by a professional football team, like some of his fellow players had been. Another simply stated that he would have liked to have been physically stronger. Non-offenders would therefore appear to differ from offenders in this respect, with physical ability being something highlighted by non-offenders which was not an issue for offenders.

**Table 30: Objects of perceived relative deprivation mentioned by offenders and non-offenders**

Objects listed by both offenders and non-offenders	Objects listed by offenders only	Objects listed by non-offenders only
Clothes	Jewellery	Video recorder
Money	Drugs	Sporting success
Car	Motorbike	Holidays
Bicycle	Going out	Strength
Computers	Eating out	
Trainers	Lifestyle	
Girlfriend	Shopping	
Nice home		
Toys		
Audio-equipment		

**Differences between offenders and non-offenders in the frequency of each object of perceived relative deprivation**

Analysis was undertaken to compare the frequency with which objects of perceived relative deprivation were mentioned by offenders and non-offenders and results of this are presented in table 31. This shows the frequency of perceived relative deprivation in relation to 14 objects mentioned by non-offenders and ignores the seven items listed by offenders only. The rationale for this is that these items would show a nil response for non-offenders and the frequency of these items is already covered by table 29. The list in table 31 is sorted in descending order of frequency, starting with the most frequent object of perceived relative deprivation mentioned by non-offenders.

**Table 31: Comparison of the frequency of objects of perceived relative deprivation between offenders and non-offenders (from study of 50 burglary offenders)**

	Offender sample		Non-offender sample		Significance
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Clothes	14.0	56.0	10.0	35.7	ns
Money	13.0	52.0	7.0	25.0	ns
Audio-equipment	1.0	4.0	7.0	25.0	ns
Bicycle	3.0	12.0	5.0	17.9	ns
Trainers	2.0	8.0	5.0	17.9	ns
Car	8.0	32.0	4.0	14.3	ns
Computer	2.0	8.0	4.0	14.3	ns
Toys	1.0	4.0	3.0	10.7	ns
Video recorder	0.0	0.0	2.0	7.1	ns
Sporting success	0.0	0.0	2.0	7.1	ns
Girlfriend	2.0	8.0	1.0	3.6	ns
Holidays	0.0	0.0	1.0	3.6	ns
Nice home	2.0	8.0	1.0	3.6	ns
Strength	0.0	0.0	1.0	3.6	ns

As table 31 illustrates, “clothes” is the item most often mentioned by both offenders and non-offenders. Among the non-offender sample, there were five objects mentioned by five or more individuals – clothes, money, audio-equipment, bicycles and trainers. Only two of these – clothes and money – were also mentioned by five or more offenders. Tests for significant differences were conducted (using Chi-Square) on each of the objects listed in table 31. However, none reached anything approaching statistical significance. This is likely to be due to the fact that there were not major differences between the groups and that the numbers involved were very small. Given the limitations of the measures of perceived relative deprivation used in this chapter and in the design of the comparison group, it would be dangerous to infer anything further from the findings presented so far.

To explore further the differences in objects of perceived relative deprivation between offenders and non-offenders, data from the YLS were examined. The male sample was divided into two groups representing those who had ever committed a property offence and those who had not<sup>26</sup>. The proportion who noted perceiving relative deprivation in relation to each of the 16 items included in the YLS was then calculated. The results are presented in table 32.

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<sup>26</sup> Property offending ever was used as it was the offence category with the largest sample size and was the offence type that seemed most related to experiencing perceived relative deprivation. The male sample only was used in order to be able to compare with the findings from the current study.

**Table 32: Proportion of individuals who had / had not ever committed a property crime who feel perceived relative deprivation in relation to each of sixteen items listed in the YLS**

Object of perceived relative deprivation	Proportion of property offending sample mentioned object	Proportion of non-property offending sample mentioned object	Significance
Holidays	30.8	26.7	ns
Somewhere larger to live	26.3	20.9	*
A place of my own	26.8	18.6	**
Car	17.3	14.2	ns
Eating out	16.7	12.7	ns
Going out	13.5	7.9	**
A place to live	7.5	6.9	ns
Clothes for self	8.3	5.8	ns
Hobby	8	5	ns
Music	6.3	4.8	ns
VCR	8.7	4.2	**
Other mark 2	4.8	3.7	ns
Other mark 1	5.7	3.4	ns
Clothes for family	3.8	3.4	ns
Food for family	2.6	3	ns
Food for self	1.4	1.2	ns
Any item	70.7	60.3	**

Significance: ns=not significant, \*= $p < 0.01$ , \*\*= $p < 0.001$

Table 32 (which has also been sorted by descending order of responses from the non-offender sample, similar to that in table 31) shows some marked differences to those found in the study of 50 burglary offenders. For example, the item mentioned most often by both samples was holidays. This was seldom mentioned by those interviewed in the study of 50 burglary offenders. One of the few items that remains relatively important was a car, which seemed to attract a similar level of response among non-offenders in the two analyses, but which is listed twice as often among the study of

burglary offenders than in the YLS analysis of property offenders. By contrast, clothes (for self) were frequently mentioned in the study of burglary offenders, but seldom mentioned in the YLS.

Unlike the current study, the YLS showed a number of statistically significant differences in the frequency with which items of perceived relative deprivation were mentioned. These differences were largely on lifestyle factors, such as somewhere larger to live, a place of my own and eating out. The exception to this was for a VCR, which was the only consumer durable where there were differences. It is important to note that all of these differences involved offenders feeling deprived of the item more often than non-offenders.

### **Experiences of being relatively deprived**

In chapter 5 and so far in this chapter, I have discussed the likelihood of offenders and non-offenders experiencing relative deprivation. This concentrated on identifying the prevalence (or frequency) of perceived relative deprivation in terms of various items and factors, and then explored the extent to which these are statistically associated with measures of offending. However, the discussion so far has failed to capture the essence of what it is to perceive relative deprivation. The following pages explore in greater detail how perceived relative deprivation manifests itself in the lives of young offenders and how they respond to such experiences. This discussion will primarily focus on the six objects of relative deprivation mentioned by at least five of those interviewed –

clothes, money, cars, jewellery, drugs and motorbikes. Each of these issues are explored in turn.

#### *Relatively deprived of clothes*

The fact that 14 offenders spontaneously mentioned clothes as a source of relative deprivation, with no prompting, is of particular interest. This item, above all others mentioned, would seem to highlight best the difference between absolute deprivation and relative deprivation. For those interviewed, the problem was not that they did not have adequate clothing. All had suitable attire which, under different circumstances, would be viewed as perfectly presentable. The problem for this group was that they did not have the "right" clothes. These individuals saw their friends with nicer, or more fashionable clothes than they themselves could afford and this created a strong sense of dissatisfaction, which could, in some cases, make the individuals feel negatively about themselves. This is highlighted in the comments by offender No. 14 who started committing burglary at the age of 14. When asked whom he felt relatively deprived in comparison to, he explained his experiences in the following terms:

*No. 14 "A lot of other friends and, not even friends, a lot of people you'd see in the street or at the Youth Club would have nice clothes. Everyone would be wearing their new clothes, looking smart and you'd be trying your best to look smart. It doesn't make you feel good."*

No. 14 went on to explain that the types of clothing people were looking good in consisted mainly of sportswear and trainers. Indeed, he bought his first pair of Nike trainers with the proceeds from his first burglary. Another individual who felt relatively deprived of clothes prior to engaging in burglary was No. 2, who committed his first burglary when aged 15. When asked about how he compared himself to his friends, he made the following comments:

No. 2        *"They all had Nike trainers and I never, so that was one of the main reasons I used to go out" [to commit burglaries].*

Interviewer    *"Why was that?"*

No. 2        *"To stay in with them by having nice clothes, nice jewellery and money."*

Interviewer    *"Were they generally well dressed?"*

No. 2        *"Yeah, every time I saw them they always had a new pair of trainers or a new top or new coat and I had the same boring ones all the time."*

It is likely that those feeling relatively deprived of clothes were experiencing a special, possibly uniquely experienced, form of perceived relative deprivation. Unlike other forms of relative deprivation, which might be experienced in relation to the remaining objects in table 29, being deprived of the right types of clothes will be extremely conspicuous. One may not have the car or motorbike one desires, but others will not

necessarily know this is the case unless they know you well, or enquire further. One can meet people for the first time with them having no idea that one does not possess a car. By contrast, lacking the right clothes will be immediately obvious to the most casual of onlookers. This is particularly relevant when put into the social context of those offenders feeling deprived of the right clothes.

For the offending group concerned and, indeed, for teenagers in general, image is often all important. The necessity of having the right looks, the right language and right friends are important aspects of life, which they may go to great lengths to cultivate. Clothes are an essential part of this image creation. An important aspect of this image would seem to be the desire to replicate the looks of others. A standard look (including a dress code) emerges, to which all within the peer group feel they must adhere if they want to be accepted. Indeed, the clothes worn by a peer group help to define members of the group from non-members. Extreme forms of this are to be found in gang membership in the USA, where a type of jacket, jeans or baseball cap will be used to distinguish which gang a youth belongs to. While it would be wrong to suggest that those interviewed in the UK context belonged to formalised gangs, or that they had a standard uniform to set them apart from others, they did generally share a style of dress with their peers. As interviewee No. 19 found, having the right clothes was an important aspect of peer group membership:

No. 19        *"If you couldn't have the sort of clothes they had, you would feel like you don't really fit in. They were walking around in, like, £100 pairs of trainers and you've got £40 ones on. You don't seem to feel right with*

*them, you know what I mean?"*

Similar sentiments were expressed by another of those interviewed, who wanted to feel a part of the peer group he associated with:

*No. 22            "It wasn't so much the clothes, it was for me to fit in. I wanted to fit in, I wanted to blend in, so I had to look, if not better, then at least as good as them."*

The style of clothes preferred varied among those interviewed, while some preferred sportswear, others tended to wear jeans and tee-shirts. There was, however, one common denominator in the clothes chosen by these offenders - the expense. Those offenders who were relatively deprived of clothes liked to wear items with designer labels on them. The usual scenario would be that their friends were already wearing designer brands, so, in order to be assimilated into the group, they too would want these types of clothes. The preference for these designer products did not seem to be based on any evaluation of the intrinsic quality of the clothing, but rather on the fact that, because it had a prominent label, it would be obvious to others that the item was expensive and, by implication, portrayed the wealth, or success of the wearer. Conspicuous consumption was a key feature in the clothes buying habits of those interviewed. Indeed, one offender explained how he used to get satisfaction out of being seen spending copious amounts of money on clothes:

*Interviewer    "Did you go out regularly buying clothes then?"*

No. 22        *"I just liked to walk into a shop and pull out a wad of money, it's like a buzz. Me, I love that part of going into a shop, picking out things and the woman's thinking 'no, he can't afford these'. You pull out a wad of money and they look surprised. It makes me feel happy that I can do that."*

The snag with designer clothes, however, is that styles change frequently. What is fashionable one week is out of date the next. To maintain their image, the offending group had to continually up-date its wardrobe with new items and it was not unusual for these individuals to spend £100 a week or more just on clothes. This continual updating of clothes brought its own strains. Not only did those interviewed feel they had to buy expensive designer clothes to fit in with the peer group, but in order to maintain credibility with their peers, they had to keep buying the latest fashions. As one interviewee put it:

No. 22        *"You had to keep up. If you don't keep up, you are dropping out."*

Once on the fashion treadmill, it would appear difficult for many of those interviewed to get off without facing some sort of chastisement, or ridicule from their friends. A by-product of this frequent renewal of clothes was that yesterday's fashions would often be quickly disposed of, either by giving away or selling to other friends. Many of the issues attached to the importance of clothes are not unique to offenders. Most teenagers would probably agree that their self-image was important and would like to be wearing the

latest designer outfits. The difference, however, was that the offenders sought an illegitimate means to obtain the clothes they desired. The ability to pay the high prices demanded for designer made clothes partly explains the excessive consumption of these items, but this excess was also an end in itself. Indeed, living to excess was to characterise the lifestyle of many of the offenders once they became proficient at burglary. It should be recalled, however, that when discussing feelings of relative deprivation of clothes, this was at the moment prior to committing burglary. However, as we shall see later, the future burglars were often comparing themselves to a peer group already involved in burglary and who were already able to afford expensive, designer clothes. To fit in with the image of such groups required a considerable investment of capital, which was not easily available through legitimate channels.

The relationship between clothes and crime is by no means a new phenomenon in criminology. For example, a study of juvenile theft in London (Belson, 1975) asked a sample of boys whether there was anything they wanted but could not afford with their pocket money. The desire for 'clothes / special clothes / latest in clothes' was the most frequently mentioned item, with 37% of the 3,113 boys surveyed identifying these items. Similarly clothes were included in studies of perceived relative deprivation by Reiss and Rhodes (1965) and Burton and Dunaway (1994), although neither separated out the effects of clothes from other items of relative deprivation. On a more qualitative level, Graef's (1992) study of a group of offenders attending a probation-run centre found importance of clothes to be a recurring theme among his subjects. This is probably best typified in the example of Johnnie, an offender attending the centre as a condition of his probation order. On a sailing trip to Dunkirk, Graef recounted how

Johnnie had insisted on shopping all over town for a certain "Chipie" jacket he wanted and finally found one and bought it, along with a pair of jeans. Following this, Graef asked Johnnie what was so special about these particular items:

*"Over coffee, I somewhat wickedly queried the obsession with what I saw as small distinctions in the different types of jeans and trainers. I pressed them to explain why some types of jeans were 'great' last year, but 'crap' now. Johnnie, the most obsessive of the lot, first said*

*'You wouldn't use a second-rate camera to produce first rate pictures.*

*It's a matter of quality.'*

*When the precious jeans were finally on board, he sheepishly conceded there was nothing he could point to which distinguished them from any others - except the label." (Graef, 1992 p.38)*

The relationship between clothes and crime may be one which would benefit from further exploration. Indeed, the current study found that the desire for better clothes was present in many of those interviewed.

#### *Relatively deprived of money*

Thirteen of the 25 offenders who perceived relative deprivation prior to engaging in burglary identified money as something that inspired such feelings. As with the analysis of clothes, those who were relatively deprived of money were often comparing

themselves to their friends who had more than they did. In some cases, those with more money obtained it legitimately from their parents, as No. 19 explained:

No. 19        *"There was about 25 of us who used to hang about together, but it was only about 10 of us that used to go out and do things. The others would be too spoiled by their parents to want to know about that sort of thing and they didn't have to want for anything. So if they said 'dad, I want £50', they'd give them £50. I thought 'I wish my dad would give me £50'."*

More commonly, however, it would appear that the comparisons were being made with friends who had made money through illegitimate means. This can best be illustrated in the cases of two of those interviewed. Offender No. 22 met a group already involved in burglary when he was sent to a local authority boarding school for being disruptive and unruly at a normal comprehensive school. He saw that this group had more money than he had, but at first didn't know where the money came from:

No. 22        *"It was clear to me that they had money all the time. I didn't know what they were doing, but they had money, they had drugs, they had Acid and things like that. They were looking alright, dressed up nice."*

Interviewer    *"How were they looking?"*

No. 22        *"They were looking good, dressed up nice, money in their pocket,*

*feeling alright."*

After about two months at the boarding school, No. 22 joined in with this group and committed his first burglary. A life history with a similar theme, but set in a different context, was provided by interviewee No. 24, who had previously been involved in less serious forms of crime such as shoplifting and, more particularly, car theft. He started stealing cars for fun at the age of 14 and later migrated to selling them for profit. At the age of 17 he was "*thrown out*" of the parental home for having continual arguments with his mother and step-father. After staying in a series of hostels, he obtained the tenancy to a council flat. However, he was soon arrested for driving while disqualified and sentenced to a term in a Young Offender Institution. During this time, he asked a friend to look after the flat until he was released. When he came out, he found that his flat was being used, by people he hardly knew, as a store for stolen goods. Feeling helpless to stop this happening, he allowed it to continue and watched as his home was used as a meeting place for a group who would go out to commit burglaries and return with the stolen items where they would be left until a deal could be set up with a local fence. Later, when they had sold the stolen items, they would return to the flat and use it as a general meeting place. No. 24 saw the amount of money they had and how they spent it and would feel left out of what was going on:

No. 24        *"Every Saturday night, they'd go to a rave or something and I was the only one staying in. I was the only one staying in on my own, and I just wanted to go out. It was just the money really at the end of the day."*

*Interviewer*    *"What were they spending their money on?"*

*No. 24*            *"Mostly buying Draw, buying drugs, Es and that."*

*Interviewer*    *"Did you have money for that sort of thing?"*

*No. 24*            *"Not really, not like them. They always used to spend money. If I had money I would save it because I had to think about what I was going to eat the next day. But they used to spend it because they knew they could go and do another burglary and have some more money."*

After witnessing this for a short time, No. 24 decided to join them by engaging in burglary and making the kind of money whose lack had previously made him feel relatively deprived. These two examples were by no means unique. Indeed, the general theme of having friends or acquaintances earning money illegitimately was a frequently recurring aspect of the interviews. It should be clear from the discussion so far that money was not seen as an end in itself. It was not so much the acquisition of wealth that interested these individuals, but what could be bought with the money. Few showed any signs of having saved any of their money and the response of No. 33 seemed typical in this respect. When asked why he had not saved any of the £2,000 a week he claimed to have been making from burglary, he responded:

*No. 33*            *"Because money is not there to be saved, not there to be looked at, it's there to be enjoyed, to be spent, that's what it's there for".*

When offenders stated that they were relatively deprived of money, it was more likely that they were feeling deprived of what the money was being spent on. In many cases, they were making comparisons with friends who were spending large sums of money on a hedonistic life-style. Money was being spent on items which would quickly be consumed and would then require additional finances to replenish. Examples of these include alcohol, drugs, take-away meals and arcade games. All these items can be consumed quickly and require considerable sums of money if they are to be enjoyed for any length of time. When offenders felt relatively deprived of money, it was more accurate to say that they felt deprived of the ability to buy these kinds of items. This corresponds with Bennett and Wright's (1984) work on burglars who also found many spent their money on non-essential, pleasure pursuits, such as drink, drugs and gambling.

The short-term consumption patterns of those interviewed characterised their views on money, which had usually been easy to obtain. There was often an 'easy-come-easy-go' attitude towards money. It didn't really matter if it was frittered away, because it could easily be replaced by committing another burglary. Money was to be spent having fun and burglary was a way to 'earn' the money required. An extreme case of this type of attitude was provided by No. 33:

No. 33        *"I could go out one night with £2,000 and come back skint. As far as I am concerned, money went in my pocket, it weren't there to be looked at, it was there to be used, to be spent and had a good time with. That was what I was doing."*

A short term attitude to spending money and the importance of having a good time today regardless of what tomorrow brings was also noted by Maguire (1982) in his study of burglary offenders. This approach to life has been described by Shover and Honaker (1992) as 'Life as Party'. Their study of persistent property offenders found many spent their time in the pursuit of pleasure, involving the consumption of non-essential products, such as drugs and alcohol, in the company of others. Similar patterns of consumption and lifestyle were found in Parker's (1974) study of a group of boys involved in petty offending.

Spending money on items which are quickly consumed was probably largely a result of wanting to live this 'life as party' and it just happened that those items which gave the most pleasure had a limited life-span, and lasted as long as it took to consume them. A bottle of Champagne (enjoyed regularly while clubbing by several of those interviewed) only lasted the time it took to drink it and a Big Mac the time it took to eat it. In a few cases, however, the choice of items which would be consumed quickly may have been a rational means of disposing of the money gained from burglary, to avoid parents or guardians finding out. Buying expensive, durable products was likely to draw attention to their sudden increase in wealth, which could raise awkward questions from parents. A typical case of this was No. 43 who came from a middle-class background and lived in an affluent village. His first burglary was on a neighbour's house:

No. 43      *"Anyway, I took a large amount of cash from the house and then being stupid, being only 13, I squandered the money all over the place and ended up coming home with a new bike and new clothes and things.*

*Mum and Dad wondered where the money had come from and that and then, of course, talking to the neighbour, found out his house had been burgled and my parents called the police and that. My parents called the police, I was taken to the police station. Burglary, £1,700 cash, I didn't know the value of money then, I was just giving it away and done all sorts with it and I got cautioned. That was my first burglary and I remember it like it was yesterday."*

Another offender, No. 7, explained how he had to be careful when he took home new clothes which had been bought from the proceeds of burglary:

No. 7      *"I used to buy clothes and all that, but I couldn't really buy new trainers, new this new that, because when I go home me old dear's going to be like 'Where did you get that from?' She knows I have been out there [committing burglaries], so I couldn't really take a lot home. I used to spend a lot of money on everything, go out for the day somewhere and spunk it all."*

Perceiving oneself as relatively deprived of money seems to have been largely about having pocket money to spend on anything and everything. It wasn't so much about having the money to make important buying decisions, it was more for the immediate consumption of items such as fast-food, drink, drugs and for generally having a good time. Seeing others with the disposable income to spend on these products may have

prompted some of those interviewed to engage in burglary so that they too could live the hedonistic life enjoyed by their friends.

The fact that so many offenders identified money as something they felt relatively deprived of gives support for previous studies of the relative deprivation - crime relationship (discussed in Chapter 3). Many of these studies were based on differences in income distribution within geographic areas. A criticism of these studies was that comparisons would not be based on actual income because this is usually a private affair. It was argued that any comparison would be based on what the income was spent on and even then, this would be based on more conspicuous forms of consumption. Contrary to this criticism, the present study found that the income of the reference group was a source of perceived relative deprivation. This was, however, likely to have been a result of the unusual nature of the reference group of the offenders interviewed. Rather than contrasting their position with an average 'law abiding' household, those interviewed by and large compared themselves to individuals already engaged in criminal pursuits. Far from viewing their income as a private matter, this reference group seemed to gain satisfaction from flaunting their illegally obtained finances (at least to each other). While it is true that the income of others was a source of perceived relative deprivation, previous theories seemed to have been based on a different reference group. It is possible that the criticisms made of these studies still stand because they assumed comparisons of income would be made with a general population, rather than with a specific criminal reference group. However, as the current thesis did not test whether the offender felt relatively deprived in comparison to the general population it was not possible to test the criticisms made of previous studies.

### *Relatively deprived of cars*

Feeling relatively deprived of a car before committing their first burglary was an issue raised by eight of those interviewed. This is interesting, given the fact that seven of the eight offenders concerned were too young to drive legally at the starting point of their burglary career. Indeed, where the age at which this group felt relatively deprived was concerned, one was aged 10, one was aged 13, three were aged 14, one was aged 15, one was aged 16 and one was aged 17.

Many of those who were experiencing relative deprivation of cars, were comparing themselves with an older group of friends. This was the case for No. 3, who was 14 when he committed his first burglary:

No. 3            *"At that time I had two groups of friends, like I had one group who had burgled this garage before and they were all just saying it was easy money and I'd another group of friends who were going out burglarling every night and all that, screwing shops and everything. I was seeing them like, with their money everyday and everything. I thought fuck it I want it. You know what I mean? So I went and done this shop, like this garage thing. And I got caught. Just generally never appealed to me after...They were all like, at the time I was 14 they were one or two years older, like 15, 16. They were all driving round in brand new cars, all had money, were going out every weekend."*

Another offender, No. 45, explained how, at the age of 15, he had friends aged 16 who would drive to school, but park their cars a short distance from the school. When asked whether these cars were stolen, he explained that they were bought with the proceeds of burglary or from "*whatever they were doing*". It is interesting that in both these cases, the drivers were below the legal age for driving. This, however, was not the scenario in all cases. Other offenders interviewed were comparing themselves to a much older group of individuals. Offender No. 46, for example, felt relatively deprived when comparing himself to his brother's friends who were several years older than he was. Another offender, No. 49, was aged 13 when he committed his first burglary, but socialised with a group of men in their mid 20's.

Experiences of relative deprivation of cars among those interviewed should come as little surprise, given that many had shown an earlier interest in such commodities through theft of, or theft from motor vehicles. Indeed, five of the eight individuals concerned stated that they had been involved in such offending before committing their first burglary. Having experienced the thrills of 'joy-riding' and 'hotting', they may have come to view the car as an important commodity at a relatively early age and have been sensitised to the fact that people they knew were driving around in nice cars.

Some of those who felt relatively deprived of cars later went on to purchase a car when they began to make an income from burglary. The types of car preferred by this group were often those that carried some prestige or that were known for their high performance. For example, BMWs were mentioned on several occasions and Ford Escort XR3s were mentioned twice. Perhaps taking this preference for high performance

to its limits was No.8, who spent some of the proceeds from the burglaries he committed on a Lotus, for which he paid £9,000 at an auction. Apart from buying expensive clothes, purchasing a car seemed to represent one of the few serious buying decisions made by some of the offenders interviewed. While much of their money was wasted on 'life as party', a car was often the one asset in which they would invest their money. Even then, the preferred type of car was one which would help to foster their image as successful or would give them a degree of 'street credibility'.

#### *Relatively deprived of jewellery*

In total, six offenders indicated that they had felt relatively deprived of jewellery at the time they committed their first burglary. When items of jewellery were mentioned, these usually consisted of gold chains, bracelets, rings and watches. Such items were never mentioned as the first object of which they felt relatively deprived, nor were they given much prominence in discussions. Indeed, jewellery tended to be used as one of those frequently mentioned items which was used to highlight further the characteristics of the lifestyle led by the reference group. Jewellery was therefore an item often associated with money, clothes, or drugs, as the following quote from No. 8 shows:

No. 8            *"They used to buy nice clothes. Used to get a nice bit of money, take about four, five hundred [pounds] out each and go and spend it on clothes and jewellery. Always go to the same shops."*

Jewellery could therefore be considered another facet of the conspicuous consumption which appeared common among the reference group. As with expensive designer clothes, jewellery could be used as symbols of status, which helped to create that all-important image. This can be seen in the discussions with offender No. 2, who had friends who spent considerable sums on items of gold:

No. 2            *"They would just come round my house, like, with sovereign rings, buckle-rings. Every time I see them they used to have loads of rings on them and chains, until they got bored with them and sold them."*

This raises another issue similar to that present with clothes - the need frequently to change. While fashions in clothes will probably be more apparent than the fashions in jewellery, there still appears to have been some need to change the jewellery worn on a regular basis. This may partially be explained by the competition which seemed to occur between friends to have the latest, or the best jewellery. In this context, getting 'bored' with the jewellery they had may simply have meant they had worn the items for a while and that it was time to look for something better, or something different to that owned by their friends. This element of competition was something mentioned by No. 2:

No. 2            *"They used to show off with all the rings they had on their fingers. We used to have, like, competitions to see who had the most gold between all our friends."*

To keep in with the peer group and to be given a modicum of status, it was important to be able to keep up with what others were wearing. Indeed, among some of those interviewed there was clearly prestige to be gained from being seen wearing certain types of jewellery - especially gold - which carried connotations of wealth and success similar to that provided by designer clothes. It is also interesting to note that, whenever the individual felt deprived of jewellery, he seemed to view this in terms of his own consumption, rather than as gifts for a girlfriend. Indeed, there was not one case where the interviewee described buying, or wanting to buy jewellery for a girlfriend.

Although only six offenders felt relatively deprived of jewellery, many more (who didn't perceive relative deprivation of jewellery) would seek to obtain such commodities. Many of those interviewed would look for jewellery when undertaking a burglary. This corresponds with the findings of the British Crime Survey (Mirrlees-Black et al., 1996) which found that jewellery was stolen more often than any other item, with 36% of burglaries involving such a loss (compared to 33% losing a video, 33% losing cash, 27% losing stereo/hi-fi equipment and 21% losing a television). Interviewees explained that this would not usually be for their own consumption, but as a means of obtaining cash to buy other items they desired. Although they seldom kept the jewellery they stole, discussions with offender No. 19 indicated that this sometimes happened. No. 19 had seen his friends at school showing off things they had stolen in a burglary and kept for themselves. This was, however, viewed as bad practice:

No. 19        *"...like some of them will do a burglary, get some gold out there, keep a bracelet or a watch, whatever. Like, we all classed that as bad luck,*

*you know what I mean?"*

This interviewee went on to explain that, in his experience, most of those who kept stolen goods from a burglary would later be caught by the police with it. The safest course of action was therefore to sell it straight away. Among those interviewed it was common to steal jewellery and then sell it on to a buyer. Unlike other commodities (TVs, videos, hi-fis etc.) jewellery was likely to go to a professional dealer, such as a jewellery shop or pawn broker. This may have been because second-hand jewellery has a limited value while to a jeweller such items are valuable as a source of raw materials. Once broken up, or melted down, they can be re-used and, at the same time, be virtually untraceable. For the offender, however, selling to a professional dealer was not without its problems. Most other items taken in a burglary are likely to be mass produced consumer products, whose new purchase price can be checked in shops to determine their potential re-sale value. With items of jewellery, a certain degree of expertise is required in order to estimate their value. For example, to determine a fair price the vendor will need to know whether an item of jewellery is solid gold, or gold plated, nine carat, or 18 carat etc., and whether the gem stones are precious, or merely glass. A professional dealer is likely to have this knowledge and will use it to his advantage to reduce the sale price by arguing that the item of jewellery is of inferior quality to that anticipated by the offender. This constant fear of "*being ripped off*" meant offenders were often discontented with the deals they obtained when selling jewellery. One result of this was that when they found a dealer they felt they could trust, they generally used that buyer repeatedly. This contrasts with electrical products, where the channels for disposing of stolen products were more disparate.

What would seem clear from this analysis of jewellery is that, while mentioned by a number of individuals as a source of relative deprivation, it was never uppermost in their minds. Indeed, when mentioned, it tended to be bundled together with a general lifestyle of significant disposable income, designer clothes and drugs. As with clothes, jewellery was a means to demonstrate conspicuous consumption, which would impress other members of the peer group. While a source of relative deprivation for some, jewellery was a commodity which was widely stolen and traded by those interviewed. Indeed, it was more often used as a means of obtaining something else which was desired, rather than for use itself.

#### *Relatively deprived of drugs*

As table 24 indicates, five of those offenders who experienced feelings of relative deprivation identified drugs as one of the sources of those feelings. Drugs were never the first object to be mentioned and were often associated with feeling deprived of other objects, such as clothes and money. Nevertheless, it is clear that in these few cases there was a sense of deprivation caused by comparison to others who were consuming drugs. One such example is offender No. 2 who, as well as feeling relatively deprived of clothes, jewellery and money, also wanted the drugs he saw his friends with. In discussing his friends who had the outward appearance of success from burglary, No. 2 described his impression of this group:

No. 2        *"...and they used to have all nice clothes, jewellery, always had money in their pockets, always had a bit of smoke and I used to have nothing. I thought if I got in with them I'll have nice clothes, I'll have money, drugs and jewellery."*

Interviewer    *"So what about the smoke then, did they have much more than you?"*

No. 2        *"No, I never used to have nothing, maybe an eighth [of an ounce]. And they used to come round with ounces and half ounces, just sit down and smoke it."*

Interviewer    *"Did they share it with you?"*

No. 2        *"Oh yeah, they'd sort me something out, but it was never enough. They used to smoke three or four while I had one."*

As with other sources of relative deprivation, it was not simply that this individual consumed none of the item in question, it was more the case that he didn't have access to sufficient quantities of the drugs.

Feeling relatively deprived of drugs took on a slightly different appearance for No. 49, who, when he was 13 years old, socialised with a group of men in their mid 20's. Not only did he see them with cars (mentioned above), but also saw them using drugs.

Before becoming involved with this group, No. 49 had never tried any form of illicit

drugs. However, he saw the group using them and soon tried them himself. He explained how he was first introduced to "Dope" (Cannabis), but later progressed to "Coke" (Cocaine) and "Smack" (Heroin). It was only once he had tried them that he began to feel relatively deprived of drugs. He realised that these substances could give him enjoyment, but could not afford to buy the quantities of drugs his older friends were using. Becoming involved in burglary (with this group of older friends) was a means to satisfy these desires. Indeed, from his first burglary he obtained a television, video and a camera which he sold to a drug dealer for one hundred pounds cash and one hundred pounds worth of Dope.

Clearly, this analysis shows that one of the reasons some of those interviewed became involved in burglary was as a means to obtain the drugs they had seen others using. It is, however, important to note that drug use was not confined to these five who felt relatively deprived of them. Many others, indeed most of those interviewed, reported frequent drug use and this did not usually result from any feelings of relative deprivation.

#### *Relatively deprived of motorcycles*

The final relative deprivation inspiring issue to be considered here is the motorbike, with five offenders mentioning feeling deprived of such an object. It is interesting to note that four of these five also mentioned other forms of transport as creating a sense of deprivation, with two mentioning cars and two mentioning mountain bikes. Although dangerous to read anything into such small numbers, this may suggest that these

individuals were more generally feeling deprived of a means of transport, or that they were particularly impressed by other people's "wheels". For whatever reason they felt deprived of motorcycles, it is clear from analysing their responses that their sense of deprivation was just as real as that experienced about other objects. For example, when asked what he spent the money he gained from burglary on, offender No. 20 explained the following:

*No. 20 "I might go out on a clothes spree, I was into motocross for a little while. Got a bit jealous of my mates, I tried saving for a bike, I was going to buy a brand new bike. It never worked out, so I spent it on clothes, drugs, going out, partying, you know, going out with £300 in my back pocket, sort of thing."*

Despite failing to get a motocross bike himself, he continued to feel relatively deprived in comparison to his friends who had such a bike and even more so towards those who were driving around in "flash cars". Another example is offender No. 37, who seems to have had an obsessive interest in motorbikes throughout his childhood. He was caught stealing motorbikes and push bikes when he was nine years old and was later placed in a secure unit because of his persistent offending. At the age of 14 he committed his first burglary with a group of 17 year olds. This was a burglary of a Co-Op supermarket from which No. 37 made £1100 and spent £900 of this on a motocross bike. Those that eventually bought motorbikes tended to do so before they were legally allowed to ride them on the public highways (at 16 years of age). This may explain why motocross bikes were the favoured option, as these could be driven off-road, on private land.

In this chapter so far, we have seen that half of the offenders interviewed felt relatively deprived in comparison to their friends immediately prior to committing their first burglary. The objects they were deprived of were by no means outlandish and often consisted of every-day items. However, as discussed in Appendix C, the frequency of relative deprivation is just one facet of a more complex concept. In order to understand the full nature of perceived relative deprivation it is also important to examine the degree and magnitude with which deprivation was experienced. The following sections therefore explore these aspects of relative deprivation in the sample of offenders.

### **Degree of perceived relative deprivation**

The degree of perceived relative deprivation relates to the intensity with which that deprivation is experienced. For example, two individuals could experience perceived relative deprivation about exactly the same object, yet one might *feel* more deprived than the other. Furthermore, the extent to which this deprivation is felt may effect the likelihood of the individual being motivated to take action to alleviate the situation. This could have relevance for understanding the motivation to commit burglary because the degree with which individuals feel deprived could have an effect on their willingness to engage in such crime, or on the extent to which they become involved. The degree to which relative deprivation was felt was therefore measured in the 25 offenders who reported experiencing such deprivation. As outlined in chapter 4, for each item identified by offenders as an object of perceived relative deprivation, respondents were asked to score the extent to which they wanted that item. This was based on a scale from one to 10, where one indicated low intensity and 10 a high intensity of feeling. In

examining the degree of relative deprivation, two alternative approaches were taken. In the first analysis, the differences in degree were examined among individuals, while in the second analysis differences between items was examined. The following pages detail the findings from each of these analyses.

### *Differences between offenders*

When measured across all offenders who perceived themselves as relatively deprived, the average level of degree was calculated to be 7.7 out of a possible score of 10<sup>27</sup>. No indication of the degree of relative deprivation was obtained from four of those offenders interviewed and this was usually because the time lapse between feeling relatively deprived and being interviewed for this research was too long for them accurately to remember. Those who were relatively deprived in the non-offender sample were similarly asked about the degree to which perceived relative deprivation was experienced. This was calculated, on average, at 5.5 out of 10. This difference was found to be statistically significant ( $t$  value = 3.65, d.f. = 46,  $p$  = 0.001). This suggests that offenders feel more intensely deprived than non-offenders. To use the words of Bonger (as discussed in chapter 1), this would appear to substantiate the assertion that "*The more intense a man's desires, the more risk he runs, other things being equal, of falling foul of the law*" (1969, p.109). However, given the problems associated with the measure of relative deprivation degree here, this is a finding that should be treated with some caution.

<sup>27</sup>

This was calculated by first producing the mean average degree for each offender. This was necessary because in most cases more than one relative deprivation inducing item was mentioned and it was assumed the general level of deprivation experienced would be the average across these items. The overall mean average degree of relative deprivation across all offenders was then based upon these individual averages.

### *Differences between objects of relative deprivation*

The degree of perceived relative deprivation was measured for each of the 17 items identified by offenders. Table 33 shows the mean score for each of these items. Two objects of relative deprivation scored a maximum of ten - nice home and girlfriend, although each was mentioned by two individuals only. It is interesting that these were things that could not easily be bought. For example, having a nice home was likely to be based on a series of purchases of furniture and household items, but would also involve decorating the place, which could involve less tangible factors such as style and taste. Similarly, a girlfriend could not simply be bought, but required personal investment in image and in how to associate with girls (although the money obtained from burglary could be used to create the image felt conducive to obtaining a girlfriend). While they were relatively deprived of these things in comparison to their friends, committing burglaries was unlikely to provide a quick remedy. These can be contrasted with all the other items in table 33, where additional purchasing power might be expected quickly to remove feelings of relative deprivation. It is therefore ironic that the items which created the greatest depth of feeling were least likely to be obtained through engaging in property crime. At the opposite end of the spectrum, a general type of lifestyle, audio equipment and shopping sprees were least likely to inspire strong feelings, although it is worth noting that even these were placed half way up the scale between one and 10.

**Table 33: Mean average degree per object of relative deprivation**

<b>Object of relative deprivation</b>	<b>Mean average degree of relative deprivation</b>
Nice home	10.0
Girlfriend	10.0
Going out	9.0
Clothes	8.7
Motorcycle	8.6
Money	8.5
Car	8.3
Bicycle	7.3
Toys	7.0
Eating out	7.0
Computers	6.5
Jewellery	6.4
Trainers	6.0
Drugs	6.0
Lifestyle	5.0
Audio equipment	5.0
Shopping	5.0

#### **Magnitude of perceived relative deprivation**

The third and final key element of perceived relative deprivation is the magnitude. This is the size of difference between what one desires and what one actually has. For example, if I feel perceived relative deprivation in relation to a neighbour who owns a Rolls Royce, while I own a Vauxhall Cavalier, the magnitude is a measure of the difference between owning a Rolls Royce and owning a Vauxhall Cavalier. In this example, one might expect the magnitude of relative deprivation to have been smaller if I had felt perceived relative deprivation in relation to a neighbour owning a new BMW. (This would certainly hold if magnitude were measured in terms of the market values of the cars concerned). Developing an adequate measure of this concept proved extremely

difficult. One approach which could have been taken was that used by Runciman (1966), who asked respondents to indicate whether they had each of 12 consumer products (this was a closed response list, in contrast to the open response format used in the current study) and then asked those who did not have them whether they wanted them. Those that responded that they did want them were then asked whether there were other people who succeeded in obtaining these items and asked to explain who these people were. The descriptions of those who were thought to own such items were then coded into a hierarchical order. Approximations of the magnitude of relative deprivation were then calculated by comparing the difference between the social grouping the individual belonged to (defined by income and manual/non-manual distinctions) and the social group identified as possessing the consumer products. There were a number of reasons why this approach was not adopted in the current study. One reason was that Runciman's operationalisation of magnitude was flawed in assuming that by identifying the groups who possess the consumer items the respondents were identifying comparative reference groups. Identifying others who possess the items of interest could be achieved through an objective assessment of the facts. Indicating that "rich people" were the ones travelling first class by train does not necessarily mean that an individual compares himself to the rich. In doing so, he is merely identifying who he sees as being able to afford first class train travel. This same individual may compare himself to others in his own class and not feel relatively deprived of first class train travel because "rich people" do not form a reference group for him.

Another reason for not opting for Runciman's approach to magnitude was that it (in theory) required the respondents to identify their own comparative reference group. The

small scale nature of this study, consisting as it does of only 50 respondents, made self selection of reference groups impractical. If 12 groups had been identified (as in Runciman's study (1966, p.214) this would have resulted in only four individuals mentioning each group, far too small to have allowed any meaningful analysis.

Another approach to measuring the magnitude of relative deprivation was to take an object specific approach and to explain the difference between the amount of an object the individual wanted and that which he actually possessed. This would seem closer to the concept of magnitude originally envisaged by Runciman when he wrote:

*"The magnitude of a relative deprivation is the extent of the difference between the desired situation and that of the person desiring it (as he sees it)."*  
(Runciman, 1966 p.10).

Attempts to develop a measure of this kind proved unsuccessful<sup>28</sup>. To develop a measure which remained faithful to the original definition, one would first need to identify how much of a particular item the individual already had and then compare this to what was wanted. There were, however, two problems in attempting to do this. The first problem was that in some instances the individual would not have any of the objects desired. For example, some offenders wanted cars, bicycles and motorbikes but didn't already have them. This raises the issue of how one measures the difference between nothing and something. How does one quantify the difference between having a bicycle and not having a bicycle? Even greater difficulties would arise if attempts were made to compare

<sup>28</sup>

This may explain why Runciman chose to use the measure of magnitude included in his 1966 study.

the magnitude of relative deprivation between different items. For example, is the magnitude between wanting a motorbike and not having a motorbike any different to the magnitude between wanting a car and not having a car? A second type of problem arises where an individual already possesses some of the object desired but would like a different type of that thing. A prime example of this relates to clothes. All of the offenders feeling relatively deprived of clothes already possessed clothes, but not the clothes they wanted. How does one measure the difference between a coat bought from Marks and Spencers and one bought from Versace? In this example it might be possible to make references to the quality of the material and the cut of cloth, but this becomes virtually impossible where items of clothing are identical apart from a different brand name. For example, an individual may own a pair of Wrangler jeans, but feel relatively deprived in comparison to a friend who has a pair of Levi jeans. Each make of jeans may be equal in terms of quality and price, but the Levis may have a better image among the reference group concerned. Accounting for differences in image seems beyond the scope of any simple measure of relative deprivation. The notion of magnitude in relative deprivation is a theoretical construct hard to measure. The complexity of many of the cases of relative deprivation means that it is practically impossible to assess in all but the most simple of cases. Indeed, the only cases where the magnitude can easily be measured are where one possesses a certain amount of an object and simply wants more. An example of this was seen in the discussion on drugs, where offender No. 2 only had an eighth of an ounce of Cannabis while his friends had half an ounce. Experiences of this type seem to have been relatively few and in most cases measuring magnitude in any quantitative way is difficult.

Due to the many problems in measuring this concept, a decision was made to exclude magnitude from the analysis. While there were some qualitative aspects of magnitude of relative deprivation, these were not appropriate for use as measures of differences in or between groups and have therefore been excluded from the thesis.

**Is it the perceptions of relative deprivation themselves that are the motivation for criminal involvement, or do they inspire other psychological processes that are criminogenic?**

This thesis so far has explored whether experiencing relative deprivation (both actual and perceived) affects the likelihood of engaging in crime. This chapter has also provided some tentative evidence that offenders feel a greater degree of relative deprivation than do non-offenders. However, is it this experience of relative deprivation itself (especially if strongly felt) that influences individuals to engage in crime?

Appendix A shows that most previous studies of the relative deprivation - crime relationship suggested that there was some intervening psychological condition between feeling relatively deprived and committing crime. This intervening variable was most often considered to be a sense of frustration that resulted from recognising that one was relatively deprived. Involvement in crime was a means of resolving such frustrations. Here we shall examine the responses from those interviewed to explore whether this was indeed the case.

It is important to assert from the outset that this is not something that was specifically explored in any systematic way in the original study. Indeed, the original study had hypothesised that it was the condition of being relatively deprived that would act as a direct motivational factor for involvement in crime. Indeed, the realisation that there may be an intervening variable between relative deprivation and crime did not occur until after the fieldwork had been completed. Despite this, further analysis of the transcripts from the qualitative interviews yielded some useful material. However, there is a danger that one is projecting a meaning on to responses that was not originally intended by the respondent. This is a concern which should be kept in mind when interpreting the results below.

It is also important to stress that the results are by no means conclusive and are at best indicative of the kind of psychological processes that might be occurring. In this sense, it is not currently possible to definitively answer the research question. We cannot say for sure whether it is perception of relative deprivation that is the motivation for criminal involvement, or whether it inspires other psychological processes that are criminogenic. At best we may be able to conclude that in some cases there is evidence of intervening psychological processes, while in others there is none.

Two intervening states of mind that were identified from the interview transcripts were injustice and marginalisation. Both of these will be examined in the following pages.

## *Injustice*

One respondent (offender No. 14) expressed feelings of injustice emanating from the sense of relative deprivation. Seeing others possess something that he himself did not have was viewed as unfair, especially when this involved bare necessities:

*"Yea, I didn't think it was fair that I never had it. I know my mum tried her best, she always tried her best. Like my Mum, you know if she had no food, enough food in the house for all of us, basically me and my brother would eat, she would go without. But at the same time I didn't think that was fair that my Mum would go without and I would see all these people. I mean they would be able to go to Macdonalds and my Mum would have to walk straight past. I didn't think it was fair and I knew that I would want the same things as well that everyone else has got."*

This sense of injustice would seem to be focused on the system that created the unfairness, rather than on any individual. In this sense, it is closer to Cloward and Ohlin's (1960) sense of unjust deprivation. However, offender No. 14 did also perceive himself to be relatively deprived of other, non essential items (such as clothes) as the following section shows.

Another example of a sense of injustice is found in the discussion with offender No. 22 who compared his position to that of a group of new friends whom he knew were conspicuously consuming from the proceeds of crime:

*"I was getting greedy. I didn't like what I had, I wanted what they had. They had better than me. The way I see it, why should they look better than me? They were getting it from somewhere else. It wasn't like they were getting it from their parents. It's not as if I can go to my parents and say 'oh yeah, he's looking better than me because his mum's looking after him.' It's not that. He's going out and nicking his own money, looking after himself."*

No. 22 went on to engage in burglary as a means to obtain what he already saw his friends obtain illegitimately. Indeed, the fact that his friends were profiting from burglary while he wasn't in a strange way legitimated his need to commit such crime.

### *Marginalisation*

As well as experiencing injustice, No. 14 also expressed feelings that could best be described as marginalisation. Feeling relatively deprived of clothes, he believed he wouldn't be accepted by his peers and especially by girls, if he didn't wear the correct attire. Although previously used to show the importance of clothing as a means of image creation, the following quote also demonstrates how the lack of the image could lead to feeling marginalised:

*"Really, you couldn't go nowhere, unless you were really wearing the latest, well not the latest. Unless you weren't looking proper, you couldn't do nothing or go anywhere. You can't even talk to a girl in the street, 'cause she's not having it, unless you are looking how you should, how they think, how they perceive you should look, then you can't really do nothing."*

Similarly, clothes would appear to be a source of marginalisation for offender No. 19.

Feeling relatively deprived in comparison to a group of friends, he explained how this affected him in the following terms:

*"If you couldn't have the sort of clothes that they had, you feel like you don't really fit in. They were walking round in, like, £100 pairs of trainers or £80 trainers and you've like got £40 ones on. You don't seem to feel right with them, you know what I mean?"*

Clothes in particular would therefore appear to be not only a source of perceived relative deprivation, but this could also generate a sense of not fitting in with the group and therefore not feeling right with oneself.

These experiences are, however, different to feeling a sense of 'frustration' as highlighted by other studies. However, it may be that 'frustration' is simply used as a kind of short-hand for explaining how recognising one is relatively deprived transforms into a willingness to engage in crime. This is an area that clearly needs further research. For example, it is currently unclear what the full range of intervening factors may be, whether those that have been identified are relevant in motivating the individual to engage in crime, or whether they are necessary above and beyond the experience of relative deprivation. All that we can say at present is that injustice and marginalisation may be relevant psychological states that mediate between feeling relatively deprived and being motivated to engage in crime.

### **Comparisons to offending peers as the source of relative deprivation**

As should be clear from the preceding pages, many of those who experience perceived relative deprivation feel so in comparison to friends already involved in offending.

Analysis was undertaken to determine the extent to which respondents' first burglaries were committed with others and whether these others acted as a reference groups for inspiring feelings of relative deprivation. The results are presented in table 34. As can be seen, from scenarios three and five, 15 of the 19 relatively deprived offenders (on whom information was available) were associating with an offending peer group at the time of their first burglary. Furthermore, for 14 of these offenders, the offending peer group was also a comparative reference group. In these cases, respondents felt relatively deprived in comparison to others already involved in burglary and soon after committed their own first burglary.

**Table 34: Frequency of five peer group contact scenarios by whether offending peer group was a comparative reference group for 19 relatively deprived offenders<sup>29</sup>.**

Peer group contact scenarios	Was offending peer group also a comparative reference group?	
	Yes	No
1. Offending alone with no prior offending peer group contact.	0	1
2. Offending with others, none of whom had committed burglary and with no prior offending peer group contact.	0	3
3. Offending alone where there was prior contact with an offending peer group.	3	0
4. Offending with others, none of whom had committed burglary, but where there was prior contact with an offending peer group.	0	0
5. Offending with existing offending peer group.	11	1

### The relative deprivation - burglary multiplier effect

#### *Burglary leads to relative deprivation*

The findings in this chapter describe how feeling relatively deprived might motivate some young men to engage in burglary (and in this sense conforms to the traditional view of the relative deprivation - crime relationship). However, the finding that many of the relatively deprived offenders compared themselves to an existing offending peer group before committing burglary with such a group, suggests an alternative process in

<sup>29</sup> This table excludes six cases where information was not available on either the contact with an offending peer group, or the use of the peer group as a comparative reference group.

which burglary causes the original sense of perceived relative deprivation. An offending peer group already involved in burglary may come to the notice of other individuals not yet involved in burglary (although often involved in other types of crime). For whatever reason, these new individuals like the look of the offending peer group. This is likely to be explained, at least in part, by the extravagance of the offending peer groups and their propensity for conspicuous consumption. In other words, the individuals are impressed by the group as a direct result of the group's burglary activity. At the same time, the new group member will feel relatively deprived that he does not have the type of lifestyle his offending friends can afford to maintain. In this sense, burglary (conducted by others) would appear to lead to perceived relative deprivation.

The process by which burglary can lead to perceived relative deprivation can be illustrated more effectively by drawing on examples from the interviews with offenders. One example is offender No. 2 who was 15 years old when he committed his first burglary. He had friends who were already involved in various types of offending, including theft from cars and shoplifting and on numerous occasions he had joined in with these activities. The group later went on to commit burglaries, although No. 2 did not join them at first. However, he soon saw how well his friends were doing from this type of crime. They would regularly go round to No. 2's home and show off their latest acquisitions, including new clothes and jewellery. Feeling deprived in comparison to his friends and feeling it was unfair that they should have lots of nice possessions and he didn't, No. 2 decided to join the group and commit a burglary with them. This seems to have occurred quite casually. One evening when he was with his friends, sitting around smoking marijuana, someone suggested that they should go out and commit a burglary

to make some money. No. 2 seems to have followed the group and, although he entered the house which was burgled, his primary role was to act as lookout from the downstairs front window. Between the three of them who had committed the burglary, they made £200. Once he had committed his first one, he soon went on to commit other burglaries, which meant he too was soon able to enjoy the lifestyle his friends had and was able to buy the latest designer clothes and jewellery of which he had previously felt deprived.

A second example of an offending peer group creating a sense of perceived relative deprivation in a new member of the group is No. 42. After leaving a children's home to return to his parents at the age of 12, No. 42 soon met up with a group of older boys (aged 16 or 17) who were already involved in crime. He soon saw how well they were doing and particularly felt deprived of the money and nice clothes he saw this group with. After knowing the group for just a few weeks, he was invited to participate in a burglary with other group members. One evening, No. 42 was with two of these new friends in a bed-sit rented by one of the group when one of them suggested doing a burglary. The three of them then went to burgle a nearby building containing more bed-sits and succeeded in stealing a cassette recorder that night.

These are but two of several examples of offenders getting to know an existing peer group involved in burglary and feeling relatively deprived in comparison to the group. Within a short period of time they made a decision to join the group and commit burglaries with them. Perceived relative deprivation and burglary may therefore represent a symbiotic relationship in which one is intrinsically linked to the other.

Perceived relative deprivation may lead some to commit burglary and their success may lead to others feeling perceived relative deprivation.

*The multiplier effect - increasing prevalence of burglary offenders*

The "burglary leads to relative deprivation" theory holds that an offending peer group may play an important role in creating a sense of perceived relative deprivation in newly recruited members of the group and in providing these individuals with the means to fulfil their desires through joining in with the burglaries committed by the group. If, as has been suggested, the offending peer group plays an important role in recruiting new offenders, this may have implications for the prevalence of burglary offenders. One result which might be hypothesised is the ability of the offending peer group to reproduce itself. Sarnecki (1982) found that juveniles tended to join and leave offending peer groups quickly and were free to leave without resistance from other group members. Walsh (1980) has noted the tendency for older burglars to work alone, while younger ones work in groups<sup>30</sup>. If these factors represent a dynamic process with offenders moving from group to lone offences as they become more experienced, then an offending peer group would come to a natural disbandment as its members begin to disperse and to work individually (or desist from this type of offending). If, however, new group members are enticed into the group's activities, it is possible that older members could be replaced by newer ones. In this way, an offending peer group could exist over a number of years and yet for all its original members to have been replaced during that time. The group would continue as an entity regardless of its individual

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<sup>30</sup> This point is supported by Downes (1966) who found the number of accomplices participating in burglaries declined with age, from 2.7 accomplices among 8-12 year olds, to 1.8 accomplices among 22-25 year olds.

members. A result of this evolution of the offending peer group is that it could lead to an increase in the total number of individuals engaging in burglaries. In this sense, the relative deprivation - crime relationship may have a multiplier effect in which more and more individuals are drawn into committing burglary by the prospects of emulating their conspicuously consuming peers.

This proposition may be clarified if we imagine a scenario which starts with one person engaging in burglary, he may conspicuously consume the proceeds of his offending, which comes to the notice of a second individual (burglary leads to perceived relative deprivation in another). Feeling relatively deprived in comparison to the offender, the second individual may join the first in committing further burglaries (perceived relative deprivation leads to burglary). Working on the principle that two conspicuously consuming individuals may be more noticeable than one, they may instil perceived relative deprivation in yet more people, who may then join in the group's offending activities. In this way, the relative deprivation - crime spiral may result in increasing numbers of individuals being introduced to burglary, thereby creating a multiplier effect.

This proposition would only hold if those individuals leaving the offending peer group were going on to commit burglaries alone or with other groups, rather than retiring from this activity. The replication and even expansion of the offending peer group would be aided further if the group contained a 'recruiter' (Reiss, 1988), who tends to offend with others who have never committed burglaries before, thereby introducing new offenders to the total pool of active burglars. Reiss and Farrington (1991) identified six recruiters

in their study of London boys, who, between them, had committed offences with 69 less experienced offenders.

As far as this research is concerned, the continued replication and extension of offending peer groups must remain hypothetical. Indeed, there was no indication of this process in the data collected for this study, nor were any 'recruiters' specifically identified. Indeed, it is unlikely that recruiters were necessary in those offending groups examined here.

The conspicuous affluence (by the standards of the young men studied) is likely to have been sufficient to draw new members into the group. However, the failure to identify the process of group replication is arguably attributable to the shortcomings of the research design, rather than the process being illusory. The study never intended to examine the natural history of the offending peer group and could therefore not be expected to identify something which could only be gained through close, long term association with such a group. As the unit of analysis in this study was the individual, rather than the group, it is only possible to make inferences from what these individuals told us about their time as members of offending peer groups. It must therefore be concluded that little is known about the role that relative deprivation plays in the continued existence of offending peer groups.

### **Summing up the evidence so far**

Chapter 5 indicated that perceived relative deprivation is often associated with offending and, in particular, with forms of property offending. Furthermore, there were indications that perceived relative deprivation is generally more strongly related to

involvement in crime than measures of actual relative deprivation. However, this tells us little about what it is like to experience perceived relative deprivation, or how this might be translated into a willingness to participate in crime. Chapter 6 therefore explored some of these issues in more detail.

One of the first findings in the chapter highlighted the fact that there may be qualitative differences in the nature of the items of which individuals feel relatively deprived. While chapter 5 showed that there were differences in the extent to which certain types of item were related to involvement in crime, this chapter showed that offenders were likely to feel deprived of some items that non-offenders were not. Analysis of the YLS showed that these tended to be lifestyle related factors associated with having a nice home and going out. This also corresponds to the importance of leisure deprivation highlighted in the previous chapter. The analysis of the open response relative deprivation questions asked of 50 burglary offenders and 50 non-offenders showed that there were some items that offenders felt relatively deprived of that non-offenders did not, such as going out, eating out, shopping sprees, drugs and motorbikes. These are lifestyle factors and typify a certain type of lifestyle that was led by those who were successful at burglary. This also accords with the findings from the previous chapter, which found that feeling deprived of leisure pursuits was an important factor in explaining involvement in property offending. Individuals are less likely to become involved in crime as a means of obtaining necessities. Involvement in crime is related to obtaining money so that luxury items and leisure pursuits can be enjoyed. This seems to have reached an extreme form among those involved in one of the most extreme forms of acquisitive property crime – burglary.

The type of lifestyle identified in this chapter as being the source of perceived relative deprivation is one characterised by excess, in which the proceeds from burglary are conspicuously consumed at a rapid rate. Indeed, this raises perhaps one of the more important findings from the study regarding those to whom comparisons are made. Offenders often compare their position to that of others already engaged in burglary. In this sense burglary may cause perceived relative deprivation in others who then go on to commit burglary as a means of resolving the perceived deprivation. This process of comparison and resulting perceived relative deprivation has not previously been well documented.

Among the other findings in this chapter is the tentative evidence on experiences of the *degree* of perceived relative deprivation. Although there are problems with the measures used, there is an indication that offenders may experience stronger feelings about perceived relative deprivation than do non-offenders. Whether these stronger feelings were responsible for involvement in crime, or whether they generated other psychological factors that were in turn responsible was difficult to judge from the current research. However, there were some indications that perceiving relative deprivation may in some cases cause individuals to experience feelings such as marginalisation and injustice, although this is clearly an area where further work is required.

So what implications do these findings have for previous theory and research on the relationship between relative deprivation and crime? Chapter 7 explores some of these issues in further detail.

## **Chapter 7**

### **Implications of the current study for understanding the relative deprivation – crime relationship**

#### **Introduction**

Chapters 5 and 6 of this thesis included the main study findings and showed how actual and perceived relative deprivation may be associated with involvement in crime and especially acquisitive property crime. As they stand, these findings provide an interesting insight into why some people decide to engage in this form of behaviour. These findings also have ramifications for theory. This chapter discusses the implications of the current study for understanding this relationship.

As discussed in chapter 3, there is a body of research which has attempted to examine empirically the relationship between relative deprivation and crime. All too often this has involved analysis at the macro level, employing aggregate statistics to show differences in income inequality either spatially or temporally and relating these differences to crime rates. These studies assume that in areas where income inequality is at its greatest the resident population are more likely to perceive itself as relatively deprived and engage in crime as a means of resolving this inequality. Chapter 3 provided a range of criticisms of this theorising. The results of the current study call into question a number of the assumptions upon which existing relative deprivation theory is based.

## **Choice of comparative reference groups**

Previous studies of relative deprivation have often been based on inequality occurring at the national (Stack, 1984) or city level (Braithwaite, 1979; Blau and Blau, 1982; Messner, 1982; Farley, 1987). These studies assume (but do not show empirically) that the perceptions of relative deprivation are manifest in the poorest individuals in society as a result of comparing themselves to others in their country or in their city. As noted by Messner and Tardiff (1986) nation-wide and city-wide comparisons were unlikely to be comparative frames of reference used by individuals and were therefore limited in the extent to which they could explain any effect of relative deprivation on crime rates. Their solution to this problem was to use neighbourhood level data, which was considered to provide a more realistic frame of reference. However, whether national, city or neighbourhood comparisons are hypothesised, these are all based on the assumption that individuals are likely to compare themselves to strangers. This runs contrary to social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954; Zanna et al. 1975; Goethals and Darley 1977; Suls et al. 1978), which suggests that individuals are most likely to make comparisons to those most like themselves. Simply living in the same country, city or neighbourhood provides an insufficient basis upon which to choose someone as a comparative reference.

The current study used two very different methodologies that treated comparative reference groups in different ways. From the secondary analysis of the YLS, it was not possible to identify who respondents may have been comparing themselves to in their

assessment of whether they had gone without sufficient quantity of the items explored. Reference groups were simply absent in the YLS part of the study. The second methodology involved interviewing offenders and non-offenders about perceptions of relative deprivation. This employed a narrowly defined reference group involving the friends of the interviewee on the basis that they were likely to be most similar to the individual concerned. Half of the offenders interviewed stated that they had compared themselves to their friends and felt relatively deprived as a result. While this research cannot rule out the possibility that these individuals compared themselves to other reference groups, including others in their neighbourhood (indeed it is highly likely that this is the case), where explaining involvement in crime is concerned, close friends would appear to be a relevant source of perceived relative deprivation.

Previous research on the relative deprivation - crime relationship implied that comparisons were being made to other law-abiding people in the community. Indeed, there was no suggestion in any of the studies reviewed that self-perceived relatively deprived individuals who became involved in crime were comparing themselves to existing offenders. This was one of the surprising findings from the interview part of the current study. When friends were chosen as the comparative reference group upon which to examine the issue of relative deprivation, it was assumed that this would generally relate to the offenders' school friends, who might have desirable possessions by virtue of generous parents. However, the dominant theme to emerge was of a comparative reference group consisting of an existing offending peer group. In a significant number of cases offenders became involved in burglary as a result of feeling relatively deprived in comparison to friends already engaging in this activity. Existing

theory has failed to identify the importance of the offending peer group as a source of relative deprivation. By examining the distribution of wealth within the population at large or within a community, these studies have failed to pin-point the more discrete groups inspiring the hypothesised criminogenic sense of relative deprivation. In this respect, statistical analysis of aggregate data has been too blunt an instrument for identifying what is likely to be an important process for understanding the relative deprivation - crime relationship.

### **Income inequality as a measure of relative deprivation**

As outlined in chapter 3, most previous studies of the actual relative deprivation - crime relationship were based on examining income inequality as the primary independent variable. Chapter 3 also highlighted some of the fundamental weaknesses in this approach, such as the fact that income is usually undisclosed to neighbours and that evidence of this will only permeate through the most conspicuous purchases, such as cars and housing. The current study discovered a number of findings which contradict the efficacy of using income as a measure of actual relative deprivation in criminological studies. Before discussing these, it is worthwhile highlighting the factors in favour of using income inequality. The YLS analysis showed that there were some statistically significant bivariate relationships between actual relative deprivation (based on a measure of household income) and involvement in crime. Logistic regression modelling found this particularly relevant for explaining property offending among young women. Where perceived relative deprivation was concerned, it was clear from the interviews with burglary offenders that prospective offenders do feel relatively deprived of income

in comparison to others. Indeed, of the 25 who felt deprived, 13 (52%) reported money as an issue which inspired such feelings. This desire for money, however, related to disposable income, rather than the measures of total income used by previous studies. This disposable income was used to buy luxury items (designer clothes, jewellery etc.) and consumables (drink, drugs, fast food etc.) rather than to cover the cost of living (rent, fuel bills etc.). This finding is supported by the analysis of the YLS that found perceived relative deprivation of leisure pursuits was more frequently associated with involvement in crime than deprivation of bare necessities. These leisure pursuits are likely to be purchased with available disposable income. Previous studies employing the income inequality variable have used total income, which can differ considerably from disposable income. For example, an individual may have a good income, yet also have minimal disposable income as a result of a large mortgage, loan on a car etc. A study based on total income would conclude that such an individual was relatively affluent, in comparison to the income of others and would be likely to induce perceived relative deprivation in others. In contrast, research based on disposable income (as suggested by the current study) would find that the same individual would be less likely to inspire perceived relative deprivation in others<sup>31</sup>.

Studies of relative deprivation based on income inequality have also assumed that knowledge of others' incomes is readily available. Comparisons based on income are only possible if one knows how much others earn, or if one can gauge how much they earn from the material possessions they acquire and the life they lead. This was confirmed in the interviews with burglary offenders in the current study. Those with

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<sup>31</sup> While the disposable income may not create a sense of relative deprivation in others, the bigger house and faster cars may do so.

whom interviewees made comparisons (usually existing offenders) were often keen to tell others in their social network how much they had made from burglaries. This was often a source of pride and a means to show how successful they were at their illegitimate pursuits. Similarly, the money they made from crime was usually conspicuously consumed on items they could show off to their friends (such as the latest designer clothes and trainers). Interviewees therefore had no difficulty in gauging the success of their friends as the evidence was plainly on view.

There were a number of inherent weaknesses in using income inequality as a measure of actual relative deprivation, which were identified by the interviews with burglary offenders. For example, the income earned was not that of the general population within a community, but more specifically that of a group of friends. Indeed, income could appear to be equal across all households within a community, therefore indicating no relationship between actual relative deprivation and crime at the aggregate level; yet an offending peer group could have a considerably higher income within that community which could inspire perceived relative deprivation in others. Measures of income inequality are often based on the income of the head of household, so it is possible for an offending peer group member of a household to have a higher income than his parent who is the head of household. Although this point is similar to that raised earlier about choice of comparative reference groups, it illustrates further the effects of selecting an inappropriate reference group.

Perhaps a more substantial criticism relates to the type of income involved. Previous studies of income inequality have been based on declared income, which will usually

have been legitimately earned. Such information is most likely to have been obtained through decennial censuses (although not in the UK), which are flawed by the fact they are often several years out of date, during which time, the demographic profile (and therefore the income profile) can change. As the income referred to in earlier studies was declared income, it differs considerably from that found to be earned by the comparative reference groups in the current study. Existing offending peer groups with whom the interviewees compared themselves prior to engaging in burglary gained most, if not all, of their income from illegitimate sources. As they would wish to conceal their sources of income from the authorities, it is unlikely they would be willing to disclose their income to those outside their friendship network - least of all those gathering information for official purposes. Thus, previous studies of the relative deprivation - crime relationship have excluded the income of those who are most likely to have motivated others (through perceptions of relative deprivation) to engage in burglary.

There is a further problem with using income inequality as a measure of relative deprivation. As outlined in chapter 3, income is not the only issue that can inspire perceived relative deprivation. This was borne out by the current study. Analysis of the YLS (which excluded money as a measure of perceived relative deprivation) found that there were many items that inspired perceptions of deprivation. Indeed, table 9 shows that 65 % of young people felt deprived of an item other than money. Among the sample of burglary offenders interviewed, "money" was only one of 17 objects of relative deprivation mentioned. Although it could be argued (despite its shortcomings) that income is a proxy variable for the ability to purchase material possessions, this nevertheless fails to identify non-material objects of deprivation - such as having a

girlfriend and a nice home, as detailed in table 29. Using income inequality as a measure therefore fails to capture the range of sources of relative deprivation that may influence individuals to engage in crime.

### **Frequency of relative deprivation**

Runciman (1966) identified three facets of perceived relative deprivation – frequency, magnitude and degree. Some of the key findings in the current study relate to measures of the frequency of relative deprivation. Previous studies employing aggregate level data to explore the relative deprivation - crime relationship have concentrated on examining the frequency of relative deprivation. They have identified the proportion of the population living on certain income levels and then related these to crime rates. These studies are based on the premise that the greater the disparity of income in a community, the more people will experience actual relative deprivation. This actual relative deprivation is translated into perceptions of relative deprivation (invariably unmeasured by these studies) among the most deprived who then engage in crime as an instrumental response to the felt deprivation. Increased actual relative deprivation is therefore associated with a greater a prevalence of offending.

This raises three fundamental questions. Does actual relative deprivation translate into perceived relative deprivation; is there an association between actual relative deprivation and crime at the individual level; and is the frequency of perceived relative deprivation associated with involvement in crime? Where the first question is concerned, there is a positive association between being relatively deprived and feeling relatively deprived.

Individuals who live in households that are more deprived relative to others, are more likely than those from relatively affluent households to perceive themselves to be deprived. This finding held for both males and females, although appeared to be stronger for female respondents. However, the relationship between actual and perceived relative deprivation, while statistically significant and in the expected direction, is a weak one. Many of those living in households on the lowest incomes do not identify themselves as being deprived (of one of the 16 options offered in the YLS), while many of the relatively affluent do perceive themselves to be deprived. This highlights the fact that the relationship between actual and perceived relative deprivation is more complex than is usually suggested by studies of the relative deprivation – crime relationship.

Where the question of whether actual relative deprivation is related to involvement in crime at the individual level is concerned, previous literature on the relative deprivation – crime relationship that employed aggregate level data has assumed this to be the case. However, there is the potential here for an ecological fallacy. While there may be an area-based relationship between household income inequality and crime incidence, this does not mean that it is the individuals who live in the relatively deprived households who commit the crime. For example, offending may be equally distributed between residents from relatively affluent and relatively deprived households and it is something else about the area (that may be correlated with actual relative deprivation) that makes it vulnerable to crime. Alternatively, as these studies tend to be based on recorded crime in areas with high actual relative deprivation, there may be something about such households that makes them more likely to be victims of crime, rather than more likely

to generate offenders. Indeed, it may be that offenders travel into areas with high actual relative deprivation to commit crime. However, as Appendix A shows, the usual explanation for the actual relative deprivation crime relationship is that individuals in the most deprived households are committing the crime.

Analysis of the YLS revealed that there was seldom a bivariate association between actual relative deprivation and crime at the individual level and that for some 22 to 30 year olds, the relationship was negative. Relative affluence (not deprivation) was associated with involvement in property crime. There were, however, cases in which individuals living in households experiencing actual relative deprivation were more likely than others to engage in crime. For example, 12 to 16 year olds (both sexes combined) who experienced high actual relative deprivation were more likely than those experiencing low actual relative deprivation to have committed a burglary in the last year. Similarly, females aged 17 to 21 who experienced actual relative deprivation were considerably more likely to have ever committed a property offence than were the non-relatively deprived. These were simple bivariate associations. When entered into a logistic regression model that included a range of other factors previously found to be good predictors of criminality, actual relative deprivation was found to be weakly associated with female offending, but not male offending. Even here, the associations were not always in the expected direction, with offending by 22 to 30 year old females being associated with relative affluence rather than relative deprivation. These findings lend little support to previous studies of the relative deprivation – crime relationship. While there may be an association between actual relative deprivation and crime at the area level, this does not appear to translate into an association at the individual level.

Where the third question, regarding the relationship between the frequency of perceived relative deprivation and involvement in crime is concerned, there are more positive findings than those found for actual relative deprivation. Previous studies that measured the relative deprivation – crime relationship at the aggregate level, assumed actual relative deprivation led to perceived relative deprivation that, in some way, translated into involvement in crime. One would therefore expect involvement in crime to be highest among those experiencing both actual and perceived relative deprivation, rather than by those who experienced either actual or perceived relative deprivation in isolation. This is precisely what the current study found. For both offending ever and offending in the last year, individuals who experienced both actual and perceived relative deprivation were more likely than those experiencing either actual or perceived relative deprivation in isolation to engage in crime. Where perceived relative deprivation on its own was concerned, this was significantly related to involvement in crime far more often than was actual relative deprivation on its own. Furthermore, when added to a series of logistic regression models, perceived relative deprivation was found to be a relevant factor in predicting involvement in property crime in five out of six age / sex groups. Analysis was also undertaken to examine the extent of perceived relative deprivation in offenders and non-offenders, on the basis that one would expect to find offenders more likely to perceive deprivation than would non-offenders. While the interviews with burglary offenders found no differences in comparison to a sample of non-offenders (possibly due to research design problems), the YLS identified greater levels of perceived relative deprivation in property offenders compared to non-offenders.

The evidence on the role of actual relative deprivation is weak as shown by the fact that there were few significant associations between actual relative deprivation and crime and no more than one might have expected by chance. The logistic regression modelling also confirms how weak and inconsistent a measure actual relative deprivation would seem to be in explaining offending behaviour. The evidence on perceived relative deprivation would suggest that this is more strongly associated with involvement in forms of property offending regardless of actual relative deprivation. Indeed, this is evident from five of the 18 logistic regression models that showed that perceived relative deprivation was significantly related to property offending while actual relative deprivation was not. Furthermore, the finding that there is a positive association between perceived relative deprivation and property crime even among the relatively affluent, suggests that previous studies of the relative deprivation – crime relationship have employed inadequate designs. Perceived relative deprivation often leads to involvement in property crime, but the weak association with actual relative deprivation means that, in particular, such studies will under-estimate the relationship. There may be an association between perceived relative deprivation and crime even where there is no actual relative deprivation – crime relationship. Previous studies employing aggregate level data to explore area-based relationships between income inequality and crime can therefore be considered to be at risk of producing false-negative results, by failing to identify the impact of perceived relative deprivation on involvement in crime.

### *Degree of perceived relative deprivation*

As far as can be discerned, no previous study of relative deprivation and crime has taken account of the *extent* to which individuals actually *feel* deprived. The current study attempted to measure the degree of relative deprivation experienced by a sample of 50 burglary offenders and 50 non-offenders interviewed for this study. Chapter 4 details some of the problems associated with this part of the study. For each of the items that respondents identified as objects of relative deprivation, they were asked to score the extent to which they desired the item on a scale from one to ten. A mean average degree score was then calculated per individual and per sample. Analysis of these scores revealed that offenders felt a considerably higher degree of deprivation than did non-offenders. This difference was found to be statistically significant. This suggests that when offenders experience perceptions of relative deprivation they feel it significantly more intensely than non-offenders. It may well be this aspect of the concept that is important in spurring them on to engage in burglary. Feeling a strong sense of desire at seeing their friends with items they too would have liked, they may have felt engaging in crime was a risk worth taking to obtain what they wanted. This is an issue which appears to have been missed by previous research examining the relative deprivation - crime relationship.

It would seem clear from this analysis that theories of the relationship between relative deprivation and crime are still in their infancy. There is still a considerable way to go in understanding the nature of relative deprivation as well in understanding the effect it has on crime rates. This is only likely to be possible with a shift away from studies of

aggregate data, towards investigating relative deprivation at the individual level, as in the current study. The analysis conducted in the current study has provided a further insight into the relationship between actual and perceived relative deprivation and between relative deprivation and crime. The following chapter attempts to utilise some of those insights to develop a revised theoretical framework for the relationship between relative deprivation and crime.

## **Chapter 8**

### **Towards a new understanding of the relative deprivation – crime relationship**

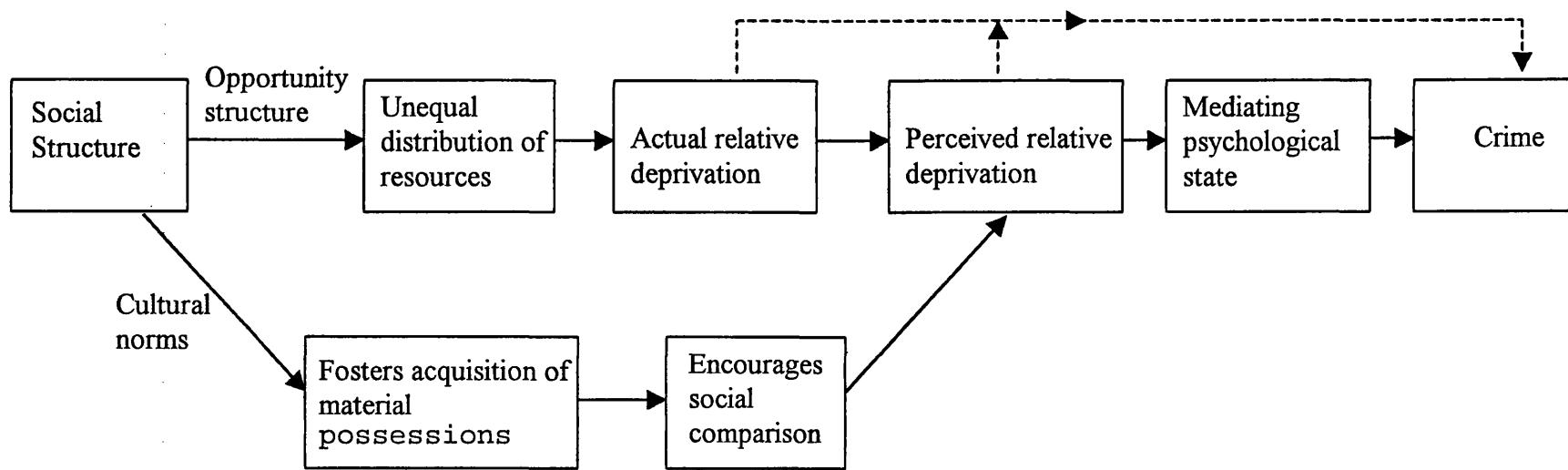
#### **Introduction**

Chapters five and six showed how actual and perceived relative deprivation may be related to crime. This chapter attempts to formalise these findings by offering a theoretical framework that can be adapted to show how relative deprivation may be related to crime at the societal level and at the peer group level. In both instances, attempts are made to show how societal pressures may influence individual action. Following this, the proposed framework is compared to existing theories that employ elements of relative deprivation in order to provide a critique of the new approach.

#### **The relationship between relative deprivation and crime at the societal level**

If we assume that the direction of the association between relative deprivation and crime identified in the current study is one that treats relative deprivation as the independent variable and crime as the dependent variable (which itself may be a moot point), we can put forward a series of theoretical propositions that are joined together in the framework presented in figure 3.

**Figure 3: Theoretical framework of how relative deprivation may be associated with crime at the societal level**



The framework in Figure 3 takes a Mertonian (1938) approach to identifying key components of the social structure that have a bearing on the relative deprivation - crime relationship. Merton's (1938) notion of anomie was based on the disjunction between societal norms that propounded the importance of monetary success and access to legitimate means for achieving success. In a similar way, figure 3 differentiates between access to opportunities that defines the distribution of scarce resources and cultural norms that promote the importance of material acquisition. The following pages document how each may be important for generating relative deprivation.

Where the opportunity structure is concerned, it is clear that economic resources are by no means equally distributed. Basic costs of living may also vary which means that some pay more for commodities like housing (possibly due to regional differences etc.) and this will influence the amount of disposable income that remains to acquire non-essential goods and services. Here, non-essential refers to any acquisition that is not necessary to sustain the most meagre lifestyle. It excludes, for example, food, basic clothing, housing and heating - all of which can be considered life's essentials.

Inequality in income, born of unequal access to legitimate opportunities and unequal rewards, also results in inequality in the ability to obtain goods and services. The result is that actual relative deprivation will be a certainty. As has previously been noted in this thesis, actual relative deprivation of goods and services is likely to be more relevant here than actual relative deprivation of income because the former will be more conspicuous than the latter. While actual relative deprivation is a certainty at the national level in any society, it is also to be found in smaller social groupings. Regardless of whether one considers geographical referents (such as cities,

neighbourhoods, streets or next-door neighbours) or one considers other social groupings (such as friends, family or work colleagues), it would be highly unusual to identify circumstances in which all members of the social grouping shared identical levels of income, goods and services.

Under some circumstances, experiences of actual relative deprivation could lead directly to involvement in crime without the mediation of other factors. By definition, those who are deprived in absolute terms of the basic necessities for sustaining life will be experiencing actual relative deprivation too. That is true unless everyone is equally poor within a particular reference group - as might be the case in times of widespread famine. There was, however, little evidence in the current study to suggest that actual relative deprivation leads directly to crime. Examining actual relative deprivation in isolation produced just 5 (5%) statistically significant associations between actual relative deprivation and the prevalence of offending, of the 96 tests conducted. Furthermore, when individuals were divided into four groups indicating their experiences of actual and perceived relative deprivation, only 16 (6%) significant results out of 288 tests conducted found the highest prevalence of offending among those suffering high actual relative deprivation (regardless of whether they also perceived themselves to be deprived). The evidence is therefore fairly consistent in suggesting that actual relative deprivation seldom leads to crime directly. This is supported by previous research on relative deprivation, which has usually assumed that mediating variables were necessary in order to generate a propensity to engage in crime.

Far more plausible than the direct actual relative deprivation - crime association, is one in which actual relative deprivation generates perceived relative deprivation, as suggested in figure 3. Previous research has generally assumed that actual relative deprivation will generate perceived relative deprivation and this will help to motivate individuals to engage in crime. Before one can act to change a circumstance, one must realise one is in that situation and this characterises the relationship between actual and perceived relative deprivation. The current study provided evidence to suggest that those who experienced both actual and perceived relative deprivation were more likely to have engaged in crime than those only experiencing actual relative deprivation. Of the 288 tests for association between relative deprivation groups and involvement in crime, 18 statistically significant results were found where the prevalence of offending was highest among those experiencing both actual and perceived relative deprivation. By comparison, no significant results were found wherein offending was most prevalent among those experiencing actual relative deprivation without experiencing perceived relative deprivation.

The association between actual and perceived relative deprivation is by no means a perfect one. Actual relative deprivation does not automatically result in individuals perceiving themselves to be deprived. The current study has shown that approximately three quarters of those experiencing high actual relative deprivation will also perceive themselves to be deprived. Clearly, a quarter of those experiencing actual relative deprivation do not perceive relative deprivation (of the items presented). Perhaps of greater interest is the fact that over half of those who are not in a state of actual relative deprivation perceive themselves to be deprived of something. This is further supported by evidence that suggests there is a positive association between perceived

relative deprivation and crime, regardless of household income. Perceived relative deprivation is relevant regardless of whether actual relative deprivation is suffered. This leads us on to the second aspect of the framework in figure 3 – the influence of cultural norms.

Merton's (1938) notion of cultural goals placed an emphasis on universal messages transmitted to members of society. These messages propounded the importance of success. For Merton, the primary metric of success was the accumulation of money and it was towards this goal that members of society were encouraged to strive. The theoretical framework in figure 3 suggests that, rather than the accumulation of money, the universal goal transmitted via cultural norms is the acquisition of material possessions. This can be justified on a number of grounds. Firstly, money is not generally viewed as an end in itself, but as a means to an end. Clearly we do not live in a society populated by Ebenezer Scrooges, who accumulate money for its own sake, rather than for how it can benefit one's life. Money tends to be used as a means to an end. That end tends to be the accumulation of material possessions to enrich one's life – whether it be by making it a little more comfortable, convenient, or convivial. For many, the accumulation of material possessions has come to be associated with a feeling of well being. This is evident among those overheard to say "life would be so much easier if only I had a dishwasher" or "wouldn't this film be more enjoyable if we were watching it on a widescreen TV with surround-sound?" The accumulation of such material possessions has therefore become a more frequently used metric for benchmarking ones economic and social well being than is the simple accumulation of money in the form of a healthy bank balance. If further evidence of this were required, one could point to the rise of consumer credit in recent decades. Bank overdrafts,

personal loans and credit cards have become commonplace and these are being used not for accumulating money, but for purchasing goods and services. Essentially, this is using other people's accumulated wealth to improve one's own material well being.

Cultural norms that propound the importance of material acquisition are essential for the wellbeing of society and not just the individual. Marx (1887 / 1971, p.609) argued that capitalist economies rely on a system of "extended reproduction" in which firms need to continually expand their sales in order to grow. Economic growth is a key feature of the capitalist world. Assessments of performance are based on annual growth rates and this is equally true for nation states and individual firms. However, companies can only grow by attracting new customers to buy their products or getting existing customers to purchase more. The primary method through which this is achieved is through marketing and, more specifically, through the use of advertising. Passas (1988, p.135) noted that advertising influences relative deprivation by:

*"1) nurturing peoples awareness of material shortages and inequalities, and 2) legitimising, encouraging or creating wishes and needs that cannot be met easily, if at all. People are constantly reminded of what 'is missing' in their house or in their life."*

The continued existence of the capitalist economy (and by definition its expansion) is therefore dependent on increasing material consumption. However, this can only be achieved by continually instilling in potential purchasers the persistent need for material acquisition. The process by which societal norms foster the acquisition of material possessions requires members of society to be encouraged to compare their stock of

material possessions with that of others. These comparisons are likely to be made with known individuals, but also (so the advertising executive would hope) with media images designed precisely for that purpose.

The process by which the accumulation of material possessions is fostered therefore encourages social comparisons to be made. These social comparisons will themselves influence the likelihood of perceiving relative deprivation. If one is presented with the material accumulation of others through media depiction and is also encouraged to measure one's own social and economic well being with reference to that which others possess, it is perhaps inevitable that one will be more likely to perceive oneself to be deprived than if such cultural norms were not present. One effect of this may be to increase the likelihood that those who are deprived, feel deprived, more than would otherwise have been the case without these cultural norms. This may explain why so many of those in a position of actual relative deprivation in the current study perceived themselves to be deprived. Actual and perceived relative deprivation may therefore be a product of a well functioning capitalist system.

There is, however, evidence to suggest that the cultural norms may have an even stronger influence on perceived relative deprivation than might be predicted from the actual relative deprivation – perceived relative deprivation relationship. It would appear that perceived relative deprivation is being generated even where actual relative deprivation may not exist. Although it is unclear to what extent perceived relative deprivation is inherent and to what extent it is socially prescribed, it would appear that it can exist independently of actual relative deprivation. This is evident from the fact that half of those experiencing low actual relative deprivation still felt deprived.

Furthermore, perceived relative deprivation is frequently associated with the prevalence of offending even when actual relative deprivation is absent. The findings in chapter 4 showed that, in general, perceived relative deprivation was a better predictor of offending than actual relative deprivation. When analysed in terms of the four relative deprivation groupings, 19 statistically significant results (out of 288 tests conducted) found the prevalence of offending highest among individuals who experienced low actual relative deprivation, where perceived relative deprivation was present. Figure 3 should therefore be interpreted as indicating that a) actual relative deprivation can foster perceived relative deprivation and this can be further promoted by societal influences and b) perceived relative deprivation can exist even when actual relative deprivation does not. Indeed, the evidence presented in this thesis suggests the latter is more plausible than the former. Although the framework appears Mertonian at first sight, the fact that perceived relative deprivation is related to offending regardless of the distribution of resources means that involvement in crime is not dependent on the actual distribution of economic resources, as is the case in Merton's (1938) anomie.

The next issue of concern in figure 3 is the role played by mediating psychological factors. This study has provided limited evidence to suggest that, in some circumstances, perceptions of relative deprivation may be translated into feelings of marginalisation or injustice and it is these that provide the basis for the decision to engage in crime. At present, it is unclear whether perceived relative deprivation leads directly to the decision to engage in crime or whether it is mediated through some other psychological factor. It is therefore presented in figure 3 as a *possible* mechanism by which perceived relative deprivation leads to involvement in crime.

Rather than attempting to explain crime at the societal level, there may be benefit in applying the general framework presented in figure 3 to explain some of the peer group processes identified in the qualitative aspect of the research, as presented in chapter 5. Figure 4 indicates a theoretical framework that links a number of social mechanisms by which relative deprivation within a peer group could lead to involvement in crime.

### **The relationship between relative deprivation and crime at the peer group level**

Figure 4 can be explained by using the example of a “typical” offending peer group. This offending peer group consists of a loose network of friends and acquaintances, some of whom may be involved in offending, while others may not. Among those who are offending, some will be more prolific than others. Starting with the opportunity structure, the distribution of resources within the group will have been a function of previous access to both legitimate and illegitimate income generating opportunities. Some will possess more than others in the group as a result of their offending and this may make some of the group feel perceived relative deprivation in comparison to the more affluent members. Involvement in crime that has profited other members of the group may therefore become a solution to the perceived need. In this sense previous involvement in crime may cause a sense of relative deprivation in others. Subsequent involvement in crime becomes the means of reducing such perceptions of relative deprivation. Therefore, as outlined in chapter 5, at the peer group level, crime leads to relative deprivation and relative deprivation leads to crime.

This is, however, a dynamic process. Within the group, the result of committing crime as a means of alleviating perceived deprivation, will be to alter the distribution of

resources and may change the nature of the actual relative deprivation within the group. Others may therefore be relatively deprived in comparison to those who have newly profited from offending. At the same time, the increased income at the disposal of the recent offender will mean they will have more to spend on acquiring material possessions. The nature of the offending peer groups discussed by those interviewed suggested that they encouraged acquisition. While societal cultural norms advocated material acquisition, this would appear to have been accentuated within the offending peer group. Approval and recognition as part of the group would appear to have depended on an ability to purchase high value possessions and to be seen to consume conspicuously. These possessions would rapidly lose value (at least within the group), either because they were out of fashion (as in the case of clothes and jewellery) or because they had been consumed (as in the case of eating out, drink and drugs).

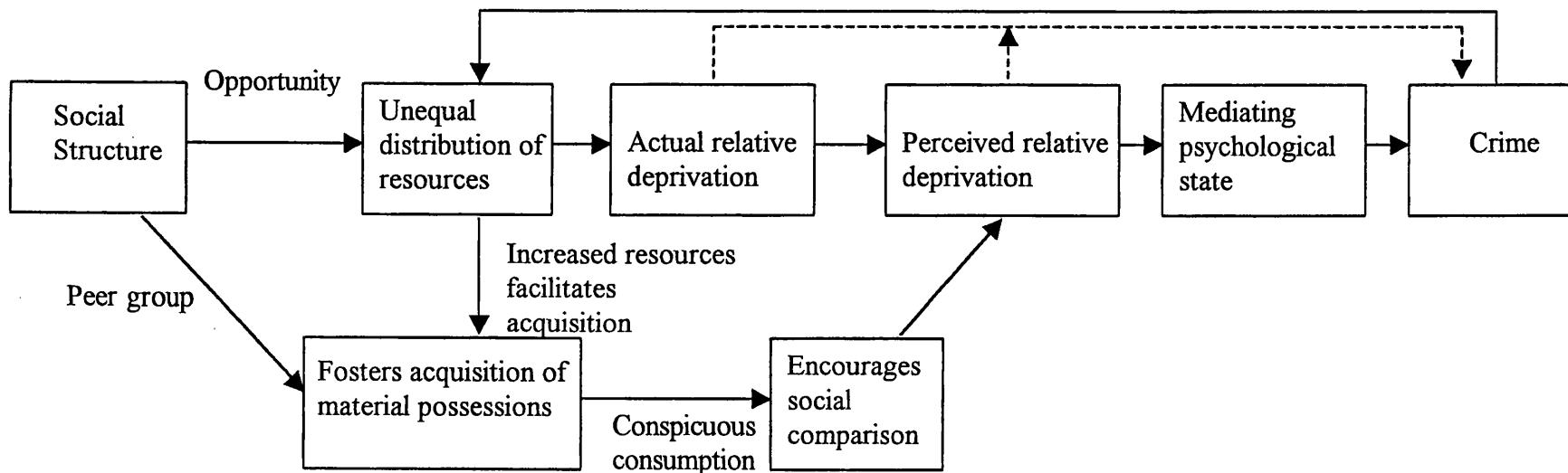
Indeed, the nature of the goods purchased by this group were in many ways a capitalist's delight – high cost and short lived, requiring regular repeat purchases to maintain consumption patterns.

The high degree of conspicuous consumption that would appear to have gone hand in hand with increased disposable income from crime will facilitate social comparisons – both within the group and by others on the fringe of the group who may observe their apparent affluent lifestyle. Unfavourable comparisons to the group of conspicuously offending peers may cause either existing group members (profiting from crime to a lesser extent) or non-offenders on the fringes of the group, to perceive themselves to be relatively deprived and ultimately to join in with the group's offending behaviour.

This process may provide the rationale for the group to continue to exist over time and recruit new members into this form of offending lifestyle. As outlined in chapter 5, this

could have a multiplier effect on the prevalence of offending if more are drawn into a offending by such groups than cease from involvement in such behaviour.

**Figure 4:** Theoretical framework of how relative deprivation may be associated with crime at the offending peer group level



The societal and peer group level theoretical frameworks outlined in figures 3 and 4 are an abstraction and do not attempt to draw in all that is known about how social factors may influence the individual decision making process. They do, however, provide a simple model of how relative deprivation may be relevant for understanding involvement in crime, notwithstanding other excluded factors that are likely to be pertinent to the issue (see logistic regression models in chapter 4). The following pages provide a critique of the two theoretical frameworks, with reference to existing theory.

### **Critique of societal and peer group level theoretical frameworks for association between relative deprivation and crime**

As with other theories of this kind, the frameworks presented in figures 3 and 4 are a significant abstraction from, and simplification of, reality. This has resulted in a number of criticisms that could be levelled at the frameworks from other theoretical perspectives. The following pages discuss some of the major concerns that might be expected from three of these perspectives – anomie, traditional strain theory, and general strain theory. These perspectives were chosen as the basis for comparison because they represent well developed theoretical approaches. Furthermore the current theoretical frameworks emerge from the school of thought that treats experience of strain in the individual as influencing the decision to engage in crime. The criticisms discussed here are divided into those that relate to problems associated with the construction of the theory and those related to the testing of that theory.

## **Criticisms of the theory construction emanating from anomie theory**

The starting point for this critique is Merton's (1938) anomie as there are clearly parallels between this and the theoretical frameworks in figures 3 and 4. Both anomie and the theory presented here start with a notion of the social structure that involves the differentiation between an opportunity structure, that defines the distribution of economic resources within society, and universal cultural goals to which all members of society are encouraged to adhere. This notion of cultural goals is the starting point for the critique of the theory. The societal level relative deprivation – crime theoretical framework set out in figure 3 suffers from the same criticisms as those levelled at anomie theory regarding universal goals. For example, Lemert (1964) noted that cultural goals were not universal. Society was better considered as an amalgam of varying cultural goals to which different sub-cultures adhered. As such it was wrong to consider universal cultural goals at the societal level as being accepted by all. This argues directly against the existence of a dominant ideology that helps to foster the maintenance of the existing social structure- a dominant ideology that, in the current thesis, is considered to foster the acquisition of material possessions. The current thesis would argue that universal cultural goals do exist in parallel to goals accepted by particular sub-cultures. While these universal goals exist, they do not have to be followed by members of particular sub-cultures, who may prefer to accept their own system of cultural norms. This is in keeping with the notion of a pluralist society consisting of many different interests groups with different beliefs and practices (as suggested by Lemert (1964)).

The argument about the existence of universal cultural goals is less of a problem for the peer group level theoretical framework in figure 4. In this scenario, goals adopted by the peer group encourage material acquisition. These goals are a reflection and amplification (in the vigour to which they are adhered) of goals of the wider society. Material acquisition is therefore raised to the status of primary goal of the offending peer group. While these norms will be universally accepted within the sub-culture of the offending peer group and result from distorted acceptance of societal norms, this process can occur without the need to identify material acquisition as a *universal* norm at the societal level. Indeed, the peer group level model allows for the possibility that material acquisition is one of many competing societal norms, but is one which, for whatever reason, the offending peer group focuses on as justification and legitimisation of its actions.

A criticism levelled at Merton's anomie theory by Lemert (1964) noted that it failed to take account of active social control that could inhibit an individual either from engaging in crime in the first place, or reduce the rate at which he participated in such behaviour. Anomie theory may therefore have over-predicted the influence of the strain experienced by the individual as it failed to articulate the pacifying influences of (both formal and informal) social control. Precisely the same criticism can be levelled at the relative deprivation – crime theoretical frameworks in figure 3 and 4. These fail to take account of social control, along with a host of other factors that may influence an individual's decision to engage in crime. Indeed, as was shown in chapter 5, relative deprivation was generally the least relevant factor (of the independent variables included in the model) for predicting property offending. The theoretical frameworks

presented in this thesis are therefore rather uni-dimensional, failing to account for what are likely to be other more relevant factors for explaining involvement in crime. This is a criticism that could be levelled at anomie theory too.

The societal level relative deprivation – crime theoretical framework could also be criticised for being uni-dimensional in the mechanisms by which societal pressures are translated into individual action. Although Merton (1964) viewed anomie as essentially sociological<sup>32</sup>, Passas (1995) has suggested that it is a socio-psychological concept that examines the relationship between the individuals and society. Anomie "*bridges the gap between explanations of social action at the individual level with those at the level of social structure*" (Abercrombie et al 1988 p.11, quoted in Passas (1995) p.97). While the societal level relative deprivation – crime theoretical framework also offers an approach that "bridges the gap" between societal pressures and individual behaviour, it provides just two intermediate mechanisms by which this is achieved – 1) actual relative deprivation leading directly to crime and 2) perceived relative deprivation leading to crime. This might be considered inferior to the range of mechanisms by which anomie at the societal level is translated into individual behaviour. However, it may also point towards a vagueness that allowed the intermediate mechanisms by which societal level pressures lead to individual level behaviour to be interpreted in ways not originally conceived of by Merton.

Similarly, the peer group level theoretical framework suffers from the fact that it relies on the two intermediate mechanisms noted above. However, the issue is slightly different to

<sup>32</sup>

Merton was keen to draw a distinction between anomie as a malaise of society as a whole and anomia as experienced by the individual. Anomie was meant to describe societal level influences which were viewed as having an impact on individually felt anomia.

that experienced at the societal level because these mechanisms are themselves mediated through an offending peer group. Here one must question what other processes may be occurring within the context of the offending peer group that facilitate a decision to engage in crime. For example, one could add factors such as peer pressure to conform, and differential association. These link offending peer groups to involvement in crime without the need for actual or perceived relative deprivation. While the peer group level theoretical framework provides a link between individual behaviour and peer group processes and ultimately with societal pressures, it still provides a somewhat uni-dimensional approach to crime causation.

The final problem lies at the outcome end of the model. Both societal and peer group level relative deprivation – crime theoretical frameworks purely show the outcome of being relatively deprived as crime. Clearly, not all of those who feel deprived take this road. Alternative solutions include 1) following legitimate opportunities to acquire that which is desired, 2) selecting alternative reference groups who do not inspire perceived relative deprivation, or 3) simply accepting that one feels deprived. In comparison to anomie theory, this can be criticised for its failure to account for the alternative ‘modes of adaptation’ that could be followed to resolve such perceptions. As noted earlier, Merton (1938) offered a classification of groups that depicted how anomie was resolved at the individual level. These included both deviant and non-deviant solutions to the experience of anomie. As such, there is a danger that the theoretical frameworks presented here over-predict the extent of crime that result from these processes and fails to offer alternative solutions (both deviant and non-deviant).

## **Criticisms of the theory construction emanating from traditional strain theory**

Many of the criticisms arising from anomie theory can also be noted in relation to traditional strain theory. This is unsurprising, given the fact that, in many respects, anomie is akin to traditional strain theory. For example, the failure to account for social control as fully as might have been attempted in traditional strain theories is a problem shared with anomie. Like Merton's anomie, other traditional strain theories have also often provided an indication of alternative paths for dealing with experiences of strain. For example, Cohen (1955) showed how gang members were differentiated from college and corner boys. Cloward and Ohlin (1960) similarly showed how a number of different sub-cultures emerged as a response to dealing with the differential access to legitimate and illegitimate opportunity structures. These can be contrasted with the previously mentioned unidimensional approach taken to dealing with outcomes in the relative deprivation – crime theoretical frameworks in figures 3 and 4.

There are also some criticisms that arise from traditional strain theory that were not apparent with Merton's anomie. For example, Cohen's (1955) theory of reaction formation of delinquent sub-cultures provided an explanation for why so much gang behaviour appeared to be non-utilitarian. Much of their delinquency involved non-profitable behaviour, such as fighting and stealing small items that would later be discarded. Cohen explained this by noting that such sub-cultures existed in opposition to the dominant culture of values and standards. Any behaviour deviating from the norm was therefore accepted by the delinquent sub-culture precisely because it stood in opposition to conventional standards. Regardless of whether it was profitable, if it

was viewed as delinquent in the eyes of society, it was successful in the eyes of the gang. Both the societal and peer group level relative deprivation – crime theoretical frameworks take a utilitarian approach to explaining delinquent behaviour. However, this was based on the fact that most of those interviewed viewed burglary as an instrumental means to a desired end. Little mention was made of non-utilitarian behaviour of the kind documented by Cohen among the 50 burglary offenders interviewed.

Cloward and Ohlin's (1960) theory of opportunity structures identified the importance of access to illegitimate pursuits in determining involvement in crime. The societal level and, more specifically, the peer group level theoretical framework assumed that illegitimate opportunities would be readily available. Indeed, the peer group level framework functions on the assumption that those on the margins of the group will be given access to the skills, knowledge and personal contacts that facilitate a successful burglary and subsequent fencing of stolen goods. This may not be a straightforward process and may involve some being accepted into the fold, while others are rejected. However this 'gatekeeper' role by which new members are inducted into the offending behaviour of the group is an area that is not adequately addressed by the current thesis.

### **Criticisms of the theory construction emanating from general strain theory**

As outlined in chapter 2, general strain theory updated the approach taken in traditional strain theories by identifying three broad causes of strain: (1) the failure to

achieve a positive goal (central to many traditional strain theories); (2) the withdrawal, or threat of withdrawal of positively valued stimuli; and (3) the presentation of or expected presentation of negatively viewed stimuli. Broadly speaking, the theoretical frameworks in figures 3 and 4 focus on the first of these. In the face of limited legitimate opportunities for material acquisition, actual and perceived relative deprivation come to represent the failure to achieve a positive goal – namely possession of that of which one feels deprived. Neither the societal, nor peer group level models take account of the two other types of strain highlighted by general strain theory.

The second criticism from the general strain theory perspective is the lack of mechanisms by which experiences of strain (i.e. perceptions of relative deprivation) generate a decision to engage in crime. This criticism is also raised in comparison to anomie theory. The societal and peer group level theoretical frameworks outlined in figures 3 and 4 employ the notion of mediating psychological states that may intervene between perceptions of relative deprivation and the decision to engage in crime. However, these mediating factors are not specified in any detail and one can currently only speculate on the range of psychological states that may be involved here. By contrast, general strain theory identifies three main coping strategies, based on cognitive, emotional and behavioural adaptations to strain, each of which conditions the likelihood of involvement in delinquency. This provides a more comprehensive theory for how strain is translated into crime than is currently possible from the two relative deprivation – crime theoretical frameworks depicted in this thesis.

### **Criticisms of the ability to test the theoretical framework empirically**

Perhaps as significant as the criticisms associated with the theoretical aspects of the framework are the problems that arise when attempting to test empirically the societal and peer group level models. The current thesis was able to test empirically only part of the model in figures 3 and 4. From this, a framework was developed that leaves a number of unanswered questions.

Where the societal level theory is concerned, the aspects that have been tested empirically in the current research are the associations between actual and perceived relative deprivation and their relationship with the prevalence of offending. Both upstream and downstream there are untested aspects of the framework. For example, the relationship between the unequal distribution of resources at the societal level and the extent of actual relative deprivation was not tested although we can assume that one implies the other. Perhaps more pertinent, given the fact that perceived relative deprivation appears to be associated with crime regardless of experiences of actual relative deprivation, was the inability to measure the extent to which cultural norms foster the aspiration to acquire material possessions. Nor has it been possible to measure the ways in which and extent to which such cultural norms may influence perceptions of relative deprivation. While perceived relative deprivation only makes sense with reference to others, it remains unclear the extent to which social comparisons are fostered by society and the extent to which they are innate characteristics.

Looking downstream from perceived relative deprivation, there are empirical problems in showing how such perceptions might be translated into crime. Although there was limited evidence to suggest that perceptions of relative deprivation inspired feelings of marginalisation and injustice that resulted in crime, the extent to which these or other mediating psychological states may be relevant and the extent to which perceived relative deprivation has a direct effect remain unclear. This is clearly an area where further work will be required.

The peer group level model suffered from a similar set of problems to that for the societal level model, plus some additional ones. One of the main limiting factors from the empirical standpoint was that the unit of analysis in the research was the individual, rather than the peer group. The peer group level model was therefore constructed from accounts given by individuals about their association with such groups. The model is therefore based on the historical perspectives of individuals who were once involved in such groups. As such, it is possible that the model is an artefact of distorted perspectives from a sample of individuals attempting to justify their behaviour after the event. A better empirical test of the model would have been to take the peer group as the unit of analysis, rather than the individual, although this was not possible within the constraints of the current study.

As with the societal level model, there are potential pitfalls in the empirical testing of the model both upstream and downstream. For example, the current study failed to measure the extent to which resources were distributed unevenly within the group.

This is partly due to the fact that the individual and not the group was the unit of analysis. However, the study of 50 burglary offenders from which the peer group level framework is derived also failed to measure the individuals' level of income and wealth. It is assumed, rather than proven, therefore, that those on the edge of the group were deprived in comparison to the offending peers, or perceived themselves to be deprived.

The exploratory nature of much of this part of the study meant that much of the peer group level framework was based on indicative findings, rather than on anything that could be confirmed at this stage. For example, the findings from the qualitative interviews suggested that peer group norms fostered the acquisition of material possessions, that this led to conspicuous consumption, which in turn encouraged social comparison within the group that eventually led to experiences of perceived relative deprivation. This postulated chain of events remains hypothetical at this stage as the research design used in the current study did not allow for this to be tested further.

Similarly, downstream there are problems shared with the societal level model. Most relevant here is the 'black box' of mediating psychological state that converts perceptions of relative deprivation into the decision to engage in crime. The nature and extent of this black box remains unknown. Perhaps the aspect that remains of greatest conjecture, however, is the feedback loop that links involvement in crime back to the unequal distribution of resources. The competitive spirit that seems to have existed among members of the offending peer group suggests that this process may have been

occurring, although again, the nature and extent of this dynamic aspect of the framework remains unclear.

### **Benefits of the societal and peer group level theoretical frameworks for the relationship between relative deprivation and crime**

The above critique shows there are clearly problems with the theoretical framework for the relationship between relative deprivation and crime and these problems exist at both the societal and peer group level. However, the importance in highlighting the weaknesses in the current model is not to dismiss the potential value of such frameworks outright, but to identify the ways in which improvements could be made. Most of the limitations of the current societal and peer group models lie in their lack of scope. They fail to take account of other factors that may be relevant, or to fully explain the causal mechanisms at play. It is important to differentiate these criticisms from those that might suggest the theory was simply wrong in its fundamental assumptions. One such criticism, for example, could be that the theoretical models are based on the assumption that crime is a response to perceived relative deprivation. Critics might argue that, although an association was identified, this might operate in the opposite direction. Perceived relative deprivation might be a response to involvement in crime as a way of justifying behaviour after the event. One must concede that this is quite possible and remains an area for further testing.

By and large the criticisms focus on the incompleteness of the theory. As such, one might view this as a theoretical framework in its infancy. As it stands it may provide

part of the picture for explaining involvement in crime, but requires further work to illuminate other aspects of that picture. In defence of the approach taken, one might also point to some of the benefits of the theoretical models as conceived of here. For example, at the societal level, the theory does attempt to 'bridge the gap' between societal level influences and individual behaviour. It also begins to articulate the mechanisms by which perceptions may be translated into actions, although this is still under-developed.

The real strengths of the theorising would seem to lie in the peer group level model. This provides an explanation for why new individuals may be drawn into an offending peer group (because of perceived relative deprivation resulting from comparisons made to conspicuously consuming offending peers). More importantly, it provides an explanation of why offending behaviour is a repetitive process. The relationship between perceived relative deprivation and crime is a dynamic one. Offending behaviour may provide the means by which to resolve initial perceptions of relative deprivation, but the conspicuous consumption and competitive spirit within the group may inspire those belonging to the group to offend further in order to keep up with the consumption patterns of the rest of the group. This therefore becomes a continual process and may potentially have a multiplier effect on the number of offenders as others are attracted into the group. The dynamic nature of the process operating at the peer group level would seem to be one of the particular strengths of the current theorising and is an area where further theoretical and empirical work would be particularly beneficial.

## **Summing up the utility of the societal and peer group level theoretical frameworks**

This chapter has attempted to articulate two theoretical models that describe how relative deprivation may be related to crime – one at the societal level and one that partially mirrors it at the peer group level. These models are far from complete. They leave unanswered many questions about how factors within the models are related to one another and cover only a small number of the independent variables that have been shown to predict criminality. Despite this, there may be benefits in developing these models further with alternative research methodologies, although this would seem to be the case more for the peer group level model than it is for the societal level model.

## **Chapter 9**

### **Conclusions**

This final chapter summarises the main findings and attempts to outline aspects of the relative deprivation - crime relationship where further attention needs to be paid.

#### **Summary of findings**

Before discussing the main findings of this study, let us first return to the starting point for this thesis by re-stating the research questions. Seven questions were presented in chapter 3:

1. Do individuals who experience actual relative deprivation also experience perceived relative deprivation?
2. Does actual relative deprivation affect the likelihood of an individual engaging in crime?
3. Does perception of relative deprivation affect the likelihood of an individual engaging in crime?

4. Which, if any, of the four conditions distinguished below are associated with involvement in crime:
  - a. where neither actual nor perceived relative deprivation are present?
  - e. where actual relative deprivation is present and perceived relative deprivation is absent?
  - f. where actual relative deprivation is absent and perceived relative deprivation is present?
  - g. where both actual relative deprivation and perceived relative deprivation are present?
5. How well does relative deprivation explain involvement in crime compared to other predictive factors?
6. What types of object or issue inspire the greatest sense of perceived relative deprivation and how do these differ between offenders and non-offenders?
7. Is it the perceptions of relative deprivation themselves that are the motivation for criminal involvement, or do they inspire other psychological processes that are criminogenic?

The following pages briefly examine each of these research questions in turn and summarise the main findings of the current study in attempting to answer these.

*Research question 1: Do individuals who experience actual relative deprivation also experience perceived relative deprivation?*

Most previous studies of the relative deprivation – crime relationship employed aggregate level data on income and crime to explore whether areas that experienced high levels of actual relative deprivation (expressed in terms of income inequality) also experienced higher levels of crime than other areas. In explaining the relationship between actual relative deprivation and crime, it was assumed that those who suffered actual relative deprivation also perceived relative deprivation. It was further assumed that it was these perceptions that were responsible (either directly or through some psychological mediating factor such as feelings of frustration) for explaining involvement in crime. This assumption was unproven and indeed, seldom referred to, in the literature on relative deprivation and crime. For these aggregate level studies of actual relative deprivation to have explanatory power, it is necessary to show that those who experience actual relative deprivation are also likely to perceive themselves as deprived.

Using data from the 1998 YLS, analysis was undertaken to explore whether individuals who lived in households that experienced actual relative deprivation (in terms of having less income than other households nationally) were more likely to experience perceived relative deprivation than those living in relatively affluent households. The results

presented in table 16 showed that there was a positive association between actual and perceived relative deprivation on all three measures of perceived relative deprivation examined. Young people who were from relatively deprived households were more likely to feel deprived of leisure pursuits, or bare necessities, or indeed, any item, than were those living in relatively affluent households. The association was stronger for females than males, although this was due to females in general being more likely to perceive relative deprivation than were males. Although there was a significant relationship between actual and perceived relative deprivation at the individual level, the strength of that association was weak. The correlation coefficients presented in table 17 show that the strongest association was between actual relative deprivation and feeling deprived of any item among females, with a coefficient of just 0.3, ie that a mere 10% of the variation in perceptions of deprivation are attributable to actual deprivation.

These findings suggest that, while there is a significant association between actual and perceived relative deprivation, that association is fairly weak. While many of those who are relatively deprived, feel deprived, so do many of those who come from relatively affluent households. This has implications for studies that focus on measuring the association between actual relative deprivation and crime. While this study has shown that actual relative deprivation does lead to perceptions of relative deprivation, simply measuring actual relative deprivation would exclude a large proportion of those living in relatively affluent households who also felt deprived. Indeed, overall, 54% of young people living in relatively affluent households have been identified as perceiving

relative deprivation. By focusing on actual relative deprivation, previous studies are likely to have under-estimated the extent to which relative deprivation is felt.

*Research question 2: Does actual relative deprivation affect the likelihood of an individual engaging in crime?*

As has just been noted, experiencing actual relative deprivation has been central to previous studies in this area. So, are individuals who experience actual relative deprivation more likely than other non-relatively deprived individuals to engage in crime? The answer to this question seems to be “very seldom”. Out of 96 tests for statistical associations conducted on the data, only five produced significant results (which is no less than one might have expected in undertaking this number of statistical tests). Importantly from the perspective of the title of this thesis, one of these significant results involved burglary committed in the last year by 12 to 16 year olds (although this was for both sexes combined). Those who were from households experiencing actual relative deprivation were more likely to have committed a burglary in the last year than were those from relatively affluent households. However, the association was lost when analysis focused on males, who were the primary consideration in this study. Actual relative deprivation would therefore appear to be associated with burglary among 12 to 16 year olds. However, this was based on a simple bivariate analysis and failed to take account of the effects of other relevant variables that might explain this relationship.

Further analysis of this issue was undertaken, using logistic regression modelling in which actual relative deprivation was added to a number of other independent variables to measure their predictive capacity in explaining involvement in property offending. This showed that actual relative deprivation was only relevant in explaining involvement in property offending among females, once other independent factors had been taken into consideration. Indeed, there was a significant association between actual relative deprivation and property offending among all three female age groups examined (12 to 16, 17 to 21 and 22 to 30 year olds). However, while the two younger age groups showed a positive association, 22 to 30 year old females showed a negative relationship between actual relative deprivation and crime. For this group, offending was associated with the relatively affluent.

These findings present something of a problem for existing relative deprivation – crime studies. For example, such studies are likely to assume that the relationship is with male offending as the majority of offences are committed by males. However, actual relative deprivation seems to be more associated with females who commit much less crime than do males. This might suggest the impact of actual relative deprivation on crime is minimal, especially when the relative strength of actual relative deprivation as a predictor of female criminality is much weaker than other variables associated with offending behaviour. Equally problematic is the issue of offending by 22 to 30 year olds, where being relatively deprived reduces the likelihood of engaging in crime. This runs counter to what one would have expected from previous research in this area.

*Research question 3: Does perception of relative deprivation affect the likelihood of an individual engaging in crime?*

Perceptions of relative deprivation were associated with involvement in crime more frequently than was actual relative deprivation. Of the 288 tests for a bivariate association undertaken, 57 yielded a significant result. This appears to have been most relevant in relation to feeling deprived of any of the 16 items presented to the respondent (accounting for 29 of the 57 significant results). This was followed by perceived deprivation of leisure pursuits (20 significant results) and deprivation of bare necessities (eight significant results). Importantly (and unlike the results for actual relative deprivation) all of the results were in the expected direction, with those experiencing perceived deprivation more likely to engage in crime than those not experiencing such perceptions.

Where burglary and offences similar to burglary in particular were concerned, analysis of specific age / sex groups showed that females were more likely to commit such offences when experiencing perceived relative deprivation than were males. Tables 20 to 22 show that, of the nine significant results of the bivariate relationship between perceived relative deprivation and crime, six involve females. Furthermore, four of these associations relate to females aged 12 to 16 who have committed burglary (either ever or in the past year).

The results of logistic regression modelling that included a range of other factors to explain involvement in property crime produced quite different results. Perceptions of

relative deprivation were found to be significantly associated with involvement in property crime among all three of the male age groups compared to two of the female age groups.

In general the measures of perceived relative deprivation were more frequently associated with involvement in crime than were the measures of actual relative deprivation employed in the current study.

*Research question 4: Which, if any, of the four conditions of actual and perceived relative deprivation are associated with involvement in crime?*

Respondents were divided into one of four mutually exclusive groups consisting of those:

- where neither actual nor perceived relative deprivation are present
- where actual relative deprivation is present and perceived relative deprivation is absent
- where actual relative deprivation is absent and perceived relative deprivation is present

- where both actual relative deprivation and perceived relative deprivation are present

Analysis of age / sex groups was undertaken using three different measures of perceived relative deprivation. Of the 208 tests for significant bivariate associations conducted, 23 produced statistically significant results. Of these, 11 exhibited the pattern expected from previous research in this area, in which offending prevalence is highest among those experiencing both actual and perceived relative deprivation. Indeed, in a further eight significant results, those who experienced perceived relative deprivation and low actual relative deprivation were most likely to be involved in crime. This would tend to suggest that perceptions of relative deprivation are associated with offending regardless of whether one experiences actual relative deprivation. Indeed, this was confirmed by analysis that showed that, regardless of household income, those who felt perceived relative deprivation were more likely to engage in property crime than were those who didn't feel deprived. These findings cast doubt on previous studies of the actual relative deprivation – crime relationship, suggesting that perceived relative deprivation is a better indicator of involvement in crime regardless of how deprived the household one comes from might be. However, these results only hold for property crime and any offending. There were no statistically significant results at all in relation to those committing burglary or those committing an offence similar to burglary.

*Research question 5: How well does relative deprivation explain involvement in crime compared to other predictive factors?*

Much of the analysis undertaken in this study consisted of simple bivariate associations between actual and perceived relative deprivation and crime. However, attempts were made to see whether these factors were still relevant for explaining involvement in crime when other factors frequently associated with involvement in crime were taken into consideration. A series of logistic regression models were therefore generated for the six age / sex groupings previously identified. The results of this work suggested that:

- Perceived relative deprivation was slightly more often associated with property offending than was actual relative deprivation.
- Perceived relative deprivation was more frequently associated with male offending than female offending.
- Perceived deprivation of leisure pursuits was the measure of relative deprivation most frequently associated with property offending.
- Actual relative deprivation was only relevant for explaining property offending by females.

Despite the fact that many of the models showed a statistically significant association between either actual or perceived relative deprivation and property crime, this should not disguise the fact that the strength of the associations was generally weak. In most cases, the other factors (more traditionally associated with offending behaviour) included as independent variables in the model were more strongly associated with property offending. While actual and perceived relative deprivation may often be significantly associated with property crime, when other factors are taken into consideration, the strength of that association is very weak. In short actual and perceived relative deprivation have little impact on property crime in comparison to other factors.

*Research question 6: What types of object or issue inspire the greatest sense of perceived relative deprivation and how do these differ between offenders and non-offenders?*

Previous analysis up to this point was concerned with whether actual or perceived relative deprivation were associated with offending behaviour and found comparatively weak associations. This research question required a slightly different approach of categorising individuals as either offenders or non offenders and then exploring the extent to which they felt perceived relative deprivation and the types of object or issue that inspired such feelings. This part of the study utilised both the findings from the YLS and from the interviews with burglary offenders.

Analysis of the YLS showed that offenders more frequently perceived relative deprivation of at least one item than did non-offenders. This difference was statistically significant. By contrast, analysis of data from the interviews with burglary offenders and from a comparison group of non-offenders provided no such significant differences. Where differences in the types of item that generated perceptions of relative deprivation were concerned, the YLS indicated that offenders were significantly more likely than non-offenders to feel deprived of somewhere larger to live, a place of their own to live, going out and owning a VCR. Interestingly, the first three of these appear to have been lifestyle related factors and this was a theme echoed in the interviews with burglary offenders. While there were no statistically significant differences between the offender sample and the comparison group, there appeared to be a qualitative difference in some of the items that were spontaneously mentioned by offenders. Indeed, issues such as clothes, jewellery, going on shopping sprees, owning motorbikes and taking drugs were aspects of the type of lifestyle towards which many of those offenders interviewed aspired. It may well have been the case that offenders were more likely than the comparison group to feel deprived of a lifestyle that involved conspicuous consumption of high value products, living to excess and generally having a good time. Furthermore, this resulted from having a comparative reference group of friends clearly appearing to be successful in crime. Joining in with the offending behaviour of their friends provided the means of reducing perceptions of relative deprivation.

Most of this thesis has been concerned with differences in the *frequency* with which actual or (less commonly) perceived relative deprivation are experienced and how this

affects the incidence or prevalence of offending. However, the interviews with burglary offenders provided tentative evidence to suggest that the *degree* or intensity with which perceived relative deprivation is experienced may also vary between offenders and non-offenders. Offenders appeared to feel relatively deprived more intensely than non-offenders, although this is an area where further work is clearly required.

*Research question 7: Is it the perceptions of relative deprivation themselves that are the motivation for criminal involvement, or do they inspire other psychological processes that are criminogenic?*

From previous research on relative deprivation and crime it was possible to discern a tendency to suggest that perceived relative deprivation generated other feelings, such as frustration and it was this frustration that was responsible for explaining the motivation to engage in crime. This study attempted to explore this issue, but it proved difficult to discern much evidence from the qualitative data available. This question had not been explored in any systematic way in the interviews with burglary offenders.

It proved possible to identify only a small number of cases where relative deprivation appeared to lead to other feelings. These have been described as injustice and marginalisation. However, the evidence is weak. All we can say at this point is that there is limited evidence that in some cases perceived relative deprivation may fuel other feelings. Even here, it is unclear whether the motivation to commit burglary is influenced directly by perceived relative deprivation, whether it is mediated through

these other feelings, or whether they are both proxy measures for some other underlying factor that influences these individuals to engage in crime.

### **Limitations of this study**

What should be clear throughout this study is that the research underlying this thesis has been beset by problems. Attempts to address these through the use of a different methodology have in their own way proved illuminating on the issue, but at the same time, have generated their own methodological problems. Many of the specific problems and caveats associated with this study have been spelled out in the body of the thesis and in particular in the methodology chapter. In this section, a number of the most important limitations associated with the above findings are outlined.

#### *The failure to examine burglary in detail*

As the front cover proclaims, the title of this thesis is 'Relative deprivation, opportunity and crime: young men's motivations for committing burglary'. As such, it would have been reasonable to assume that this study would examine the motivations for engaging in burglary. This is at least partly true. The study included interviews with 50 young men who had previously committed burglary and explored the issues of perceived relative deprivation around the time they committed their first burglary. The study showed that, for some individuals, the experience of perceived relative deprivation may have been at least part of the reason for explaining why these individuals chose to engage in burglary. As outlined in chapter 4, problems associated

with the operationalisation of the measures of relative deprivation meant that it was dangerous to place too much weight on these findings for fear that they were not measuring that which was intended. A second methodology was therefore applied, which examined the issue from a different perspective.

The YLS provided details of the self reported offending behaviour among a sample of young people aged 12 to 30. Unfortunately for this study (although fortunately for society), the prevalence of burglary is relatively rare, especially in comparison to other forms of offending behaviour. From a sample of 3,819 individuals interviewed using a computer-assisted method, only 125 claimed to have ever committed a burglary, 97 of whom were male. This sample size faced similar problems to that of the original study of burglary offenders in that it was too small for conducting much statistical analysis. It therefore proved necessary to select a second group of individuals whose behaviour could be considered similar to those committing burglary. The rationale for this was that, if their offending behaviour was similar, so might the factors associated with their offending be similar. A group of individuals who had committed other types of property crime that were also likely to have been committed by burglary offenders were selected. In the process of selecting this group, it was noted that those committing burglary were more likely than expected (based on odds ratios of actual to expected offending) to have previously committed any property offence (except shoplifting). Therefore, only those offence types that were particularly likely to have been committed by burglary offenders (based on the highest odds ratios) were included in the group of offences similar to burglary. However, the fact that burglary offenders are also likely to be involved in most other forms of property offending lends support

to the argument for treating the findings for the property offence category as broadly relevant to burglary offenders. This study found few significant results for those committing burglary or offences similar to burglary. Property offending was most associated with measures of relative deprivation. As burglary offenders are more likely than expected to commit most of the offences in this category, the behaviour of those committing burglary could be considered similar to the behaviour of those committing other property offences.

It is, perhaps, also worth returning to the rationale for selecting burglary as the focus of attention in the first place. Burglary was considered the epitome of a property offence, involving as it does the decision to trespass on private property with the intent (in most cases) to steal something from that property. If measures of relative deprivation were associated with this form of property offending, then it may well have been relevant to others. The fact that property offending in general has been focused on in much of the secondary analysis of the YLS, rather than burglary, should not necessarily be considered as problematic, given that burglary offenders seem to commit a range of property offences anyway and that the focus on burglary was initially a means of limiting the scope of the research. Although the title focused on burglary, the findings presented in this study might be considered to have wider utility, given the breadth of offence types examined.

#### *Determining causality from association*

This study has conducted a range of analyses that have shown an association between measures of relative deprivation and crime. For example, the analysis of the YLS has

should have possessed things that they wanted but didn't have and that this explained why they committed crime as a means of obtaining those things. This could, in particular, explain why those from relatively affluent households were likely to commit crime when they perceived relative deprivation. Faced with the paradox that, on the one hand, they were not experiencing deprivation in comparison to many others around them, while on the other, they felt inclined to commit crime, *feeling* that they had gone without, relative to others, may have helped them justify their behaviour after the event. Similarly with the case of the burglary offenders interviewed, from the distance of several years since they had started offending, the belief that they had felt relatively deprived in comparison to their friends and that this had influenced them to engage in crime may have been used for convenience. It helped to explain their previous behaviour and by implication, shifted the blame to others on the basis that 'it's not my fault that others have got more than me!'

The point of this is that the direction of influence is unknown. It is unclear whether perceived relative deprivation affects crime, or whether involvement in crime subsequently affects perceived relative deprivation. The assumption used in the current thesis is the former, on the basis that many other studies have used a similar assumption. The important point, however, is that this cannot be established from the current study and that the direction of influence remains an assumption.

### *The frame of reference for measures of relative deprivation*

Relative deprivation only exists with reference to others who serve as the basis for comparison. An important aspect of the concept of relative deprivation is the frame of reference used. This study employed two very different methodologies, but each was subject to limitations in the nature of the comparative reference group with which relative deprivation was assumed to occur.

Where actual relative deprivation was concerned, chapter 5 noted the fact that national comparisons were being assumed. It was not possible to examine household income inequality at a smaller geographical level than national comparisons. This would have been preferable, given the fact that individuals tend to compare themselves to similar others and that those living nearby would be both visible and likely to share common attributes to those making the comparisons. The analysis of actual relative deprivation therefore focused on comparisons of household income between respondents from different parts of the country. However, if comparisons are more likely to be localised, then this may well be an artificial frame of reference. Indeed it may create a weaker association between actual relative deprivation and crime than would a frame of reference involving a local community. As such the measure of actual relative deprivation used in the current study may under-estimate the relative deprivation – crime relationship, although it is currently unclear whether this is the case and, if it is, to what extent the geographic frame of reference affects the relationship.

So far, the discussion on the frame of reference for actual relative deprivation has focused on the merits of different geographical units of analysis. However, as chapter 3 noted, non-geographic frames of reference may be more relevant as a basis for comparison. For example, comparisons to friends, family or others who share common socio-demographic characteristics may be more likely than to those whose only common attribute is that they live in the same area. The current study went some way to addressing this by examining gender specific actual relative deprivation, although it is unclear whether this is an acceptable assumption (that individuals are more likely to compare themselves to others of the same sex) to make at this stage.

Just as defining the comparative reference group for measures of actual relative deprivation was problematic, so too were reference groups for measures of perceived relative deprivation. The measure developed from the secondary analysis of the YLS faced the greatest difficulty in this regard. The question used for this exercise asked:

*“Which of the following, if any, do you (and the people you live with) have to go without because you cannot afford them?*

1. *Holiday*
2. *Car*
3. *Somewhere larger to live*
4. *A place of my own to live*
5. *Personal hobby*
6. *Eating out*
7. *Video recorder*

8. *Records / cassettes / CDS*
9. *Going out*
96. *Other*
97. *None of these*
98. *All of these*

*And which of the following, if any, do you (and the people you live with) have to go without because you cannot afford them?*

1. *Food of yourself*
2. *Food for your family*
3. *Clothes for yourself*
4. *Clothes for your family*
5. *A place to live*
96. *Other*
97. *None of these*
98. *All of these.*

As noted in chapter 4 the assumption made here was that the recognition of going without these things could only be made by reference to that possessed by others. The problem, however, was that there was no way of finding out to whom such comparisons may be made. Under ideal circumstances, one would be able to identify the types of group to whom comparisons are made. One would then be able to measure the extent of actual relative deprivation in comparison to those groups and the

extent of perceived relative deprivation generated by such comparisons. This would allow one to explore more comprehensively the interrelationships between actual and perceived relative deprivation. For example, do those who experience actual relative deprivation in comparison to certain groups also perceive themselves to be deprived in comparison to those groups. One could, for example explore the circumstances under which individuals experience both actual and perceived relative deprivation, but where the perceived relative deprivation is generated in comparison to a different group than that with which the individual experiences actual relative deprivation. To illustrate this point, one might measure actual relative deprivation, based on household inequality within local geographical communities, but only perceive oneself to be relatively deprived in comparison to work colleagues, who may live outside the geographic area used to measure actual relative deprivation. Both actual and perceived relative deprivation will be present, but not in comparison to the same group.

Similarly, the current study found that many individuals living in relatively affluent households still perceived themselves to be deprived. However, this may well have been due to these individuals comparing themselves to even more affluent friends. The assumption of the current study is that comparisons are made to others in general living anywhere nationally. However, it is reasonable to assume that in the current study, many of the findings regarding the relationship between actual and perceived relative deprivation involved comparisons to different groups. Individuals who *are* deprived may not *feel* deprived in comparison to the same reference group.

In defence of the approach taken in the current study, one should ask oneself the following question. Is it better to measure actual relative deprivation and assume that individuals who are deprived also perceive relative deprivation, or should an attempt (albeit with inherent weaknesses) be made to examine the extent to which individuals experience both actual and perceived relative deprivation? The latter is problematic, but the former would seem little short of intellectual negligence. It should also be noted that the major problems with identifying a reference group occur when attempting to combine actual and perceived relative deprivation. The issue is not so pronounced when examining perceived relative deprivation in isolation, where one can assume (without the consequent dilemma of differing frames of reference) that the things one desires are generated by comparisons to others. Therefore, the analysis that concentrated on the relationship between perceived relative deprivation and crime, which generated many significant results, is not subject to the same kind of shortcoming as that outlined above.

The original study involving interviews with 50 burglary offenders was subject to a quite opposite problem. Rather than defining no comparative reference group, as in the case of the YLS, this part of the study used a very tightly defined comparative reference group. Individuals were asked to indicate the extent to which they felt relatively deprived in comparisons to their friends. This may have been too narrow a focus as these individuals may have felt deprived in relation to other groups, such as family, or neighbours. This would mean the measure used was in danger of under-estimating the number of offenders who perceived relative deprivation before engaging in burglary. It should, however, be noted that chapter 6 demonstrated that many

offenders did perceive deprivation in relation to their friends. Furthermore, these were often friends who had already been involved in burglary. The notion of the comparative reference group consisting of offending peers that generated perceived relative deprivation in others who engage in burglary would not appear to have been well-rehearsed in previous criminological literature. Although the association with offending and having delinquent peers has been well documented, the possibility that part of the process by which individuals come to engage in crime may involve comparisons with groups that engender perceived relative deprivation, does not appear to have been considered. The fact remains that there may have been other comparative reference groups that inspired perceived relative deprivation that were not covered by the current research.

#### *Failure to explore mediating psychological factors*

The final limiting factor is one shared with all other studies reviewed in this thesis. An attempt was made to explore the mediating psychological factors that might translate perceived relative deprivation into a motivation to commit crime. However, this was not one of the original objectives of the study and this meant the issue was not explored in any systematic way. The only information available was that which could be gleaned from the qualitative interviews with burglary offenders. However, this was 'hit and miss' to say the least and there was very little evidence that could be extracted from the interview transcripts. That which was available and which has been presented in this thesis could be open to misinterpretation, with the possibility that something is being read into a conversation that was not intended by the interviewee. Clearly, this is

a part of the research that needs to be treated with caution, but the findings point towards the possibility that, in some cases at least, perceived relative deprivation creates other adverse feelings that influence an individual in the decision to engage in burglary. This is another area where further attention would appear to be required.

### **Recommendations for further research**

It should be self evident that, despite attempts to extend knowledge about the relative deprivation – crime relationship in the current study, there are still significant gaps in what we know from rigorous empirical investigation in this area. The following pages examine some of the issues that would benefit from further attention by future research.

Primacy must be given above all else to exploring more fully the relationship between relative deprivation and crime at the individual level. Throughout this thesis, the inadequacies of studies based on aggregate data have been brought to the fore. While they have their uses, their benefits would seem to be outweighed by their disadvantages. Few studies would appear to have taken the individual as the unit of analysis and those that have, have tended to measure relative deprivation inadequately.

This leads us on to the second area for further research effort. Relative deprivation (both actual and perceived) would appear to have been poorly operationalised at the individual level. There are a number of issues that need to be addressed in this regard. Both actual and perceived relative deprivation would benefit from a greater

understanding and application of comparative reference groups. Little is currently known about which groups are likely to inspire a deviant response. The current study has indicated that existing offenders may form a potent comparative reference group, but more research is required to confirm this relationship. Yet the fact remains that relative deprivation (both actual and perceived) only makes sense with reference to others. One thing we can be certain of is that there is no reason to assume that geographic terms of reference (whether they be nation-wide, as in the current study, city-wide or neighbourhood-wide) are better predictors of "similar others" than other frames of reference (friends, family, work colleagues etc.).

Even when this issue is addressed, there are still important issues to resolve regarding how relative deprivation is measured. For actual relative deprivation, there is the issue of whether this should be monetary or material based. If monetary based, one must ask whether total household income is the most appropriate measure or whether a measure of disposable income would be more appropriate. The current research has suggested that material items are frequently a salient basis on which to make comparisons. If this is the case, then a valid measure of actual relative deprivation might measure the extent to which relevant items are possessed by individuals who are the focus of a particular study and the extent to which they are also possessed by a relevant comparative reference group.

In the current study, the unit of analysis for actual relative deprivation (household income) was different to that for perceived relative deprivation (deprivation of certain material items). Under ideal circumstances, a study of the relationship between actual

and perceived relative deprivation would use a common metric. For example, the extent to which particular items were owned by the subjects of a study might be compared to the extent to which they were owned by a comparative reference group. The difference between the two would provide a measure of the frequency of actual relative deprivation / superiority. Using the same metric, the study respondents could also be asked about the extent to which they perceived themselves to be deprived relative to the comparative reference group. A study of this kind would allow an adequate analysis of the relationship between actual and perceived relative deprivation to be undertaken. This is a far cry from what would appear to have been achieved to date, especially when applied to the field of criminology.

Even with this approach, there are aspects of the perceived relative deprivation operationalisation that require further elaboration. As appendix C shows, there has been some debate over the pre-conditions that need to exist for perceived relative deprivation to occur. For example, is 'deservingness' a prerequisite? The current study, in interviewing 50 offenders assumed it was necessary, based on the evidence of earlier studies. But this was by no means clear. Further elaboration of the pre-conditions for perceived relative deprivation would appear to be required.

The current study examined measures of perceived relative deprivation frequency and degree, but was unable to generate an adequate measure of the magnitude of relative deprivation. While conceptually, this made sense as a facet of relative deprivation, operationalising this into a measure proved problematic. This may have been due to the materialistic nature of the perceived relative deprivation measures constructed for this

study and further work may be required to produce an acceptable measure of magnitude. That is assuming materialistic measures of perceived relative deprivation are the most relevant factors for inspiring perceived relative deprivation or for motivating individuals to engage in crime (assuming there is a motivational effect). While the current study has gone some way to examining the types of items that inspire perceived relative deprivation that are also associated with offending (e.g. leisure pursuits in particular), this was based on a fairly limited range of items. It is unclear whether these items are the most relevant for inspiring perceived relative deprivation. Although the interviews with burglary offenders identified some non-materialistic items, these were relatively few in number, suggesting the questioning used was more conducive for identifying materialistic, rather than non-materialistic sources of perceived relative deprivation. Future research in this area should attempt to incorporate a much longer list of items of perceived relative deprivation that includes a range of both materialistic and non-materialistic items.

So far, the areas where further research has been suggested have focused on improving the ways in which relative deprivation is measured. There are, however, a number of more general questions that need to be explored in greater detail:

- *How are actual relative deprivation and perceived relative deprivation related?*

The current study has shown there is only a weak association between actual and perceived relative deprivation, although this analysis was based on far from perfect measures. Further research that uses the same metric to measure both actual and

perceived relative deprivation, as outlined earlier, would help to clarify the extent to which those who *are* deprived, *feel* deprived.

- *In which direction does the perceived relative deprivation – crime association operate?* The current study has shown a series of statistically significant associations between perceived relative deprivation and the prevalence of offending. It was assumed that relative deprivation played a role in inspiring individuals to engage in crime. There was some evidence of this in the interviews with burglary offenders. However, further studies using different research designs are required to help clarify whether perceived relative deprivation leads to crime, or whether crime leads to perceived relative deprivation.
- *Does perceived relative deprivation have a direct influence on crime, or is it mediated through some other factor?* If perceived relative deprivation is found to influence offending, one might then ask how this occurs. The current study has provided very limited insight into this question and this is clearly an area where further research would be beneficial.

### **Concluding remarks**

If one compares the list of issues to be addressed by future research with the original research questions for this thesis, one will note a marked similarity. The current study has gone some way to extending an understanding of the relative deprivation – crime relationship, but perhaps, not as far as one might have hoped at the outset. The breadth

of questions that remain unanswered at the end of this thesis bears testament to the limitations of the current study and provides an indication of how much more could be done to research the relative deprivation – crime relationship.

Perhaps given the long and difficult road travelled by the author in producing this thesis, it is apt to conclude on a more cynical note. This study has faced particular difficulties in operationalising actual and perceived relative deprivation, which impeded the extent to which firm conclusions could be drawn. If any conclusions could be drawn from the available evidence, it would be on the association between perceived relative deprivation and crime. While there would appear to be an association between perceived relative deprivation and crime, the strength of that association is weak when contrasted with other, well documented predictors of criminality. One should therefore ask oneself, is it worth expending further effort on exploring a factor that at best would currently appear (on the available evidence) to provide little capacity to explain involvement in crime?

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## **Appendix A**

### **Summary of explicit studies of relative deprivation - crime relationship**

Authors	Methodology	Type of data	Findings on RD - Crime Link	What does it tell us about nature of Actual RD?	What does it tell us about nature of Perceived RD?	What does it tell us about how RD leads to crime?
Henry and Short (1954)	Time series data on business cycle, suicide and homicide from 1910 to 1949. Cross-sectional suicide and homicide data on 55 US cities.		1. Decline in business cycle correlated with rise in suicide in higher status white population. 2. Decline in business cycle correlated with rise in homicide among lower status black population.	This is a study of actual RD in which economic change is related to levels of homicide and suicide.	Perceived RD is implied. Perceptions are of changes to relative economic status over time. During economic crisis, white individuals compare their situation to other whites and perceive themselves to be disadvantaged. During economic recovery black individuals feel deprived because they compare their situation to white individuals in more advantageous positions.	Conjectural. Implies that perceptions of RD lead to frustration experienced by those who perceive themselves to be RDed and this frustration leads them to take action. In the case of the white population, suicide is the course of action and for the black
Reiss and Rhodes (1963)	Survey of 12,524 pupils from 41 schools in Tennessee USA exploring relationships between status deprivation and delinquency (defined in various ways)	Individual level data from survey questionnaire.	Perceptions of RD are most likely to be related to delinquency among bottom class youths in schools predominantly populated by bottom class pupils, although the evidence is weak.	Nothing. This is a study of perceived RD.	Perceived RD measured in terms of whether respondent felt other school pupils had better clothes and homes than they themselves have.	As this is test of Cohen's theory of status frustration, perceived RD is assumed to cause a sense of frustration that presumably leads to a rejection of middle class norms of conformity. But this is not clear from the paper.
Eberts and Schwirian (1970)	Statistical analysis (cross sectional design) of relationship between economic inequality and general crime rates.	Aggregate data from 1960 based on 212 United States SMSAs	In areas where there is a relatively large high income population and a small low income population, general crime rates are higher than when the proportion of high and low income groups is equal.	RD is measured as the ratio of the number of persons in a community earning \$10,000 or more a year to those earning \$3,000 or less a year.	"...as the size of the upper income population exceeds that of the lower income group, the lower income population perceives itself as being relatively more deprived of local economic rewards than in communities where the populations are of a more equal size." (p.92)	Conjectural. As a result of the recognition of the disparities of income, there is an increase in frustration that manifests itself in aggression towards others in the same community.

Authors	Methodology	Type of data	Findings on RD - Crime Link	What does it tell us about nature of Actual RD?	What does it tell us about nature of Perceived RD?	What does it tell us about how RD leads to crime?
Danziger and Wheeler (1975)	Econometric statistical analysis exploring both time series and cross sectional relationships between absolute / relative income inequality and crime.	Aggregate data. Time series = national US data for 1949-1970. Cross sectional data = 57 large SMSAs for 1960.	In both time series and cross sectional models, relative income inequality is positively associated with levels of burglary, robbery and aggravated assault.	Actual RD measured in terms of income inequality defined as difference in income between those above and below the mean income level. Assumes low income population compares its position to high income earners.	Assumes low income population compares its position to high income earners.	Conjectural. Perceived RD leads to violence as a result of the frustration it induces. Leads to property crime being committed by low income earners as a rational choice when impact of unequal income distribution outweighs allegiances to social contract.
Chester (1976)	Literature review based largely on criminological studies	N/A	Previous studies have shown that crime tends to be concentrated in the lower classes and that this is due to relative, rather than absolute, deprivation	Examines two studies that show that city wide income inequality is related to crime.	Shows that perceived RD is often implied from studies of actual RD. However, the author argues there are good reasons why the visibility of wealth differentials assumed in actual RD studies need not lead to perceived RD.	Conjectural. Perceived RD most likely to be linked to property crime because it provides a means to an end. This is viewed as more realistic than perceived RD leading to frustration that is vented in the form of violent crime.
Skogan (1977)	Statistical analysis (time series analysis) examining the reasons for changing city crime rates.	Aggregate data for 1946 to 1970 across 32 US cities.	Conjectural. The relationship between city density and crime rates has increased over time. The suggested reason for this is that the process of suburbanisation has stratified the population, leaving central city areas with more socio-economic problems, while suburbs are relatively affluent.	Conjectural. Discusses the possibility that high central city crime rates are due to population becoming stratified along city-suburb lines. Affluent population moves to suburbs, leaving behind those with fewer economic resources.	Conjectural. Implies that the relatively deprived population in central city areas recognise the differential in economic status between themselves and those in the suburbs.	Conjectural. Suggests that the flight of the middle classes to the suburbs has increased the level of frustration and hostility among those left in central city areas.

Authors	Methodology	Type of data	Findings on RD - Crime Link	What does it tell us about nature of Actual RD?	What does it tell us about nature of Perceived RD?	What does it tell us about how RD leads to crime?
Braithwaite (1979)	Statistical analysis (cross-sectional design) of relationship between income inequality and various crime types.	Aggregate data from 1967-1973 for 193 United States SMSAs	Significant positive association between income inequality (measured as difference between median income and average income for the poorest 20%) and six crime types – homicide, rape, robbery, burglary, grand larceny and auto theft.	This is a study of actual RD. RD is measured in terms of city wide income inequality.	Conjectural. Suggests that the lower income population recognises that they are in a position of RD in comparison to a higher income population in the same city.	Conjectural. Suggests that recognition being in a position of RD creates frustration among the lower classes that makes them more likely to commit crime.
Farley and Hansel (1981)	Statistical analysis (cross sectional design) of relationship between suburbanisation and central city crime rates.	Aggregate data for 184 central city areas (embedded in SMSAs) with a population of more than 50,000 for 1970	Significant relationship between level of suburbanisation and property crime in central city areas.	Conjectural. Discusses the possibility that high central city crime rates are due to population becoming stratified along city-suburb lines. Affluent population moves to suburbs, leaving behind those with fewer economic resources.	Conjectural. Implies that the relatively deprived population in central city areas recognise the differential in economic status between themselves and those in the suburbs.	Conjectural. The authors consider that "To the degree that feelings of relative deprivation become generalised in low status central cities surrounded by middle class and wealthy suburbs, central-city crime rates may be elevated".(p.49). The process by which these feelings lead to crime is not discussed.
Jacobs (1981)	Statistical analysis (cross-sectional design) of relationship between income inequality and property crime.	Aggregate data from 1970 for 195 United States SMSAs	Significant positive association between income inequality (measured by Gini coefficient) and burglary and grand larceny.	This is a study of actual RD. RD is measured in terms of city wide income inequality.	Conjectural. Those on the lowest income perceive themselves to be deprived relative to others living in the city.	Conjectural. Involvement in property crime is seen as a rational solution to the experience of relative deprivation.
Blau and Blau (1982)	Statistical analysis (cross sectional design) of relationship between economic inequality and violent crime.	Aggregate data from 1970 based on 125 United States SMSAs.	Strong positive relationship between income inequality (based on the Gini coefficient on family income) and violence. Also a positive relationship between violent crime and both inter and intra racial income inequality.	This is a study of actual RD. RD is measured in terms of city wide family income inequality.	Conjectural. Implies experience of income inequality leads to recognition of that position by individuals.	Conjectural. The recognition of income inequality leads to "alienation, despair, and pent up aggression, which find expression in frequent conflicts, including a high incidence of criminal violence" (p. 126)

Authors	Methodology	Type of data	Findings on RD - Crime Link	What does it tell us about nature of Actual RD?	What does it tell us about nature of Perceived RD?	What does it tell us about how RD leads to crime?
Messner (1982)	Statistical analysis (cross sectional design) of relationship between economic inequality and homicide.	Aggregate data from 1970 based on 204 United States SMSAs	Moderate relationship between family income inequality (using Gini coefficient) and homicide, cancelled out by demographic controls.	This is a study of actual RD. RD is measured in terms of city wide family income inequality.	One of the reasons for the lack of statistical association between actual RD and homicide may be that SMSAs are not suitable frames of reference for creating perceptions of RD. If individuals do not make city wide comparisons then it may not inspire perceived RD that leads to homicide.	Conjectural. The lack of statistical association between actual RD and homicide may also be due to relative economic deprivation not being a relevant factor in explaining homicide. "Disparities in income may have little bearing on the everyday disputes and quarrels which ultimately effect to homicide rate." (p.112)
Messner (1983)	Statistical analysis (cross sectional design) of relationship between economic inequality and homicide.	Aggregate data averaged across three years (1969-71) from 204 United States SMSAs	Failed to find a significant relationship between income inequality and homicide	This is a study of actual RD. RD is measured in terms of city wide family income inequality.	No discussion of perceived RD.	Income inequality is treated as one of a number of independent variables affecting crime. As it is not significantly related to homicide is not discussed further.
Stack (1984)	Statistical analysis (cross sectional design) of relationship between inequality and property crime at the national level.	Aggregate data from 1965 based on Interpol data for 62 capitalist nations.	In nine tests of the RD - crime relationship, no significant associations were found in six tests and in three significant associations were found in the wrong direction.	Actual RD is measured in terms of nationwide family income inequality. Measures are constructed to test Runciman's concepts to frequency, magnitude and degree.	Conjectural. Implies that comparisons are made by poor towards rich, regardless of geography (within national limits). The lack of statistical association may be due to measuring RD against the wrong crime.	Conjectural. Uses work of Runciman on RD to suggest that perceptions of RD lead to feelings of envy and animosity that increase the likelihood of involvement in comparative reference group.

Authors	Methodology	Type of data	Findings on RD - Crime Link	What does it tell us about nature of Actual RD?	What does it tell us about nature of Perceived RD?	What does it tell us about how RD leads to crime?
Messner and Tardiff (1986)	Statistical analysis (cross sectional design) of relationship between economic inequality and homicide.	Aggregate data (1980 census and 1981 crime data) from 26 Manhattan, New York neighbourhoods.	Failed to find a significant relationship between income inequality (based on Gini coefficient of household income) and homicide.	This is a study of actual RD. RD is measured in terms of household income inequality. It assumes neighbourhoods are a more realistic frame of reference than cities for making comparisons of income.	The lack of statistical relationship between income inequality and homicide at the neighbourhood level may suggest that perceptions of relative deprivation are not derived from comparisons of income made with others living locally. The authors conclude that perceptions of inequality may be more likely to result at the national level due to the effects of media depiction of wealth.	The authors imply that actual RD based on income inequality at the neighbourhood level might be expected to lead to perceptions of RD that lead to homicide. The process by which perceived RD might be considered to lead to homicide is not discussed.
Farley (1987)	Statistical analysis (cross sectional design) of relationship between suburbanisation and central city crime rates.	Aggregate data for 1980 for 227 SMSAs with singular central cities.	City-suburb income inequality (measured as the ratio of mean family income in the central city to mean family income in the balance of the SMSA) found to be significantly related to 2 (out of 7 examined) crime types - robbery and auto-theft.	Actual RD is measured in terms of family income differences between those that live in city centres and those in the suburbs.	Conjectural. Implies those in the central city areas compare their economic position to those in the suburbs.	The means by which RD leads to crime is not discussed, but it is likely to be due to similar reasons to Skogan (1977) and Farley and Hansel (1981) as this paper builds on these studies.
Taylor and Covington (1988)	Statistical analysis of ecological changes in and relationship with violent crime (based on aggravated assault and murder / nonnegligent manslaughter).	Aggregate data (for 1970 and 1980) on 15 clusters of neighbourhoods in Baltimore.	Neighbourhoods suffering a decline in status (measured by an index of factors such as relative house prices, educational and professional employment levels) were associated with an increase in homicide over time.	Relative deprivation framed in terms of changes in index of socio-economic factors at the local community level. Actual relative deprivation of an area occurs when its economic status declines relative to others over time.	No discussion of perceived RD.	Conjectural. In underclass neighbourhoods, violence is considered to result from experiences of relative deprivation, but no explanation is given to the nature of these experiences or how they lead to crime.
Jones (1993)	Literature review and discussion on motor projects	n/a	Suggests that some offenders steal cars because they are unlikely to get the opportunity to drive legally due to actual relative deprivation.	Suggests that actual RD among youths was fuelled by unemployment and benefit changes.	Nothing	Conjectural. Car crime may be a rational means of obtaining something one has no other chance of experiencing.

Authors	Methodology	Type of data	Findings on RD - Crime Link	What does it tell us about nature of Actual RD?	What does it tell us about nature of Perceived RD?	What does it tell us about how RD leads to crime?
Burton and Dunaway (1994)	Survey of self reported delinquency among middle class high school pupils from one school in the USA.	Individual level data based on 263 completed questionnaires.	Perceived RD found to be positively related to general delinquency among both males and females. Also found to be associated with felony offences among males but not females.	Nothing. This is a study of perceived RD.	Frequency of perceived RD measured for money, better homes and clothes in comparison to other school students. Also measures RD of family income in comparison to other families in the community.	The study reports statistical associations between RD and crime but does not infer causality or explain how RD affects crime.
Sanchez Jankowski (1995)	Ethnographic study of relationship between inequality and crime	Individual level data from qualitative interviewing	Some black individuals engage in crime as a result of recognising that white work colleagues are promoted more rapidly. Crime is a means to redress the imbalance.	Suggests that actual RD is not equally distributed between racial groups.	Comparisons are made between racial groups and the workplace provides a setting in which comparisons are made that may be criminogenic.	Crime is seen as a rationale solution to the experience of RD. Faced with blocked opportunities to succeed legitimately, illegitimate opportunities may become a tempting offer.
James (1997)	Literature review based largely on medical studies	n/a	Negative social comparisons have been linked with causing low levels of serotonin. Perpetrators of violence are often found to have low levels of serotonin. Therefore it is argued that negative social comparisons can lead to violent crime.	Actual RD is considered a constant feature of society and it's the recognition of RD that changes.	Regardless of any change in actual relative deprivation, perceived relative deprivation is becoming more common because people are making more upward social comparisons.	Biological link between perceived RD and crime. Upward social comparisons create perceptions of RD that lead to reduction in level of serotonin that leads to violent crime.

## Appendix B

### Interview Schedules

#### MOTIVATIONS FOR BURGLARY

##### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE NUMBER ONE

1. ID Number [ ]

2. Gender? Male [ ]1  
Female [ ]2

I like to start by asking you a few general background questions about yourself.

3. Firstly, can you tell me your date of birth? \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

4. Which of the following best describe your ethnic group? **SHOW CARD 1**  
Tick one box only

White	[ ]1
Black Caribbean	[ ]2
Black African	[ ]3
Black Other	[ ]4
Indian	[ ]5
Pakistani	[ ]6
Bangladeshi	[ ]7
Chinese	[ ]8
Other	[ ]9

5. How old were you when you committed your first burglary?

Write in number

[ ]

6. What was your marital status at the time of your first burglary?

Tick one box only

Single	[ ]1
Married	[ ]2
Separated	[ ]3
Cohabiting	[ ]4
Widow/Widower	[ ]5

7a. Were you working at the time of your first burglary?  
Tick one box only

Yes [ ]1 [GO TO Q7b]  
No - unemployed [ ]2 [GO TO Q8]  
No - still at school [ ]3 [GO TO Q8]

7b. [IF YES] What was your job?  
.....

7c. How much did you earn per week? [£ ]

8. At the time of your first burglary with whom were you living?

Tick one box only

On my own [ ]1  
With both parents [ ]2  
With mother [ ]3  
With father [ ]4  
With other relative [ ]5 State.....  
With friends [ ]6  
Other [ ]7

9. What type of accommodation were you living in?

a. Type (house, flat etc)?.....

b. Tenure? Owner occupied [ ]1  
Privately rented [ ]2  
Council rented [ ]3

10. What was the marital status of your parents?

Tick one box only

Single [ ]1  
Married [ ]2  
Separated [ ]3  
Cohabiting [ ]4  
Widow/Widower [ ]5

11. What was your father's occupation at the time of your first burglary?  
.....

12. What was your mother's occupation at the time of your first burglary?  
.....

13. I'd now like to ask you about your education. Can you tell me what qualifications you have gained from school, or elsewhere?

DATE	SUBJECT	LEVEL	GRADE

14. I'd now like to ask you about your employment record since leaving school?  
To start with, when did you leave school?

<b>FROM</b>	<b>TO</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>PAY PER WK</b>
		Left school	

I'd now to ask you some questions about your offending. To start with...

15a. What types of offences had you committed before your first burglary?

.....

15b. Which had you committed most often?

.....

16. How many burglaries do you think you've done?

[ ]

17. How long were you involved in burglary for?

[ ] years [ ] months

18a. If we could just turn to your first burglary for a moment, did you commit that alone or with others?

Tick one box only

Alone [ ] 1 [GO TO Q19]

With others [ ] 2 [GO TO Q18b]

18b. [IF WITH OTHERS] How many others were with you?

Write in number

[ ]

19. At the time of your first burglary, how many of your friends would you say had previously committed burglaries?

Write in number

[ ]

20. What percentage of your main group of friends would you say were involved in burglary when you first became involved?

Write in number

[ % ]

**MOTIVATIONS FOR BURGLARY**  
**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE NUMBER TWO**  
**QUESTIONS ON RELATIVE DEPRIVATION**

1a. Before you started burglary, did you ever compare yourself to other people?  
Tick one box only

Yes	[	]1
No	[	]2
Don't know	[	]3
Can't remember	[	]4

1b. [IF 'Yes'] Who did you compare yourself to?

1c. [IF 'Yes'] Did you see yourself as better off, worse off, or the same as these others?  
Tick one box only

Better off	[	]1	GO TO 1d
Worse off	[	]2	GO TO 1e
The same	[	]3	GO TO 1f
Don't know	[	]4	GO TO 2
Can't remember	[	]5	GO TO 2

1d. In which ways were you better off?

1e. In which ways were you worse off?

1f. In which ways were you the same?

2a. Before you started burglary did you ever feel there were things you wanted that your friends had?

Tick one box only

Yes	[	]1
No	[	]2
Don't know	[	]3
Can't remember	[	]4

2b. [IF YES] What sort of things did you want?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

3. Did you feel you should have them, or deserved them in some way?

Circle letter

1. Y/N
2. Y/N
3. Y/N
4. Y/N
5. Y/N

4. On a scale of one to ten (where 10 represents a great deal and 1 a little) how would you rate the extent to which you wanted each of these things?

1. [ ]
2. [ ]
3. [ ]
4. [ ]
5. [ ]

5. Did you actually obtain any of these things? How?

Circle letter

How?

1.	Y/N	[	]
2.	Y/N	[	]
3.	Y/N	[	]
4.	Y/N	[	]
5.	Y/N	[	]

## **MOTIVATIONS FOR BURGLARY**

### **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE NUMBER THREE**

#### **QUESTIONS ON CURRENT RELATIVE DEPRIVATION**

I'd now like to turn to look at the situation with your friends now.

1. How many friends would you say you currently have?

[ ]

2. How many of these have been in trouble with the police?

[ ]

3. How many have previously committed burglaries?

[ ]

4. To your knowledge, how many are still involved in burglaries?

[ ]

5. When you look at your friends, do you ever feel there are things they have that you would like?

*Tick one box only*

Yes [ ]<sup>1</sup>

No [ ]<sup>2</sup>

Don't know [ ]<sup>3</sup>

6. [IF YES] What sort of things are they?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

7. Do you feel you should have them, or deserve them in some way?

*Circle letter*

1. Y/N

2. Y/N

3. Y/N

4. Y/N

5. Y/N

8. On a scale of one to ten (where 10 represents a great deal and 1 a little) how would you rate the extent to which you want each of these things?

1. [ ]
2. [ ]
3. [ ]
4. [ ]
5. [ ]

5. Do you think you will actually obtain any of these things? How?

	Circle letter	How?	
1.	Y/N	[	]
2.	Y/N	[	]
3.	Y/N	[	]
4.	Y/N	[	]
5.	Y/N	[	]

## CONTROL SAMPLE

### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE NUMBER ONE

1. ID Number [ ]

I'd like to start by asking you a few general background questions about yourself.

2. Age? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Which of the following best describe your ethnic group? **SHOW CARD 1**  
Tick one box only

White	[ ]	1
Black Caribbean	[ ]	2
Black African	[ ]	3
Black Other	[ ]	4
Indian	[ ]	5
Pakistani	[ ]	6
Bangladeshi	[ ]	7
Chinese	[ ]	8
Other	[ ]	9

4. Answering just yes or no, have you ever been arrested for any of these offences?

#### **SHOW CARD 2**

Yes	[ ]	1
No	[ ]	2

5. **WRITE IN AGE FROM SHEET HERE.** \_\_\_\_\_

I'd now like to ask you a series of questions about when you were aged X. Is that OK?

6. What was your marital status when you were aged X?

Tick one box only

Single	[ ]	1
Married	[ ]	2
Separated	[ ]	3
Cohabiting	[ ]	4
Widow/Widower	[ ]	5

7a. Were you working when you were aged X?

Tick one box only

Yes	[ ]	1 [GO TO Q7b]
No - unemployed	[ ]	2 [GO TO Q8]
No - still at school	[ ]	3 [GO TO Q8]

7b. [IF YES] What was your job?

7c. How much did you earn per week? [£ ]

8. At that age with whom were you living?

Tick one box only

On my own	[ ]	]1
With both parents	[ ]	]2
With mother	[ ]	]3
With father	[ ]	]4
With other relative	[ ]	]5 State.....
With friends	[ ]	]6
Other	[ ]	]7

9. What type of accommodation were you living in?

a. Type (house, flat etc)? .....

b. Tenure?	Owner occupied	[ ]	]1
	Privately rented	[ ]	]2
	Council rented	[ ]	]3

10. What was the marital status of your parents?

Tick one box only

Single	[ ]	]1
Married	[ ]	]2
Separated	[ ]	]3
Cohabiting	[ ]	]4
Widow/Widower	[ ]	]5

11. What was your father's occupation at that time?

.....

12. What was your mother's occupation at that time?

.....

13. I'd now like to ask you about your education. Can you tell me what qualifications you have gained from school, or elsewhere?

GCSE	[ ]
A Levels	[ ]
City and Guilds	[ ]
HNC	[ ]
HND	[ ]
Other	[ ]

14a. At the age of X, did you ever compare yourself to other people?

Tick one box only

Yes	[	]1
No	[	]2
Don't know	[	]3
Can't remember	[	]4

14b. [IF 'Yes'] Who did you compare yourself to?

14c. [IF 'Yes'] Did you see yourself as better off, worse off, or the same as these others?

Tick one box only

Better off	[	]1
Worse off	[	]2
The same	[	]3
Don't know	[	]4
Can't remember	[	]5

15. When you were aged X, did you ever feel there were things you wanted that your friends had?

Tick one box only

Yes	[	]1
No	[	]2
Don't know	[	]3
Can't remember	[	]4

16. [IF YES] What sort of things did you want?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

17. Did you feel you should have them, or deserved them in some way?

Circle letter

1. Y/N
2. Y/N
3. Y/N
4. Y/N
5. Y/N

18. On a scale of one to ten (where 10 represents a great deal and 1 a little) how would you rate the extent to which you wanted each of these things?

1. [ ]
2. [ ]
3. [ ]
4. [ ]
5. [ ]

19. Did you actually obtain any of these things? How?

	Circle letter	How?	
1.	Y/N	[	]
2.	Y/N	[	]
3.	Y/N	[	]
4.	Y/N	[	]
5.	Y/N	[	]

## Appendix C

### Defining relative deprivation

#### Introduction

In chapter 1, the distinction was drawn between 'actual relative deprivation' and 'perceived relative deprivation'. Actual relative deprivation has often been couched in terms of economic inequality and has been measured in terms of income disparities between groups within a community. This measure of difference in wealth, however, only deals with part of the issue. As we saw in chapter 2, there are a number of problems associated with this approach, not least the fact that those who are actually deprived need not feel a sense of disadvantage. For relative deprivation to act as a motivation for crime, this element of perceived disadvantage would seem essential. The failure to measure this perceived relative deprivation in existing criminological literature means it will be necessary to look to other disciplines for an understanding of this concept. In this chapter, we turn to literature from the field of social psychology, in order to produce a working definition of perceived relative deprivation. Here we will trace the development of the concept over the past fifty years and will conclude by providing the operational definition of perceived relative deprivation as used in this study.

## The development of relative deprivation theory

As a general principle, the idea underlying relative deprivation has been with us for some time. As we have already seen, Bonger's (1969) notion of 'cupidity' closely resembles this concept and, indeed, Marx was propounding this basic idea when he stated that:

*"A house may be large or small; as long as the surrounding houses are equally small it satisfies all social demands for a dwelling. But let a palace arise beside the little house, and it shrinks from a house to a hut." (quoted in Crosby, 1976 p.85)*

The basic assumptions underlying both Marx's and Bonger's approaches were that demand for goods and services are, by and large, socially constructed and rely on individuals comparing their situation to that of others. If they compare themselves to others who are better off, such as those living next door in a palace, they are more likely to feel discontent with their own situation. One's social position is therefore always relative to others within the same society.

These sentiments of comparison and feelings of disadvantage were not termed 'relative deprivation' until after World War II. The term was introduced into modern sociology to explain a series illogical findings in a large scale study of 'The American Soldier' by Stouffer et al. (1949). As Stouffer et al. explained in their introductory chapter to the study, relative deprivation was "*introduced to help in more generally ordering*

*otherwise disparate empirical findings*" (1949, p.52). In examining levels of satisfaction with military life, the study found that dissatisfaction was higher among married men than among single men, among combat soldiers than among non-combat soldiers and high school graduates than among non-graduates. In total, Merton and Kitt (1950, p.43-45) identified nine separate examples of how relative deprivation was utilised in 'The American Soldier'. Perhaps the most celebrated and most often quoted use of the concept was in explaining differences in satisfaction with career progression in various parts of the U.S. armed forces. It was found that the Military Police had a greater degree of satisfaction with their promotion opportunities than did pilots in the Air Corp. This seemed contradictory, given the fact that pilots were promoted more rapidly in comparison to military police officers. To resolve this apparent paradox, Stouffer et al. introduced the concept of relative deprivation as 'a plausible *ex post facto* explanation' (Gaskell and Smith 1984, p.121). Pilots in the Air Corp were less satisfied with their career progression because they would be comparing their situation to that of their promoted colleagues. As their colleagues were promoted relatively quickly, they would view themselves as at a disadvantage if they had not yet been promoted. All around them they would see others being promoted, while they themselves remained at the same rank. By contrast, Military Police officers were rarely promoted, which meant that when an officer compared his situation to that of his colleagues, he would be likely to view himself as being in an equivalent position to them. Few would be promoted, so, in terms of personal career development, he would have little to feel dissatisfied about.

Given these circumstances, it followed that Military Police officers would, on average, feel less dissatisfied with their promotion prospects than would pilots in the Air Corp. The use of the relative deprivation concept in this way proved important because, as Stouffer et al. put it:

*"Without reference to the theory that such opinions by soldiers represent a relationship between their expectations and their achievements relative to others in the same boat with them, such findings would be paradoxical indeed."*

(Stouffer et al. 1949 p.251)

Relative deprivation was therefore introduced as a 'provisional after-the-fact interpretive concept' (Merton and Kitt, 1950 p.46) to explain these paradoxical findings. As Merton and Kitt pointed out, however, the fact that relative deprivation was introduced to explain levels of dissatisfaction only after the fieldwork had been completed meant that the relationship between relative deprivation and dissatisfaction remained hypothetical. Relative deprivation was being used as a convenient intervening variable between an independent variable (e.g. whether an individual belonged to the Military Police or the Air Corp) and the dependent variable - satisfaction with promotion prospects. Merton and Kitt did, however, concede that this was an area where empirical research could be used to test these relationships.

Although Stouffer et al. (1949) introduced the term 'relative deprivation' into modern sociology, their work failed to provide a clear and precise definition of exactly what the concept involved. In their discussion of reference group theory, Merton and Kitt

(1950) began the process of systematically examining the concept. From the work of 'The American Soldier' two types of reference group were discerned from the passages detailing examples of relative deprivation. These were termed the 'membership reference group', or 'in-group', and the 'non-membership group', or 'out-group'. Both types of group could share common characteristics with an individual, which could serve as the basis for comparison. However, in-groups were identified by virtue of the fact that an individual would have sustained social relations with such groups, while for out-groups, the individual would have little or no direct contact. From a reading of 'The American Soldier', Merton and Kitt concluded that feelings of relative deprivation could result from a comparison with either an in-group or an out-group. Their focus on understanding reference groups, however, meant that they were primarily interested in how individuals chose between in-groups and out-groups as a basis for comparison. As a result, the concept of relative deprivation remained unformulated in Merton and Kitt's work.

The first formal definition of the relative deprivation concept came with the work of Davis (1959). By analysing the work of Stouffer et al. (1949) and Merton and Kitt (1950), a number of key components of the concepts were identified. For Davis, relative deprivation hinged on an understanding of the various groups to which individuals belong and used Merton and Kitt's distinction between 'in-groups' and 'out-groups'. However, Davis subtly changed the meaning of these groups. Rather than being a group with which an individual has regular social interaction, an in-group was solely defined as a group to which an individual belonged by virtue of sharing

some common characteristic.<sup>1</sup> In Davis' new formulation, an out-group was simply a group with which an individual did not share any common characteristics and to which that person could not be considered to belong. Davis used examples drawn from the work of Stouffer et al. (1949) to illustrate these points. Hence, married men comparing themselves to other married men was used as an example of an in-group, while enlisted men comparing themselves with officers was used to describe an out-group comparison.

The resulting feelings experienced by an individual were considered to vary according to whether comparisons were made to an in-group or an out-group. If the comparison was made to an in-group and an individual found he was less deprived than those he was comparing himself to, he would experience 'relative gratification'. By contrast, if he found he was deprived in comparison to others in the in-group, he would experience 'relative deprivation'. Davis also introduced the concept of 'fairness' into his formulation. This took account of the fact that those feeling relatively gratified, or relatively deprived would also be aware that their level of deprivation was different to that of their peers. The concept of fairness therefore denoted an individual's realisation that there was differential treatment in the in-group.

Out-group comparisons were explained using a similar approach to that used for in-group comparisons. When a non-deprived individual compares himself to a deprived member of an out-group, he will experience 'relative superiority'. By contrast, a

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<sup>1</sup> In Merton and Kitt's (1950) original formulation, an individual would share common characteristics with both in-groups and out-groups.

deprived individual comparing himself to a non-deprived out-group member will experience 'relative subordination'. In examining these out-group comparisons, Davis introduced the notion of 'social distance' to explain the fact that those experiencing relative subordination or relative superiority will feel that their deprivation is different to those in the out-group.

Davis contended that these four states - relative superiority, relative subordination, relative gratification and relative deprivation - explained the range of possible outcomes resulting from comparisons with others. This framework was then applied to the examples taken from 'The American Soldier' and it was found that in ten out of the eleven cases analysed, the comparisons made were explained by the theory.

Summing up Davis' theory, relative deprivation was identified as one type of deprivational experience which would result from comparisons to others who share some common characteristic (an in-group). In addition, this experience of deprivation would be seen to vary between members of this in-group (creating a notion of fairness).

Davis' (1959) formulation of relative deprivation was extended by Runciman (1966) who arguably provided the largest leap forward in the understanding of this concept. In Runciman's formulation, a person would be relatively deprived of something (called 'X' by Runciman) in comparison to another if he:

- i. does not possess X;
- ii. perceives another to possess X;

- iii. desires to have X;
- iv. sees it feasible to possess X.

Items i to iii in this simplistic model were also shared by that put forward by Davis (1959). A number of points of clarification were, however, added by Runciman. For example, relative deprivation was considered in terms of feelings rather than objective measures of deprivation. These feelings resulted from perceived differences in comparison to others, yet these differences may not exist in reality, but merely be imagined by the person feeling relatively deprived. Runciman also noted that comparisons need not only be with other groups or individuals, but could also relate to the individual making the comparison to his own position either in the past or in the future. The main difference in the basic formulation of the relative deprivation concept, however, was the inclusion of the feasibility factor. Runciman noted that it was important to differentiate between desires which were realistic and those which were clearly in the realms of fantasy. For example, one might see the amount of property the Duke of Westminster owns in central London and desire to own a similar estate. Yet, for most people, this would obviously not be a realistic goal. For a sense of relative deprivation to be produced, the object of desire should be feasible to obtain.

In addition to reformulating the relative deprivation concept in this way, Runciman also identified three ways in which it could manifest itself, which he termed magnitude, frequency and degree. The magnitude of relative deprivation was the extent of the difference between what one desired and what one actually had. For example, if one desired to own a magnificent palace but only actually had a studio flat,

the magnitude of relative deprivation would be greater than if one desired to own a house with one bedroom. The frequency would be the proportion of the group who felt a sense of relative deprivation about a specific item or issue. In our example, the frequency would increase as the number of other people also feeling relatively deprived about living in a magnificent palace increased. The third aspect of relative deprivation, the degree, was the intensity with which the object is desired. Thus, the stronger one desired to live in a magnificent palace, the greater the degree of relative deprivation would be.

Runciman also developed further the notion of reference groups, which for him, were the key to understanding relative deprivation. Moving beyond the simple in-group, out-group distinction, Runciman introduced the idea of the 'membership', 'comparative' and 'normative' reference groups. It was, however, important to note that these groups need not be groups at all, but could, for example, consist of just one person, or an abstract idea or belief. A normative reference group was defined as the group from which an individual takes his standards. For example, a factory worker may be working class in terms of his occupation, income and lifestyle, but may very well hold middle class values. In this case, the middle class will be acting as the normative reference group. The membership reference group is similar to that defined by Merton and Kitt (1950) in that it is a group to whom an individual belongs by virtue of sharing some common characteristic. It is this commonality which will be used to contrast his position with that of the comparative reference group. This comparative reference will have at least one attribute shared by the individual making the comparison. Indeed, it is one of these attributes upon which the comparison will be

made. Runciman used the example of a woman seeking equal pay for equal work, where the comparative reference group would be fellow male workers doing the same job.

In Runciman's formulation, relative deprivation would result when an individual compares his membership reference group to a comparative reference group and feels disadvantaged by the comparison in terms of some attribute. Indeed, Runciman went on to state that:

*"If relative deprivation is to be precisely described, all inequalities which give rise to feelings of relative deprivation must be treated as inequalities between and only between the membership reference group and comparative reference group." (Runciman 1966, p.14)*

In examining how feelings of relative deprivation were produced, Runciman drew the distinction between fraternalistic and egoistical relative deprivation. Fraternalistic relative deprivation would result when an individual compared his situation to that of a reference group and would feel that all those in his membership reference group were at a disadvantage. Relieving this form of relative deprivation would therefore entail improving the position of the group as a whole in comparison to the reference group. Examples of fraternalistic relative deprivation could be found in cases of class solidarity, or union solidarity, where improvements in the conditions of the group take priority over individual gains. In contrast, egoistical relative deprivation described the opposite scenario where an individual would want to improve his own position relative

to his own membership reference group. The nature of this form of relative deprivation is that an individual may feel intensely dissatisfied without necessarily having any affinity with others in exactly the same boat. Here, the emphasis will be on personal achievement, rather than on the achievements of the membership group as a whole. Runciman used the example of a junior executive who has failed to win promotion comparing his position to others further up the company hierarchy. In comparison to these, he may feel he personally deserves to be promoted. The focus, however, will be on his own desire for success, rather than for the advancement of all junior executives in the company. Runciman pointed out that in considering this notion of egoistical relative deprivation one might be tempted to conjure up a rather mean spirited individual who '*appears a rather greedy and unpleasant sort of person*' (1966, p.33). It was, however, important to note that this typology could equally be applied to individuals with certain talents who had yet to become successful (e.g. impoverished actors and artists), or to intelligent school leavers who had failed to secure a place at university. As we shall see later, this form of relative deprivation may have potential uses for explaining involvement in crime, as it indicates a motivational influence which drives an individual to participate in delinquency.

Further developments to the concept of relative deprivation were made by T.R. Gurr (1970) in his study of civil unrest. This work built on aspects of Runciman's work, although Gurr often used different terms to refer to the same concepts used by Runciman. As the focus of concern was on understanding the causes of collective violence, it followed that fraternalistic relative deprivation was of primary importance (although Gurr did not use the term 'fraternalistic'). As an aside, it is interesting to

note that Gurr chose to examine civil unrest as a channel for expressing experiences of fraternalistic relative deprivation, while Runciman gave the example of collective action through the trade union movement. This was, perhaps, indicative of the differences in opportunities for political dissent in the USA and UK. In the UK, the union movement has traditionally been a powerful political force (although this has been significantly eroded in the past two decades) representing employees and the working class in general. Indeed, the trade union movement has had considerable influence upon party politics through its strong links with the Labour Party. This can be contrasted with the USA, where unions have traditionally been less politically orientated and, as such, have not offered the same opportunities to voice the concerns of the people they represent. Under these circumstances, fraternalistic relative deprivation may have resulted in other forms of collective action in the USA, such as the civil unrest which occurred in the late 1960's and early 1970's. This has been a fruitful area of research, with a number of studies examining the relationship between relative deprivation and civil unrest (Gurr 1970; McPhail 1971; Martin and Murray 1984; Sayles 1984; Dubé and Guimond 1986; Muller 1994; Lindstrom 1995)

Gurr's model of relative deprivation was based on an understanding of 'values'. These values were defined in the widest possible sense as '*the desired events, objects and conditions for which men strive*' (1970, p.25). Relative deprivation would result from perceptions of the discrepancy between value expectations and value capabilities. Value expectations were defined as the goods and conditions of life to which people feel they are rightfully entitled, while value capabilities were defined as the goods and conditions which people feel they are capable of achieving. Relative deprivation would

therefore result from an excess of value expectations over value capabilities and the extent of the feelings of disadvantage would increase as the discrepancy between expectations and capabilities rises. In essence, this is the argument that relative deprivation arises when expectations exceed opportunities. As such it replicates Merton's (1938) theory of anomie, but, unlike anomie, the social psychological concept of relative deprivation is explicitly stated as the result of expectations exceeding opportunities.

While the model developed by Gurr was based around Runciman's (1966) conception of fraternalistic relative deprivation, the alternative form, an egoistical model, was put forward by Crosby (1976). In short, Crosby's formulation of relative deprivation set out to explain the conditions under which individuals would feel their own positions were relatively deprived in comparison to their reference group. Crosby extended the work of previous theorists (Davis 1956, Runciman 1966) by proposing a definition of relative deprivation with five facets. To feel relatively deprived, an individual who does not possess X would need to:

- i. see someone else possessing X;
- ii. want X;
- iii. feel entitled to X;
- iv. think it feasible to obtain X;
- v. lack a sense of personal responsibility for not having X.

While items i., ii. and iv. had previously been used in relative deprivation theorising (Runciman 1966), the requirement to feel entitled and the lack of personal responsibility were additional factors. The issue of feeling entitled to possess X was considered important by Crosby because, if one wanted something without feeling entitled to it, one would be unlikely to feel resentful about not having that thing. This resentment was, however, considered an integral part of the concept. An absence of personal responsibility was important because, if one blamed oneself for not possessing something one would be unlikely to find the situation unjust. The sense of injustice was considered central to theory of relative deprivation, which meant blame for not achieving the desired object or situation would be directed towards others or towards the system in general. One problem with this approach, however, was that an absence of personal responsibility need not translate into blame being directed towards others or towards the system in general. Indeed, an individual who did not blame himself may blame no one for his situation, or may simply blame fate for his predicament. To be accurate, Crosby's fifth dimension of relative deprivation should, perhaps, have stated that blame should be attributed towards others, or towards the system which shaped the distribution of resources and that by blaming these others, an individual would feel resentful about not possessing X.

These five facets of relative deprivation were termed the 'preconditions' by Crosby and for relative deprivation to be felt by an individual, all five would need to be present. When one of the preconditions was absent, a different feeling was likely to result, such as disappointment, jealousy, or righteous indignation. Crosby's 1976 paper was purely theoretical and her model was supported through a literature review

of work relevant to each of the five preconditions. The model was, however, subsequently tested in a study of relative deprivation experienced by working women (Crosby 1982). This research failed to support the five precondition model. As a result, a revised model was formulated consisting of just three preconditions:

- i. Does not possess X;
- ii. Wants X;
- iii. Feels entitled to X.

The social comparison and future expectation preconditions were not considered essential in this revised model, although Crosby conceded that these may be relevant in some circumstances. In some respects, this more simplistic model had greater similarity to that first proposed by Davis (1959) than with Crosby's (1976) earlier sophisticated model, although the entitlement to possess X was an innovation in the 1976 model which remained in the 1982 formulation. Nevertheless, the theorising on relative deprivation had, in some respects, turned full circle, back to the more basic model developed 30 years previously. However, a validation of various models of relative deprivation (Alain 1985) found support for Crosby's (1976) original five point model. When included in a multiple regression model, these five preconditions were found to explain 45% of the variance in feelings of relative deprivation in a sample of blue collar and clerical workers. It should also be noted that this was only slightly higher than Davis' (1959) simpler model of relative deprivation, which Alain found explained 41% of the variance.

So far in this chapter, we have traced the development of relative deprivation theory from its introduction into the social sciences in the 1940's, through major developments in the formulation of the concept. The theorists identified along the way each provided a new understanding the relative deprivation. However, it is important to note that there have been many others who have considered this concept in their own work, but who have not been included in this thesis. It is important not to lose sight of the fact that the purpose of this chapter is to explain how the formulation of relative deprivation used in this research was developed. Those theorists who have been included were therefore considered influential in the development of the concept of relative deprivation used in the following pages. In the remainder of this chapter we turn to examining the definition of relative deprivation used and how this was operationalised into the questions used in the empirical part of the research.

### **Definition of relative deprivation used**

The definition of relative deprivation used in this study was one based broadly upon Crosby's (1982) model of the concept. Relative deprivation was considered to result when an individual:

- i. Does not possess X
- ii. Sees that someone else possesses X;
- iii. Wants X;
- iv. Feels entitled to X.

This four factor model was based largely upon Crosby's (1982) formulation of relative deprivation and encompasses the three preconditions present in that model - not possessing X, wanting X and feeling entitled to X. Wanting X and feeling entitled to X were also validated as preconditions of relative deprivation in a study by Crosby et al. (1986). In examining experiences of relative deprivation in the home and in the workplace, they found that both preconditions were significant in explaining feelings of deprivation, although the importance attributed to each varied from situation to situation.<sup>2</sup>

The model used in the current research also included a precondition that one should see someone else possessing the object of desire before a sense of relative deprivation can be generated. Without this comparison to others, the very meaning of the concept is lost. As Runciman (1966, p.11) noted:

*"...relative deprivation means that the sense of deprivation is such as to involve a comparison with the imagined situation of some other person or group."*

The important point is that desires are largely socially constructed, which means that the extent to which one is being deprived of something can only be measured through reference to another individual or group. Again, it is important to reiterate that this reference group can also include one's own situation in the past, or future, as well as

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<sup>2</sup> While wanting X explained the greatest proportion of variance in relative deprivation experienced at work, deservingness (or feeling entitled to X) was found to be most important in explaining relative deprivation in the home. Crosby et al. (1986) concluded from this that the model of relative deprivation chosen may vary according to the context in which it is used.

other people. The exclusion of social comparison transformed Crosby's (1982) model into little more than a measure of absolute deprivation. For example, the model would explain why if I feel hungry but do not have any food, I might want some food and feel I deserve to eat something. But this does not mean I have come to this conclusion through reference to the situation of others. Comparison to others has therefore been considered an essential prerequisite to relative deprivation in the model used in this research.

Another important point about the preconditions included in the chosen model is the absence of the feasibility factor first highlighted by Runciman (1966). The essence of including feasibility within a model of relative deprivation was to distinguish realistic desires from impossible dreams. Runciman viewed relative deprivation as only being possible if an individual thought it was feasible to obtain the item being desired. This view was, however, contrary to the theory put forward by Gurr (1970), who considered that relative deprivation would result when individuals realised they were unable to obtain that which they aspired to. While feasibility was held to be high in Runciman's theorising it had to be low in Gurr's model for relative deprivation to occur. These polar positions on the issue of feasibility meant the uses of this precondition within a formulation of relative deprivation were by no means clear. There was, however, also empirical evidence to suggest that the feasibility precondition should be excluded from the analysis. While Crosby (1982) concluded this was not an essential prerequisite of relative deprivation, Alain (1985) found feasibility did not contribute significantly to the prediction of relative deprivation when all other variables were held constant. Furthermore, the zero order correlation

between feasibility and relative deprivation, while significant, was fairly weak (0.21).

Given the theoretical debate over the contribution made by the feasibility precondition to relative deprivation and the empirical evidence suggesting it may be unnecessary, a decision was made to exclude this element from the model used in the current research.

The four preconditions which were included within the definition of relative deprivation used in this research were considered to constitute factors upon which a certain amount of agreement had been reached over the fifty year history of formulating the relative deprivation concept. This definition was subsequently used to develop a series of questions which would help to elicit the extent of relative deprivation from a group of respondents. Before outlining how this concept was operationalised, a number of other parameters of the concept need to be explained.

One principle underlying this research was that the type of relative deprivation being experienced was egoistical, rather than fraternalistic. This is a theoretical point which is of importance for understanding the underlying relative deprivation - crime relationship, rather than of use in operationalising the concept. In depicting the influence that feelings of relative deprivation have upon motivations to engage in crime, the assumptions made here are that the response will be a largely a personal one. Offenders engaging in crime are motivated to do so because they feel their own position is deprived in comparison to those they make comparisons with. As a result, they may participate in criminal activities to improve their own position relative to others in their comparative reference group. This proposition should not be taken to

suggest that offenders engage in crime on their own, this clearly is not the case and offending peer groups are common phenomena. The point is that, in engaging in crime, they are attempting to improve their own situation. This position can be contrasted with an experience of fraternalistic relative deprivation, where an individual feels his whole membership reference group is at a disadvantage relative to the comparative reference group. In such situations, any action would need to be taken on behalf of the group as a whole, with a common goal in mind.

The fact that this research uses egoistical relative deprivation to explain involvement in crime also suggests that the end result is a utilitarian response. In essence, individuals who are relatively deprived engage in crime for their own gain, in order to reduce the perceived discrepancy between what they have and what they desire. Engaging in crime is therefore a direct means of solving a perception of disadvantage. This line of argument would suggest that feelings of deprivation would be particularly useful for explaining acquisitive property crime, where individuals improve their situation relative to others by stealing what they perceive they need. This approach may appear fairly mechanistic, but it may nonetheless help to explain involvement in property crime. This should not be interpreted as negating other responses to feeling relatively deprived. Indeed, most individuals will respond by seeking legitimate channels, such as employment, while some may respond to relative deprivation by taking non-utilitarian action, such as engaging in violence. Indeed, it is particularly interesting to note that the most frequent use of relative deprivation in criminological literature has been to explain the extent of violence. This would seem interesting given the fact that a utilitarian response to deprivation through property crime would seem more rational.

This development of the relative deprivation - crime theory which relies on an egoistical, utilitarian response is also characterised by having a materialistic orientation. As we have previously noted, it is possible to be relatively deprived about a whole host of things. While this can include material items, such as the goods we see in shops, or the items our neighbour owns, it is equally possible that the deprivation will be focused on less tangible items. This might include an assessment of career prospects in comparison to colleagues, the desire to grow roses as successfully as a neighbour, or the desire for religion in ones life. These are things which are less quantifiable than goods, but can create just as strong a sense of relative deprivation.

The conception of relative deprivation used in this study was one largely based on measuring the extent to which individuals feel deprived of material goods. While the questions asked allowed for the possibility of non-material items being mentioned, these are things which are less likely to be elicited from research of this kind and are, perhaps, more likely to be unconscious comparisons made to others. In assessing the impact of relative deprivation as a motivational influence in the decision to engage in crime, it is important to remember that the type of deprivation being measured is of a more tangible, materialistic nature. Other forms of relative deprivation based on values or standards may also play a role in the decision to commit crime, but are not dealt with here. This locates the current research in the tradition of explicit relative deprivation outlined in chapter 2.

## **Operationalising relative deprivation**

Using the four precondition model of relative deprivation, it was necessary to 'operationalise' the concept by developing valid questions which could be used to measure the extent to which relative deprivation was experienced. Appendix A provides an example of the interview schedule used, which included questions about relative deprivation. The following section provides further details about the questions asked and the reasons for choosing the format they are in.

### *Choice of reference groups*

As noted by earlier theorists (Merton and Kitt 1950, Davis 1959, Runciman 1966), individuals may take many different groups as a point of reference and as long as there is at least one similar characteristic between the comparative reference group and the individual concerned, the comparison could result in a sense of deprivation if the comparison proves unfavourable. Furthermore, these comparisons need not be consciously made by the individual. Many comparisons are likely to be made without the individual realising he is doing so. This is particularly problematic for a study which attempts to elicit feelings of relative deprivation from individuals because, if they are not aware they are making comparisons to others, how can they identify that those comparisons result in them feeling relatively deprived? This problem is not unique to studies of relative deprivation, but a problem for interview, or response based empirical social research in general. During the course of a day, we do many things which are influenced by others or by societal norms which we are unaware of.

For example, what we wear, how we eat and how we walk along a street are all influenced by others. However, if we were asked why we wear certain clothes, why we eat with a knife and fork or why we walk on the pavement, we may be able to give answers to each of these, but we will not necessarily take account of all reasons for our behaviour. Where relative deprivation is concerned, we will probably be able to identify the most obvious forms in which this phenomenon manifests itself, but, by definition, we will be unable to identify feelings of relative deprivation which result from unconscious comparisons to others. It is possible that this unconscious relative deprivation is important in motivating an individual to participate in crime<sup>3</sup>. Given the difficulty in measuring unconscious comparisons to others, this study will focus upon the comparisons to others which individuals are able to identify.

It is likely that we will be making a number of comparisons (both conscious and unconscious) with a variety of groups at any one time. In comparison to some, we are likely to feel relatively deprived, while compared to others we will be relatively satisfied and our overall level of deprivation experienced will be the sum of these levels of satisfaction and deprivation. In an ideal situation, the research would ask individuals to first identify all groups they make comparisons with and then to assess the level of relative deprivation felt in relation to that group. Given the fact that many comparative reference groups are likely to be generated, the task of identifying all groups would prove beyond the scope of this study. Indeed, to identify sufficient numbers of each type of group to allow for a meaningful analysis, it would have been

<sup>3</sup>

James (1998) has suggested that these unconscious comparisons are responsible for much of the violence witnessed in the UK. Negative comparisons lower the serotonin levels and makes violent behaviour more likely.

necessary to interview several hundred individuals. Even then, the groups identified would largely consist of those which respondents were conscious of and those which remain in the unconscious would not be picked up in the context of an interview. Identifying which of the many possible groups are influential in creating a sense of relative deprivation was considered by Runciman (1968) to be beyond the scope of survey research.

To overcome the problem of having diverse comparative reference groups, a fairly rigid line was taken by specifying the particular group of interest. The research focused on gaining an understanding of the levels of relative deprivation resulting from a single reference group - the respondents' friends. By choosing a single group, it was recognised that the research might miss other reference groups which were important to the individual. As such, the findings reported in this study will be an under-estimate of the total level of deprivation experienced. This would suggest that relative deprivation could have a greater influence on involvement in crime than was actually identified. The choice of friends as the comparative reference group was not an arbitrary decision. The qualitative pilot work showed that individuals most often chose their friends as a basis for comparison. To confirm the wisdom of this approach, the main study also asked who individuals most often compared themselves to. The results presented later in this thesis show that a respondent's friends were the most commonly mentioned comparative reference group. On a theoretical level, this choice of reference groups can be justified because comparisons appear to be most likely with similar others. For example, Festinger's (1954) third hypothesis in his theory of social comparison processes stated that:

*"The tendency to compare oneself with some other specific person decreases as the difference between his opinion or ability and one's own increases."*

(Festinger 1954 p.120)

This theory suggested that individuals were more likely to choose others who were similar to themselves in making a comparison, rather than choosing a group which was obviously very different. Since Festinger's work, a number of studies have shown the importance of comparison with similar others (Zanna et al. 1975; Goethals and Darley 1977; Suls et al. 1978) and have explained the conditions under which such comparisons are made. This approach was further refined by Suls (1986) who found that the choice of comparison group changed over one's life course. Adolescents and young adults were found by Suls to be particularly likely to make comparisons with similar others. This is an important finding for the current research, given the fact that this group commit the greatest proportion of recorded crime. Friendship groups were chosen as the basis for comparison in the current study as these were considered to constitute the groupings which were most likely to be similar to the individuals participating in the research and therefore likely to be used by those studied as a basis for comparison.

The disadvantage of using a tightly defined reference group in this study is that it will only be possible to generalise about the effect of relative deprivation resulting from comparisons with friends and not other potential reference groups. The results presented in this thesis will therefore explain only a part of the relative deprivation

experienced by respondents. However, the comparison group was considered to be important in creating a sense of relative deprivation and particularly important in explaining the delinquent behaviour which resulted.

#### *Timing of relative deprivation*

Respondents were asked about the extent to which they felt relatively deprived when they committed their first burglary. Their first burglary was used as a starting point around which various events were related. Given the fact that burglary is seldom a first offence, it is important to understand that the concept of relative deprivation is not being used to explain the onset of offending generally. While the relative deprivation concept used here may explain the onset of offending for those who committed burglary as a first offence, for others it will explain changes in the nature of offending, often graduating from less serious offending such as theft from cars and shoplifting.

#### *Specific questions asked*

To gauge the nature and extent of the relative deprivation experienced by respondents, a series of four questions were asked. (Appendix A provides an example of the various interview schedules used in the research, including the questions focusing on relative deprivation.) The first of these four questions asked the following:

*"Before you started burglary, did you ever feel there were things you wanted that your friends had?"*

This question locates the point of interest at a time before the respondent committed his first burglary and identifies his friends as the reference group. It also contains three of the four preconditions for relative deprivation defined above - does not possess X (either at all or in sufficient quantity), sees friends with X and wants X.

For those that indicated that they did see friends with things that they wanted, the next question asked was:

*"What sort of things did you want?"*

The purpose of this question was to identify the types of things individuals felt relatively deprived of. To keep this to manageable proportions, respondents were asked to identify up to five items. While the items mentioned were largely material possessions, the question did allow for intangible items and, indeed, some mentioned sporting ability as something they wanted. For each of the items mentioned, respondents were then asked:

*"Did you feel you should have them in some way?"*

The purpose of this question was to measure the fourth precondition of relative deprivation -feeling entitled to X. By asking this question of each of the items mentioned, it was possible to differentiate things which an individual felt relatively deprived about from things which they merely would have liked. In designing the questions in this way, it was possible to identify not only whether an individual felt relatively deprived, but also what they felt relatively deprived of. As such, the

operationalised concept of relative deprivation was an item specific one. Furthermore, unlike previous research (Runciman 1966, Crosby 1982) the choice of issues or items the respondent felt relatively deprived of was left open, thereby allowing for a much wider range of possibilities.

The final question asked in relation to relative deprivation was;

*"On a scale of one to ten (where ten represents a great deal and one a little)  
how would you rate the extent to which you wanted each of these things?"*

The purpose of this question was to obtain a measure of what Runciman (1966) called the 'degree' of relative deprivation. This was a quantifiable measure of the intensity with which relative deprivation was felt. As the approach taken was item specific, it was possible to measure the extent to which each object mentioned was desired and to sum up the scores given across the items to give an indication of total level of relative deprivation felt by a respondent.

By exploring the concept of relative deprivation in this way, it was possible to measure and quantify both the frequency and degree to which it was experienced by those involved in burglary. The third aspect of relative deprivation in Runciman's (1966) formulation - magnitude - was excluded from this part of the research. Without developing a sophisticated measure of relative poverty, it would have been difficult to quantify the size of the gap between what the respondents wanted and what they actually had. For this reason, a qualitative measure of magnitude was gained through

discussions with the respondents. Through a mixture of quantitative and qualitative measures, the following research therefore explores a number of dimensions of relative deprivation.

## **Conclusions**

In this chapter, we have seen that over the past fifty years a number formal definitions of relative deprivation have been put forward, with new theories often refining earlier formulations. Much of the previous work has dealt with identifying the relevant preconditions which are necessary for a feeling of relative deprivation to prevail. The number and type of preconditions necessary has varied from study to study and, at one point, as many as five were suggested. From this previous literature, a definition of relative deprivation was developed for use in the current study. This definition had four preconditions, all of which must be found for a sense of relative deprivation to be identified.

This definition of relative deprivation was used to explore the extent to which the concept is experienced by a group of individuals involved in burglary. Before proceeding to outline the findings from using the measures developed in this chapter, it is necessary to explain in more detail how the study was undertaken. The following chapter provides a description of the methodology used in this research and identifies some of the problems encountered with undertaking research of this kind.

## Appendix D

### Analysis of relationship between actual relative deprivation and involvement in crime

**Table D.1: Proportion of those experiencing high / low actual relative deprivation who have ever committed burglary by sex and age**

Sex	Age		Low ARD	High ARD	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	1.8	6.1	ns
		Unweighted N	3	12	
	17 to 21	Percent	3.2	4.3	ns
		Unweighted N	4	5	
	22 to 30	Percent	8.5	5.4	ns
		Unweighted N	22	19	
	All ages	Percent	5.3	5.4	ns
		Unweighted N	29	36	
	Female	12 to 16	Percent	2.8	3.2
		Unweighted N	4	1	
		17 to 21	Percent	0.0	0.0
		Unweighted N	0	1	
		22 to 30	Percent	0.6	0.3
		Unweighted N	3	2	
		All ages	Percent	1.1	1.0
		Unweighted N	7	4	
		Both sexes	Percent	2.5	4.5
		Unweighted N	6	14	

**Table D.2: Proportion of those experiencing high / low actual relative deprivation  
who have ever committed a property crime similar to burglary by sex and age**

Sex	Age		Low ARD	High ARD	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	9.8	14.3	ns
		Unweighted N	15	34	
	17 to 21	Percent	15.7	21.5	ns
		Unweighted N	21	28	
	22 to 30	Percent	22.6	20.7	ns
		Unweighted N	67	57	
	All ages	Percent	17.6	18.5	ns
		Unweighted N	103	119	
Female	12 to 16	Percent	7.3	5.2	ns
		Unweighted N	13	5	
	17 to 21	Percent	2.3	3.1	ns
		Unweighted N	5	4	
	22 to 30	Percent	2.8	2.8	ns
		Unweighted N	16	15	
	All ages	Percent	4.0	3.5	ns
		Unweighted N	34	24	
Both sexes	12 to 16	Percent	8.8	10.2	ns
		Unweighted N	24	43	
	17 to 21	Percent	10.0	11.8	ns
		Unweighted N	25	33	
	22 to 30	Percent	13.2	10.6	ns
		Unweighted N	78	77	
	All ages	Percent	11.2	10.7	ns
		Unweighted N	127	153	

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table D.3: Proportion of those experiencing high / low actual relative deprivation  
who have ever committed a property crime by sex and age**

Sex	Age		Low ARD	High ARD	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	33.9	34.7	ns
		Unweighted N	57	76	
	17 to 21	Percent	52.0	60.7	ns
		Unweighted N	71	74	
	22 to 30	Percent	58.4	54.3	ns
		Unweighted N	191	152	
Female	All ages	Percent	50.7	48.6	ns
		Unweighted N	319	302	
Female	12 to 16	Percent	25.6	32.9	ns
		Unweighted N	57	45	
	17 to 21	Percent	24.9	40.9	*
		Unweighted N	39	37	
	22 to 30	Percent	34.1	29.3	ns
		Unweighted N	148	123	
Both sexes	All ages	Percent	29.5	32.7	ns
		Unweighted N	244	205	
Both sexes	12 to 16	Percent	29.6	33.3	ns
		Unweighted N	97	138	
	17 to 21	Percent	40.2	48.2	ns
		Unweighted N	98	123	
	22 to 30	Percent	47.6	40.1	*
		Unweighted N	308	306	
	All ages	Percent	41.0	39.7	ns
		Unweighted N	503	567	

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table D.4: Proportion of those experiencing high / low actual relative deprivation  
who have ever committed any offence by sex and age**

Sex	Age		Low ARD	High ARD	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	45.3	43.9	ns
		Unweighted N	77	94	
	17 to 21	Percent	65.6	72.4	ns
		Unweighted N	85	84	
	22 to 30	Percent	65.5	59.7	ns
		Unweighted N	212	162	
	All ages	Percent	60.4	56.8	ns
		Unweighted N	374	340	
	Female	Percent	31.4	39.6	ns
		Unweighted N	75	54	
		Percent	34.0	43.3	ns
		Unweighted N	49	39	
		Percent	37.5	32.9	ns
		Unweighted N	156	135	
		Percent	34.9	36.9	ns
		Unweighted N	280	228	
	Both sexes	Percent	38.6	40.6	ns
		Unweighted N	128	172	
		Percent	50.0	58.6	ns
		Unweighted N	118	139	
		Percent	52.6	44.6	*
		Unweighted N	336	329	
		Percent	48.2	46.4	ns
		Unweighted N	582	640	

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table D.5: Proportion of those experiencing high / low actual relative deprivation  
who have committed burglary in the last year by sex and age**

Sex	Age		Low ARD	High ARD	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	0.4	2.3	ns
		Unweighted N	1	5	
	17 to 21	Percent	0.9	0.0	ns
		Unweighted N	1	0	
	22 to 30	Percent	0.0	0.0	ns
		Unweighted N	0	1	
Female	All ages	Percent	0.3	0.8	ns
		Unweighted N	2	6	
Female	12 to 16	Percent	0.3	3.2	ns
		Unweighted N	1	1	
	17 to 21	Percent	0.0	0.0	ns
		Unweighted N	0	0	
	22 to 30	Percent	0.0	0.0	ns
		Unweighted N	0	0	
Both sexes	All ages	Percent	0.1	0.8	ns
		Unweighted N	1	1	
Both sexes	12 to 16	Percent	0.2	2.4	*
		Unweighted N	1	7	
	17 to 21	Percent	0.5	0.0	ns
		Unweighted N	1	0	
	22 to 30	Percent	0.0	0.0	ns
		Unweighted N	0	0	
	All ages	Percent	0.2	0.8	ns
		Unweighted N	2	8	

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table D.6: Proportion of those experiencing high / low actual relative deprivation  
who have committed a property crime similar to burglary in the last year by sex  
and age**

Sex	Age		Low ARD	High ARD	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	4.5	5.7	ns
		Unweighted N	8	12	
	17 to 21	Percent	1.4	4.9	ns
		Unweighted N	2	6	
	22 to 30	Percent	2.1	2.3	ns
		Unweighted N	4	4	
	All ages	Percent	2.6	4.1	ns
		Unweighted N	14	22	
	Female	Percent	0.3	3.2	ns
		Unweighted N	1	2	
		Percent	0.9	0.0	ns
		Unweighted N	2	1	
		Percent	0.0	0.0	ns
		Unweighted N	0	0	
		Percent	0.3	0.8	ns
		Unweighted N	3	3	
	Both sexes	Percent	2.3	4.3	ns
		Unweighted N	8	5	
		Percent	1.0	2.7	ns
		Unweighted N	3	8	
		Percent	1.1	1.0	ns
		Unweighted N	4	4	
		Percent	1.5	2.4	ns
		Unweighted N	15	27	

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \*= $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table D.7: Proportion of those experiencing high / low actual relative deprivation  
who have committed a property crime in the last year by sex and age**

Sex	Age		Low ARD	High ARD	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	15.8	14.2	ns
		Unweighted N	28	29	
	17 to 21	Percent	21.2	27.7	ns
		Unweighted N	27	36	
	22 to 30	Percent	22.2	15.1	ns
		Unweighted N	67	38	
Female	All ages	Percent	20.3	17.6	ns
		Unweighted N	122	103	
Both sexes	12 to 16	Percent	6.6	12.3	ns
		Unweighted N	15	15	
	17 to 21	Percent	13.6	17.2	ns
		Unweighted N	19	15	
	22 to 30	Percent	5.9	5.3	ns
		Unweighted N	24	27	
	All ages	Percent	7.8	9.7	ns
		Unweighted N	58	57	

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table D.8: Proportion of those experiencing high / low actual relative deprivation  
who have committed any offence in the last year by sex and age**

Sex	Age		Low ARD	High ARD	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	26.9	24.3	ns
		Unweighted N	41	49	
	17 to 21	Percent	32.0	44.2	ns
		Unweighted N	42	50	
	22 to 30	Percent	26.2	18.0	ns
		Unweighted N	78	44	
	All ages	Percent	27.9	26.3	ns
		Unweighted N	161	143	
	Female	Percent	11.6	16.6	ns
		Unweighted N	29	20	
		Percent	15.0	19.7	ns
		Unweighted N	23	18	
		Percent	6.1	6.6	ns
		Unweighted N	26	30	
		Percent	9.7	11.8	ns
		Unweighted N	78	68	
	Both sexes	Percent	18.4	20.6	ns
		Unweighted N	59	80	
		Percent	25.1	30.7	ns
		Unweighted N	59	74	
		Percent	17.0	11.2	*
		Unweighted N	97	81	
		Percent	19.4	18.4	ns
		Unweighted N	215	235	

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

## Appendix E

### Analysis of relationship between perceived relative deprivation and involvement in crime

**Table E.1: Proportion of those experiencing / not experiencing perceived relative deprivation of an item in factor 1 (deprived of bare necessities) who have ever committed burglary by sex and age**

Sex	Age		No PRD	PRD Present	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	4.0	3.9	ns
		Unweighted N	18	3	
	17 to 21	Percent	5.4	4.0	ns
		Unweighted N	17	4	
	22 to 30	Percent	6.6	8.0	ns
		Unweighted N	43	12	
	All ages	Percent	5.5	5.7	ns
		Unweighted N	78	19	
	Female	12 to 16	Percent	3.3	0.0
			Unweighted N	10	ns
		17 to 21	Percent	1.6	0.0
			Unweighted N	5	ns
		22 to 30	Percent	1.2	2.1
			Unweighted N	6	ns
		All ages	Percent	2.0	1.4
			Unweighted N	21	ns
		12 to 16	Percent	3.7	2.0
			Unweighted N	28	ns
Both sexes	17 to 21	Percent	3.7	1.8	ns
			Unweighted N	22	
	22 to 30	Percent	4.1	4.0	ns
			Unweighted N	49	
	All ages	Percent	3.8	3.1	ns
			Unweighted N	99	

**Table E.2: Proportion of those experiencing / not experiencing perceived relative deprivation of an item in factor 1 (deprived of bare necessities) who have ever committed a property crime similar to burglary by sex and age**

Sex	Age		No PRD	PRD Present	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	11.2	11.8	ns
		Unweighted N	57	10	
	17 to 21	Percent	16.8	19.0	ns
		Unweighted N	58	14	
	22 to 30	Percent	19.5	18.1	ns
		Unweighted N	124	26	
	All ages	Percent	16.1	16.8	ns
		Unweighted N	239	50	
	Female	Percent	7.2	0.0	ns
		Unweighted N	28	1	
		Percent	5.4	3.1	ns
		Unweighted N	19	4	
		Percent	3.4	5.8	ns
		Unweighted N	26	22	
		Percent	5.2	4.2	ns
		Unweighted N	73	27	
	Both sexes	Percent	9.3	5.8	ns
		Unweighted N	85	11	
		Percent	11.5	9.9	ns
		Unweighted N	77	18	
		Percent	11.9	9.8	ns
		Unweighted N	150	48	
		Percent	11.0	9.1	ns
		Unweighted N	312	77	

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table E.3: Proportion of those experiencing / not experiencing perceived relative deprivation of an item in factor 1 (deprived of bare necessities) who have ever committed a property crime by sex and age**

Sex	Age		No PRD	PRD Present	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	34.2	42.9	ns
		Unweighted N	169	24	
	17 to 21	Percent	51.5	66.0	ns
		Unweighted N	177	44	
	22 to 30	Percent	54.3	58.7	ns
		Unweighted N	366	73	
	All ages	Percent	47.2	57.2	**
Female	12 to 16	Percent	27.8	29.1	ns
		Unweighted N	127	18	
	17 to 21	Percent	32.0	37.4	ns
		Unweighted N	98	36	
	22 to 30	Percent	31.1	39.0	ns
		Unweighted N	235	129	
	All ages	Percent	30.2	37.1	*
Both sexes	12 to 16	Percent	31.2	35.9	ns
		Unweighted N	296	42	
	17 to 21	Percent	42.4	50.2	ns
		Unweighted N	275	80	
	22 to 30	Percent	43.4	45.4	ns
		Unweighted N	601	202	
	All ages	Percent	39.2	45.0	*
		Unweighted N	1172	324	

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \*=p<0.01, \*\* = p<0.001

**Table E.4: Proportion of those experiencing / not experiencing perceived relative deprivation of an item in factor 1 (deprived of bare necessities) who have ever committed any offence by sex and age**

Sex	Age		No PRD	PRD Present	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	44.7	42.1	ns
		Unweighted N	214	28	
	17 to 21	Percent	63.4	78.0	*
		Unweighted N	207	50	
	22 to 30	Percent	62.5	63.3	ns
		Unweighted N	407	77	
	All ages	Percent	57.0	62.7	ns
		Unweighted N	828	155	
	Female	Percent	33.7	43.4	ns
		Unweighted N	159	23	
	17 to 21	Percent	38.2	41.7	ns
		Unweighted N	111	40	
	22 to 30	Percent	33.3	43.6	*
		Unweighted N	246	139	
	All ages	Percent	34.7	43.1	*
		Unweighted N	516	202	
Both sexes	12 to 16	Percent	39.4	42.8	ns
		Unweighted N	373	51	
	17 to 21	Percent	51.7	57.5	ns
		Unweighted N	318	90	
	22 to 30	Percent	48.7	50.0	ns
		Unweighted N	653	216	
	All ages	Percent	46.5	50.7	ns
		Unweighted N	1344	357	

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table E.5: Proportion of those experiencing / not experiencing perceived relative deprivation of an item in factor 1 (deprived of bare necessities) who have committed burglary in the last year by sex and age**

Sex	Age		No PRD	PRD Present	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	1.6	2.6	ns
		Unweighted N	7	2	
	17 to 21	Percent	0.8	0.0	ns
		Unweighted N	2	0	
	22 to 30	Percent	0.0	0.7	ns
		Unweighted N	1	1	
	All ages	Percent	0.7	0.9	ns
		Unweighted N	10	3	
Female	12 to 16	Percent	1.0	0.0	ns
		Unweighted N	2	0	
	17 to 21	Percent	0.0	0.0	ns
		Unweighted N	0	0	
	22 to 30	Percent	0.0	0.0	ns
		Unweighted N	0	0	
	All ages	Percent	0.3	0.0	ns
		Unweighted N	2	0	
Both sexes	12 to 16	Percent	1.2	1.3	ns
		Unweighted N	9	2	
	17 to 21	Percent	0.4	0.0	ns
		Unweighted N	2	0	
	22 to 30	Percent	0.0	0.2	ns
		Unweighted N	1	1	
	All ages	Percent	0.5	0.4	ns
		Unweighted N	12	3	

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table E.6: Proportion of those experiencing / not experiencing perceived relative deprivation of an item in factor 1 (deprived of bare necessities) who have committed a property crime similar to burglary in the last year by sex and age**

Sex	Age		No PRD	PRD Present	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	5.2	6.5	ns
		Unweighted N	24	5	
	17 to 21	Percent	1.9	9.0	**
		Unweighted N	8	4	
	22 to 30	Percent	2.1	1.4	ns
		Unweighted N	9	3	
	All ages	Percent	3.1	5.0	ns
		Unweighted N	41	12	
	Female	Percent	1.5	0.0	ns
		Unweighted N	2	0	
	17 to 21	Percent	1.1	0.0	ns
		Unweighted N	0	0	
	22 to 30	Percent	0.0	0.7	ns
		Unweighted N	0	0	
	All ages	Percent	0.8	0.6	ns
		Unweighted N	10	5	
Both sexes	12 to 16	Percent	3.5	3.2	ns
		Unweighted N	30	6	
	17 to 21	Percent	1.6	3.9	ns
		Unweighted N	12	5	
	22 to 30	Percent	1.1	0.9	ns
		Unweighted N	9	6	
	All ages	Percent	2.0	2.3	ns
		Unweighted N	51	17	

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \*= $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table E.7: Proportion of those experiencing / not experiencing perceived relative deprivation of an item in factor 1 (deprived of bare necessities) who have committed a property crime in the last year by sex and age**

Sex	Age		No PRD	PRD Present	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	15.0	17.6	ns
		Unweighted N	69	11	
	17 to 21	Percent	18.1	32.3	*
		Unweighted N	65	22	
	22 to 30	Percent	18.7	17.4	ns
		Unweighted N	113	22	
	All ages	Percent	17.4	22.1	ns
Female	12 to 16	Percent	9.7	10.7	ns
		Unweighted N	44	6	
	17 to 21	Percent	13.2	13.4	ns
		Unweighted N	36	15	
	22 to 30	Percent	6.3	7.4	ns
		Unweighted N	44	27	
	All ages	Percent	9.2	9.3	ns
Both sexes	12 to 16	Percent	12.4	14.2	ns
		Unweighted N	113	17	
	17 to 21	Percent	15.8	21.4	ns
		Unweighted N	101	37	
	22 to 30	Percent	12.8	10.5	ns
		Unweighted N	157	49	
	All ages	Percent	13.5	14.2	ns
		Unweighted N	371	103	

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \*=p<0.01, \*\* = p<0.001

**Table E.8: Proportion of those experiencing / not experiencing perceived relative deprivation of an item in factor 1 (deprived of bare necessities) who have committed any offence in the last year by sex and age**

Sex	Age		No PRD	PRD Present	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	25.5	26.4	ns
		Unweighted N	110	18	
	17 to 21	Percent	31.2	38.7	ns
		Unweighted N	104	25	
	22 to 30	Percent	22.4	23.0	ns
		Unweighted N	134	26	
	All ages	Percent	25.8	28.7	ns
		Unweighted N	348	69	
	Female	Percent	14.5	18.3	ns
		Unweighted N	68	9	
	17 to 21	Percent	14.4	16.1	ns
		Unweighted N	42	18	
	22 to 30	Percent	6.5	9.2	ns
		Unweighted N	45	32	
	All ages	Percent	11.1	12.4	ns
		Unweighted N	155	59	
Both sexes	12 to 16	Percent	20.1	22.5	ns
		Unweighted N	178	27	
	17 to 21	Percent	23.5	26.1	ns
		Unweighted N	146	43	
	22 to 30	Percent	14.8	13.6	ns
		Unweighted N	179	58	
	All ages	Percent	18.8	18.7	ns
		Unweighted N	503	128	

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table E.9: Proportion of those experiencing / not experiencing perceived relative deprivation of an item in factor 2 (deprived of leisure pursuits) who have ever committed burglary by sex and age**

Sex	Age		No PRD	PRD Present	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	3.7	5.1	ns
		Unweighted N	14	7	
	17 to 21	Percent	4.1	8.6	ns
		Unweighted N	12	9	
	22 to 30	Percent	6.9	6.9	ns
		Unweighted N	38	17	
	All ages	Percent	5.0	6.9	ns
Female	12 to 16	Percent	1.6	7.8	**
		Unweighted N	6	4	
	17 to 21	Percent	1.3	1.6	ns
		Unweighted N	4	2	
	22 to 30	Percent	0.5	3.0	*
		Unweighted N	3	9	
	All ages	Percent	1.0	3.4	**
Both sexes	12 to 16	Percent	2.6	6.5	*
		Unweighted N	20	11	
	17 to 21	Percent	2.8	4.7	ns
		Unweighted N	16	11	
	22 to 30	Percent	3.9	4.3	ns
		Unweighted N	41	26	
	All ages	Percent	3.2	4.9	*
		Unweighted N	77	48	

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \*=p<0.01, \*\* = p<0.001

**Table E.10: Proportion of those experiencing / not experiencing perceived relative deprivation of an item in factor 2 (deprived of leisure pursuits) who have ever committed a property crime similar to burglary by sex and age**

Sex	Age		No PRD	PRD Present	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	10.8	13.7	ns
		Unweighted N	51	16	
	17 to 21	Percent	16.6	18.8	ns
		Unweighted N	54	18	
	22 to 30	Percent	18.0	22.6	ns
		Unweighted N	99	51	
	All ages	Percent	15.3	19.2	ns
		Unweighted N	204	85	
	Female	Percent	5.4	9.9	ns
		Unweighted N	22	7	
		Percent	5.5	3.7	ns
		Unweighted N	16	7	
		Percent	2.4	6.3	*
		Unweighted N	18	30	
		Percent	4.3	6.3	ns
		Unweighted N	56	44	
	Both sexes	Percent	8.2	11.7	ns
		Unweighted N	73	23	
		Percent	11.5	10.2	ns
		Unweighted N	70	25	
		Percent	11.0	12.3	ns
		Unweighted N	117	81	
		Percent	10.2	11.7	ns
		Unweighted N	260	129	

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table E.11: Proportion of those experiencing / not experiencing perceived relative deprivation of an item in factor 2 (deprived of leisure pursuits) who have ever committed a property crime by sex and age**

Sex	Age		No PRD	PRD Present	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	33.4	42.4	ns
		Unweighted N	152	41	
	17 to 21	Percent	53.9	53.9	ns
		Unweighted N	171	50	
	22 to 30	Percent	52.9	60.5	ns
		Unweighted N	316	123	
	All ages	Percent	46.8	54.1	*
Female	12 to 16	Percent	24.1	42.3	**
		Unweighted N	107	38	
	17 to 21	Percent	33.3	33.0	ns
		Unweighted N	89	45	
	22 to 30	Percent	28.9	39.3	**
		Unweighted N	182	182	
	All ages	Percent	28.4	38.3	**
Both sexes	12 to 16	Percent	28.9	42.3	**
		Unweighted N	259	79	
	17 to 21	Percent	44.4	42.3	ns
		Unweighted N	260	95	
	22 to 30	Percent	42.0	47.1	ns
		Unweighted N	498	305	
	All ages	Percent	38.3	44.9	**
		Unweighted N	1017	479	

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table E.12: Proportion of those experiencing / not experiencing perceived relative deprivation of an item in factor 2 (deprived of leisure pursuits) who have ever committed any offence by sex and age**

Sex	Age		No PRD	PRD Present	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	44.1	45.6	ns
		Unweighted N	194	48	
	17 to 21	Percent	66.0	65.1	ns
		Unweighted N	201	56	
	22 to 30	Percent	60.9	67.2	ns
		Unweighted N	352	132	
	All ages	Percent	56.7	61.3	ns
		Unweighted N	747	236	
	Female	Percent	31.4	46.8	**
		Unweighted N	140	42	
	17 to 21	Percent	37.7	41.7	ns
		Unweighted N	100	51	
	22 to 30	Percent	30.9	43.5	**
		Unweighted N	192	193	
	All ages	Percent	32.9	43.7	**
		Unweighted N	432	286	
Both sexes	12 to 16	Percent	38.1	46.2	ns
		Unweighted N	334	90	
	17 to 21	Percent	53.0	52.4	ns
		Unweighted N	301	107	
	22 to 30	Percent	47.2	52.1	ns
		Unweighted N	544	325	
	All ages	Percent	45.7	51.0	*
		Unweighted N	1179	522	

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \*= $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table E.13: Proportion of those experiencing / not experiencing perceived relative deprivation of an item in factor 2 (deprived of leisure pursuits) who have committed burglary in the last year by sex and age**

Sex	Age		No PRD	PRD Present	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	1.6	2.2	ns
		Unweighted N	6	3	
	17 to 21	Percent	0.4	1.3	ns
		Unweighted N	1	1	
	22 to 30	Percent	0.0	0.4	ns
		Unweighted N	1	1	
	All ages	Percent	0.6	1.1	ns
Female	12 to 16	Percent	0.2	3.5	**
		Unweighted N	1	1	
	17 to 21	Percent	0.0	0.0	ns
		Unweighted N	0	0	
	22 to 30	Percent	0.0	0.0	ns
		Unweighted N	0	0	
	All ages	Percent	0.1	0.6	ns
Both sexes	12 to 16	Percent	0.9	2.8	ns
		Unweighted N	7	4	
	17 to 21	Percent	0.2	0.6	ns
		Unweighted N	1	1	
	22 to 30	Percent	0.0	0.1	ns
		Unweighted N	1	1	
	All ages	Percent	0.4	0.8	ns
		Unweighted N	9	6	

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table E.14: Proportion of those experiencing / not experiencing perceived relative deprivation of an item in factor 2 (deprived of leisure pursuits) who have committed a property crime similar to burglary in the last year by sex and age**

Sex	Age		No PRD	PRD Present	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	4.7	7.9	ns
		Unweighted N	21	8	
	17 to 21	Percent	1.5	7.8	**
		Unweighted N	6	6	
	22 to 30	Percent	2.2	1.6	ns
		Unweighted N	8	4	
	All ages	Percent	2.8	4.9	ns
		Unweighted N	35	18	
	Female	Percent	0.6	4.2	*
		Unweighted N	4	3	
	17 to 21	Percent	1.3	0.5	ns
		Unweighted N	3	2	
	22 to 30	Percent	0.0	0.5	ns
		Unweighted N	0	3	
	All ages	Percent	0.5	1.3	ns
		Unweighted N	7	8	
Both sexes	12 to 16	Percent	2.7	6.0	ns
		Unweighted N	25	11	
	17 to 21	Percent	1.4	3.8	ns
		Unweighted N	9	8	
	22 to 30	Percent	1.2	0.9	ns
		Unweighted N	8	7	
	All ages	Percent	1.8	2.7	ns
		Unweighted N	42	26	

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \*= $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table E.15: Proportion of those experiencing / not experiencing perceived relative deprivation of an item in factor 2 (deprived of leisure pursuits) who have committed a property crime in the last year by sex and age**

Sex	Age		No PRD	PRD Present	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	15.1	15.9	ns
		Unweighted N	65	15	
	17 to 21	Percent	18.9	24.7	ns
		Unweighted N	64	23	
	22 to 30	Percent	17.6	20.7	ns
		Unweighted N	90	45	
	All ages	Percent	17.2	20.7	ns
		Unweighted N	219	83	
	Female	12 to 16	Percent	7.8	17.9
			Unweighted N	37	**
		17 to 21	Percent	13.9	11.7
			Unweighted N	26	ns
		22 to 30	Percent	5.2	8.5
			Unweighted N	31	ns
		All ages	Percent	8.3	11.1
			Unweighted N	104	ns
		12 to 16	Percent	11.5	16.6
			Unweighted N	102	ns
Both sexes	17 to 21	Percent	16.8	17.5	ns
			Unweighted N	100	
	22 to 30	Percent	11.9	13.0	ns
			Unweighted N	121	
	All ages	Percent	13.1	15.0	ns
			Unweighted N	323	
	12 to 16	Percent	11.5	16.6	ns
			Unweighted N	102	
	17 to 21	Percent	16.8	17.5	ns
			Unweighted N	100	
	22 to 30	Percent	11.9	13.0	ns
			Unweighted N	121	
	All ages	Percent	13.1	15.0	ns
			Unweighted N	323	

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table E.16: Proportion of those experiencing / not experiencing perceived relative deprivation of an item in factor 2 (deprived of leisure pursuits) who have committed any offence in the last year by sex and age**

Sex	Age		No PRD	PRD Present	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	24.7	29.5	ns
		Unweighted N	101	27	
	17 to 21	Percent	33.0	30.7	ns
		Unweighted N	101	28	
	22 to 30	Percent	21.7	24.9	ns
		Unweighted N	110	50	
	All ages	Percent	25.8	27.6	ns
		Unweighted N	312	105	
	Female	Percent	13.5	20.1	ns
		Unweighted N	61	16	
		Percent	16.2	12.4	ns
		Unweighted N	44	16	
		Percent	5.6	9.6	ns
		Unweighted N	34	43	
		Percent	11.0	12.2	ns
		Unweighted N	139	75	
	Both sexes	Percent	19.3	24.5	ns
		Unweighted N	162	43	
		Percent	25.4	20.6	ns
		Unweighted N	145	44	
		Percent	14.3	15.0	ns
		Unweighted N	144	93	
		Percent	18.9	18.5	ns
		Unweighted N	451	180	

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table E.17: Proportion of those experiencing / not experiencing perceived relative deprivation of any item (based on list of 16 items) who have ever committed burglary by sex and age**

Sex	Age		No PRD	PRD Present	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	4.2	3.6	ns
		Unweighted N	8	13	
	17 to 21	Percent	2.9	6.3	ns
		Unweighted N	4	17	
	22 to 30	Percent	5.5	7.6	ns
		Unweighted N	16	39	
	All ages	Percent	4.4	6.2	ns
		Unweighted N	28	69	
	Female	Percent	0.9	4.5	*
		Unweighted N	2	8	
		Percent	0.0	1.9	ns
		Unweighted N	0	6	
		Percent	0.4	1.8	ns
		Unweighted N	2	10	
		Percent	0.7	2.4	*
		Unweighted N	4	24	
	Both sexes	Percent	2.5	4.1	ns
		Unweighted N	10	21	
		Percent	1.6	4.1	ns
		Unweighted N	4	23	
		Percent	3.6	4.3	ns
		Unweighted N	18	49	
		Percent	2.7	4.2	ns
		Unweighted N	32	93	

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table E.18: Proportion of those experiencing / not experiencing perceived relative deprivation of any item (based on list of 16 items) who have ever committed a property crime similar to burglary by sex and age**

Sex	Age		No PRD	PRD Present	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	10.9	11.6	ns
		Unweighted N	26	41	
	17 to 21	Percent	14.6	18.4	ns
		Unweighted N	24	48	
	22 to 30	Percent	17.4	20.5	ns
		Unweighted N	47	103	
All ages	Percent	14.4	17.4	ns	
		Unweighted N	97	192	
Female	12 to 16	Percent	6.2	6.7	ns
		Unweighted N	14	15	
	17 to 21	Percent	1.2	6.1	ns
		Unweighted N	3	20	
	22 to 30	Percent	2.4	4.7	ns
		Unweighted N	6	42	
Both sexes	Percent	3.8	5.5	ns	
		Unweighted N	23	77	
Both sexes	12 to 16	Percent	8.5	9.3	ns
		Unweighted N	40	56	
	17 to 21	Percent	8.8	12.1	ns
		Unweighted N	27	68	
	22 to 30	Percent	11.3	11.6	ns
		Unweighted N	53	145	
All ages	Percent	9.6	11.2	ns	
		Unweighted N	120	269	

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table E.19: Proportion of those experiencing / not experiencing perceived relative deprivation of any item (based on list of 16 items) who have ever committed a property crime by sex and age**

Sex	Age		No PRD	PRD Present	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	34.2	35.9	ns
		Unweighted N	83	110	
	17 to 21	Percent	42.9	59.6	**
		Unweighted N	65	156	
	22 to 30	Percent	46.8	59.7	**
		Unweighted N	141	298	
	All ages	Percent	41.4	53.0	**
		Unweighted N	289	564	
	Female	12 to 16	Percent	20.9	34.7
		Unweighted N	58	87	**
		17 to 21	Percent	18.5	38.8
		Unweighted N	29	105	**
		22 to 30	Percent	27.7	35.2
		Unweighted N	74	290	ns
		All ages	Percent	22.7	36.1
		Unweighted N	161	482	**
	Both sexes	12 to 16	Percent	27.4	35.4
		Unweighted N	141	197	*
		17 to 21	Percent	32.2	49.0
		Unweighted N	94	261	**
		22 to 30	Percent	39.1	45.9
		Unweighted N	215	588	*
		All ages	Percent	32.9	44.2
		Unweighted N	450	1046	**

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table E.20: Proportion of those experiencing / not experiencing perceived relative deprivation of any item (based on list of 16 items) who have ever committed any offence by sex and age**

Sex	Age		No PRD	PRD Present	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	45.5	43.4	ns
		Unweighted N	105	137	
	17 to 21	Percent	54.3	71.5	**
		Unweighted N	80	177	
	22 to 30	Percent	56.1	66.4	*
		Unweighted N	160	324	
	All ages	Percent	51.9	61.5	**
		Unweighted N	345	638	
	Female	Percent	27.0	42.3	**
		Unweighted N	79	103	
	17 to 21	Percent	23.1	45.0	**
		Unweighted N	34	117	
	22 to 30	Percent	29.5	38.4	ns
		Unweighted N	78	307	
	All ages	Percent	26.9	41.1	**
		Unweighted N	191	527	
Both sexes	12 to 16	Percent	36.2	42.9	ns
		Unweighted N	184	240	
	17 to 21	Percent	40.9	58.1	**
		Unweighted N	114	294	
	22 to 30	Percent	45.0	50.6	ns
		Unweighted N	238	631	
	All ages	Percent	40.6	50.8	**
		Unweighted N	536	1165	

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \*=p<0.01, \*\* = p<0.001

**Table E.21: Proportion of those experiencing / not experiencing perceived relative deprivation of any item (based on list of 16 items) who have committed burglary in the last year by sex and age**

Sex	Age		No PRD	PRD Present	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	2.2	1.0	ns
		Unweighted N	4	5	
	17 to 21	Percent	0.9	0.5	ns
		Unweighted N	1	1	
	22 to 30	Percent	0.0	0.2	ns
		Unweighted N	1	1	
	All ages	Percent	1.0	0.5	ns
		Unweighted N	6	7	
	Female	Percent	0.3	1.5	ns
		Unweighted N	1	1	
		17 to 21	Percent	0.0	0.0
		Unweighted N	0	0	
		22 to 30	Percent	0.0	0.0
		Unweighted N	0	0	
		All ages	Percent	0.1	0.3
		Unweighted N	1	1	
	Both sexes	Percent	1.4	1.2	ns
		Unweighted N	5	6	
		17 to 21	Percent	0.5	0.2
		Unweighted N	1	1	
		22 to 30	Percent	0.0	0.1
		Unweighted N	1	1	
		All ages	Percent	0.7	0.4
		Unweighted N	7	8	

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \*= $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table E.22: Proportion of those experiencing / not experiencing perceived relative deprivation of any item (based on list of 16 items) who have committed a property crime similar to burglary in the last year by sex and age**

Sex	Age		No PRD	PRD Present	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	5.4	5.3	ns
		Unweighted N	11	18	
	17 to 21	Percent	1.4	3.9	ns
		Unweighted N	3	9	
	22 to 30	Percent	2.8	1.6	ns
		Unweighted N	5	7	
	All ages	Percent	3.4	3.3	ns
		Unweighted N	19	34	
	Female	Percent	0.9	2.1	ns
		Unweighted N	3	4	
	17 to 21	Percent	0.6	1.2	ns
		Unweighted N	1	4	
	22 to 30	Percent	0.0	0.3	ns
		Unweighted N	0	3	
	All ages	Percent	0.5	0.9	ns
		Unweighted N	4	11	
Both sexes	12 to 16	Percent	3.1	3.8	ns
		Unweighted N	14	22	
	17 to 21	Percent	1.1	2.5	ns
		Unweighted N	4	13	
	22 to 30	Percent	1.6	0.9	ns
		Unweighted N	5	10	
	All ages	Percent	2.1	2.1	ns
		Unweighted N	23	45	

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \*= $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table E.23: Proportion of those experiencing / not experiencing perceived relative deprivation of any item (based on list of 16 items) who have committed a property crime in the last year by sex and age**

Sex	Age		No PRD	PRD Present	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	15.3	15.0	ns
		Unweighted N	32	48	
	17 to 21	Percent	11.3	25.1	**
		Unweighted N	20	67	
	22 to 30	Percent	15.9	20.1	ns
		Unweighted N	44	91	
Female	All ages	Percent	14.5	20.1	**
		Unweighted N	96	206	
Female	12 to 16	Percent	7.2	12.4	ns
		Unweighted N	21	29	
	17 to 21	Percent	7.9	15.1	ns
		Unweighted N	13	38	
	22 to 30	Percent	4.2	7.4	ns
		Unweighted N	9	62	
Both sexes	All ages	Percent	6.3	10.6	**
		Unweighted N	43	129	
Both sexes	12 to 16	Percent	11.1	13.9	ns
		Unweighted N	53	77	
	17 to 21	Percent	9.8	20.1	**
		Unweighted N	33	105	
	22 to 30	Percent	10.9	12.9	ns
		Unweighted N	53	153	
Both sexes	All ages	Percent	10.8	15.2	**
		Unweighted N	139	335	

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table E.24: Proportion of those experiencing / not experiencing perceived relative deprivation of any item (based on list of 16 items) who have committed any offence in the last year by sex and age**

Sex	Age		No PRD	PRD Present	Significance
Male	12 to 16	Percent	25.5	25.6	ns
		Unweighted N	51	77	
	17 to 21	Percent	23.3	37.1	**
		Unweighted N	38	91	
	22 to 30	Percent	19.1	24.5	ns
		Unweighted N	49	111	
	All ages	Percent	22.4	28.5	*
		Unweighted N	138	279	
Female	12 to 16	Percent	12.6	17.1	ns
		Unweighted N	35	42	
	17 to 21	Percent	10.5	16.6	ns
		Unweighted N	16	44	
	22 to 30	Percent	4.2	8.1	ns
		Unweighted N	10	67	
	All ages	Percent	9.2	12.5	ns
		Unweighted N	61	153	
Both sexes	12 to 16	Percent	18.7	21.7	ns
		Unweighted N	86	119	
	17 to 21	Percent	17.7	26.7	**
		Unweighted N	54	135	
	22 to 30	Percent	12.9	15.2	ns
		Unweighted N	59	178	
	All ages	Percent	16.3	20.1	*
		Unweighted N	199	432	

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \*= $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

## Appendix F

### Analysis of involvement in crime (ever) based on four actual / perceived relative deprivation groups

Table F.1: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have ever committed burglary by sex (based on feeling deprived of any one of 16 items)

	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	4.2	1.2	2.8
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>14</i>
ARD Low & With PRD	6.4	1.1	4.0
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>22</i>
ARD High & No PRD	5.7	0.0	3.5
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>10</i>
ARD High & With PRD	5.4	1.2	2.9
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>30</i>
Significance	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table F.2: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have ever committed burglary by sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 1 – deprived of bare necessities)**

	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	5.5	1.3	3.7
<i>Unweighted N</i>	25	7	32
ARD Low & With PRD	4.4	0.0	1.8
<i>Unweighted N</i>	4	0	4
ARD High & No PRD	5.2	0.9	3.1
<i>Unweighted N</i>	27	1	28
ARD High & With PRD	6.6	1.2	2.9
<i>Unweighted N</i>	9	3	12
Significance	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table F.3: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have ever committed burglary by sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 2 – deprived of leisure pursuits)**

	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	6.3	0.8	3.8
<i>Unweighted N</i>	26	5	31
ARD Low & With PRD	2.2	1.9	2.1
<i>Unweighted N</i>	3	2	5
ARD High & No PRD	4.8	0.0	2.7
<i>Unweighted N</i>	20	0	20
ARD High & With PRD	6.4	2.0	3.5
<i>Unweighted N</i>	16	4	20
Significance	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table F.4: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have ever committed a property crime similar to burglary by sex (based on feeling deprived of any one of 16 items)**

	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	16.9	4.3	10.8
Unweighted N	48	15	63
ARD Low & With PRD	18.5	3.8	11.6
Unweighted N	55	19	74
ARD High & No PRD	13.3	1.1	9.5
Unweighted N	27	1	28
ARD High & With PRD	20.3	3.6	10.9
Unweighted N	92	23	115
Significance	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \*=p<0.01, \*\* = p<0.001

**Table F.5: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have ever committed a property crime similar to burglary by sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 1 – deprived of bare necessities)**

	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	18.2	4.5	11.8
Unweighted N	91	31	122
ARD Low & With PRD	14.7	1.5	6.6
Unweighted N	12	3	15
ARD High & No PRD	17.7	2.1	10.6
Unweighted N	93	9	102
ARD High & With PRD	20.4	5.3	9.9
Unweighted N	26	15	41
Significance	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \*=p<0.01, \*\* = p<0.001

**Table F.6: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have ever committed a property crime similar to burglary by sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 2 – deprived of leisure pursuits)**

	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	18.2	3.8	11.4
Unweighted N	87	24	111
ARD Low & With PRD	16.3	4.7	10.6
Unweighted N	16	10	26
ARD High & No PRD	16.0	2.0	10.0
Unweighted N	75	8	83
ARD High & With PRD	23.0	4.4	11.2
Unweighted N	44	16	60
Significance	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \*=p<0.01, \*\* = p<0.001

**Table F.7: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have ever committed any property crime by sex (based on feeling deprived of any one of 16 items)**

	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	44.2	24.0	34.9
Unweighted N	137	94	231
ARD Low & With PRD	56.2	33.5	45.9
Unweighted N	182	150	332
ARD High & No PRD	39.5	24.4	33.0
Unweighted N	79	25	104
ARD High & With PRD	51.9	33.3	41.2
Unweighted N	223	34	257
Significance	**	*	**

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \*=p<0.01, \*\* = p<0.001

**Table F.8: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have ever committed any property crime by sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 1 – deprived of bare necessities)**

	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	50.9	29.1	41.0
Unweighted N	285	206	491
ARD Low & With PRD	48.5	31.6	38.9
Unweighted N	34	38	72
ARD High & No PRD	46.1	28.2	37.5
Unweighted N	242	110	352
ARD High & With PRD	56.5	38.6	43.9
Unweighted N	60	95	155
Significance	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table F.9: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have ever committed any property crime by sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 2 – deprived of leisure pursuits)**

	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	49.7	27.3	39.8
Unweighted N	269	177	446
ARD Low & With PRD	54.8	35.5	44.5
Unweighted N	50	67	117
ARD High & No PRD	43.6	24.6	35.0
Unweighted N	199	84	283
ARD High & With PRD	57.9	38.9	45.6
Unweighted N	103	121	224
Significance	*	**	*

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table F.10: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have ever committed any crime by sex (based on feeling deprived of any one of 16 items)**

	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	54.5	28.2	42.1
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>163</i>	<i>112</i>	<i>275</i>
ARD Low & With PRD	64.9	39.0	52.4
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>211</i>	<i>168</i>	<i>379</i>
ARD High & No PRD	50.5	29.2	41.9
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>94</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>125</i>
ARD High & With PRD	58.3	37.5	46.9
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>246</i>	<i>197</i>	<i>443</i>
Significance	*	*	**

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table F.11: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have ever committed any crime by sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 1 – deprived of bare necessities)**

	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	60.9	33.8	48.0
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>336</i>	<i>236</i>	<i>572</i>
ARD Low & With PRD	52.9	38.8	45.8
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>82</i>
ARD High & No PRD	54.8	32.1	44.7
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>274</i>	<i>123</i>	<i>397</i>
ARD High & With PRD	60.4	43.7	48.2
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>66</i>	<i>105</i>	<i>171</i>
Significance	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table F.12: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have ever committed any crime by sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 2 – deprived of leisure pursuits)**

	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	59.3	31.9	46.7
<i>Unweighted N</i>	314	207	521
ARD Low & With PRD	63.7	41.7	51.5
<i>Unweighted N</i>	60	73	133
ARD High & No PRD	54.2	29.1	43.1
<i>Unweighted N</i>	234	97	331
ARD High & With PRD	59.4	43.1	49.4
<i>Unweighted N</i>	106	131	237
Significance	ns	*	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table F.13: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have ever committed burglary by age and sex (based on feeling deprived of any one of 16 items)**

	12 to 16 years			17 to 21 years			22 to 30 years		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	1.0	2.2	1.5	3.2	0.0	1.9	6.4	0.7	3.9
<i>Unweighted N</i>	1	2	3	2	0	2	7	2	9
ARD Low & With PRD	2.2	3.8	3.5	3.2	0.0	1.8	10.0	0.4	5.3
<i>Unweighted N</i>	2	2	4	2	0	2	15	1	16
ARD High & No PRD	7.1	0.0	4.4	2.7	0.0	1.6	5.6	0.0	3.3
<i>Unweighted N</i>	4	0	4	1	0	1	5	0	5
ARD High & With PRD	5.0	3.4	4.0	4.9	0.0	2.3	5.3	0.4	2.4
<i>Unweighted N</i>	8	1	9	4	1	5	14	2	16
Significance	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table F.14: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have ever committed burglary by age and sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 1 – deprived of bare necessities)**

	12 to 16 years			17 to 21 years			22 to 30 years		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	1.9	3.2	2.4	3.5	0.0	2.1	8.2	0.9	4.9
<i>Unweighted N</i>	3	4	7	4	0	4	18	3	21
ARD Low & With PRD	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.4	0.0	3.3
<i>Unweighted N</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	4
ARD High & No PRD	5.4	2.7	4.4	3.4	0.0	1.7	5.4	0.0	2.6
<i>Unweighted N</i>	10	1	11	3	0	3	14	0	14
ARD High & With PRD	10.0	0.0	4.4	3.3	0.0	3.3	7.1	0.8	2.5
<i>Unweighted N</i>	2	0	2	2	1	3	5	2	5
Significance	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

(Factor 1 – deprived of bare necessities)

	12 to 16 years			17 to 21 years			22 to 30 years		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	1.9	3.2	2.4	3.5	0.0	2.1	8.2	0.9	4.9
<i>Unweighted N</i>	3	4	7	4	0	4	18	3	21
ARD Low & With PRD	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	9.4	0.0	3.3
<i>Unweighted N</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	4
ARD High & No PRD	5.4	2.7	4.4	3.4	0.0	1.7	5.4	0.0	2.6
<i>Unweighted N</i>	10	1	11	3	0	3	14	0	14
ARD High & With PRD	10.0	0.0	4.4	3.3	0.0	3.3	7.1	0.8	2.5
<i>Unweighted N</i>	2	0	2	2	1	3	5	2	5
Significance	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns
Significance: ns = Not Significant, * = $p < 0.01$ , ** = $p < 0.001$									

**Table F.15: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have ever committed burglary by age and sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 2 – deprived of leisure pursuits)**

	12 to 16 years			17 to 21 years			22 to 30 years		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	1.9	1.5	1.3	4.0	0.0	2.3	9.4	1.0	5.8
<i>Unweighted N</i>	3	2	5	4	0	4	19	3	21
ARD Low & With PRD	0.0	9.3	6.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.1	0.0	1.8
<i>Unweighted N</i>	0	2	2	0	0	0	3	0	3
ARD High & No PRD	5.5	0.0	3.3	3.7	0.0	2.0	4.7	0.0	2.4
<i>Unweighted N</i>	6	0	6	3	0	3	11	0	11
ARD High & With PRD	8.2	7.9	7.3	2.7	0.0	2.2	6.7	0.6	2.8
<i>Unweighted N</i>	6	1	7	2	1	3	8	2	10
Significance	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table F.16: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have ever committed a property crime similar to burglary by age and sex (based on feeling deprived of any one of 16 items)**

	12 to 16 years			17 to 21 years			22 to 30 years		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	7.3	8.0	7.5	15.6	1.8	9.1	22.3	2.0	13.6
<i>Unweighted N</i>	7	9	16	10	2	12	31	4	35
ARD Low & With PRD	10.1	5.7	8.8	16.0	3.0	10.0	23.1	3.3	13.2
<i>Unweighted N</i>	8	4	12	11	3	14	36	12	48
ARD High & No PRD	15.3	2.4	10.6	13.5	0.0	9.4	12.3	0.0	8.1
<i>Unweighted N</i>	11	1	12	8	0	8	8	0	8
ARD High & With PRD	13.6	5.6	9.4	24.7	4.1	12.8	23.3	3.1	10.9
<i>Unweighted N</i>	23	4	27	20	4	24	49	15	64
Significance	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table F.17: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have ever committed a property crime similar to burglary by age and sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 1 – deprived of bare necessities)**

	12 to 16 years			17 to 21 years			22 to 30 years		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	9.2	7.7	8.7	16.0	3.1	10.6	23.0	2.9	14.0
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>59</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>72</i>
ARD Low & With PRD	4.5	0.0	2.6	14.3	0.0	5.6	21.9	2.5	8.6
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>11</i>
ARD High & No PRD	13.2	5.3	10.0	20.5	0.0	10.0	21.1	1.3	11.3
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>33</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>49</i>
ARD High & With PRD	20.0	0.0	8.9	25.8	12.5	16.1	17.5	4.7	8.3
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>33</i>
Significance	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table F.18: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have ever committed a property crime similar to burglary by age and sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 2 – deprived of leisure pursuits)**

	12 to 16 years			17 to 21 years			22 to 30 years		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	9.5	5.5	7.1	15.3	2.5	10.0	23.5	2.7	14.4
<i>Unweighted N</i>	13	9	22	17	4	21	57	11	68
ARD Low & With PRD	7.1	14.0	13.1	15.2	2.6	10.0	20.3	3.0	9.9
<i>Unweighted N</i>	2	4	6	4	1	5	10	5	15
ARD High & No PRD	12.8	2.2	8.6	23.5	2.1	14.5	15.5	1.7	9.3
<i>Unweighted N</i>	24	3	27	23	1	24	28	4	32
ARD High & With PRD	17.7	10.3	12.7	16.2	2.4	7.7	29.3	3.5	11.5
<i>Unweighted N</i>	10	2	12	5	3	8	29	11	40
Significance	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table F.19: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have ever committed any property crime by age and sex (based on feeling deprived of any one of 16 items)**

	12 to 16 years			17 to 21 years			22 to 30 years		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	33.3	21.9	27.5	42.2	17.5	30.0	50.5	28.3	41.2
<i>Unweighted N</i>	32	28	60	28	15	43	77	51	128
ARD Low & With PRD	31.5	26.7	28.1	59.1	28.7	46.5	65.1	38.0	52.4
<i>Unweighted N</i>	25	29	54	43	24	67	114	97	211
ARD High & No PRD	29.4	21.4	25.5	56.8	31.3	46.9	42.5	25.8	35.8
<i>Unweighted N</i>	24	12	36	20	5	25	35	8	43
ARD High & With PRD	36.4	37.8	36.4	63.4	42.5	49.7	58.5	29.0	40.7
<i>Unweighted N</i>	52	33	85	54	32	86	117	115	232
Significance	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	*	*	ns	**

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table F.20: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have ever committed any property crime by age and sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 1 – deprived of bare necessities)**

	12 to 16 years			17 to 21 years			22 to 30 years		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	35.6	23.6	28.8	49.7	23.6	39.3	58.2	34.7	48.0
<i>Unweighted N</i>	53	51	104	61	31	92	171	124	295
ARD Low & With PRD	13.6	22.7	18.4	78.6	30.0	44.4	59.4	34.6	45.2
<i>Unweighted N</i>	4	6	10	10	8	18	20	24	44
ARD High & No PRD	31.2	33.3	31.3	60.2	40.0	46.7	55.0	19.6	39.1
<i>Unweighted N</i>	66	39	105	55	21	76	121	50	171
ARD High & With PRD	60.0	26.3	40.0	66.7	41.7	55.6	50.9	39.8	41.5
<i>Unweighted N</i>	10	6	16	19	16	35	31	73	104
Significance	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	*	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table F.21: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have ever committed any property crime by age and sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 2 – deprived of leisure pursuits)**

	12 to 16 years			17 to 21 years			22 to 30 years		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	31.8	20.6	26.1	51.6	25.4	40.5	57.5	32.8	46.9
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>113</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>153</i>	<i>59</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>89</i>	<i>160</i>	<i>107</i>	<i>267</i>
ARD Low & With PRD	35.7	39.5	36.1	52.9	23.1	37.7	62.2	38.3	50.0
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>41</i>	<i>72</i>
ARD High & No PRD	27.4	25.5	25.7	62.2	38.3	49.0	50.0	18.3	37.0
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>51</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>83</i>	<i>55</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>72</i>	<i>93</i>	<i>35</i>	<i>128</i>
ARD High & With PRD	50.8	48.7	50.0	60.5	42.9	48.9	61.5	35.3	43.1
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>59</i>	<i>88</i>	<i>147</i>
Significance	ns	*	**	ns	ns	ns	ns	*	*

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table F.22: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have ever committed any crime by age and sex (based on feeling deprived of any one of 16 items)**

	12 to 16 years			17 to 21 years			22 to 30 years		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	42.7	27.2	33.8	58.7	24.5	43.0	59.8	30.5	47.1
<i>Unweighted N</i>	39	39	78	36	19	55	88	54	142
ARD Low & With PRD	46.1	32.4	39.8	71.3	38.8	54.1	70.0	41.9	56.8
<i>Unweighted N</i>	38	36	74	49	30	79	124	102	226
ARD High & No PRD	42.4	26.2	36.0	64.9	41.2	54.7	52.1	26.7	42.5
<i>Unweighted N</i>	32	16	48	23	6	29	39	9	48
ARD High & With PRD	42.1	44.9	41.8	76.5	44.4	60.6	62.6	32.8	44.6
<i>Unweighted N</i>	62	38	100	61	33	94	123	126	249
Significance	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	*

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table F.23: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have ever committed any crime by age and sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 1 – deprived of bare necessities)**

	12 to 16 years			17 to 21 years			22 to 30 years		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	47.5	28.8	37.5	64.3	33.3	49.8	65.9	37.1	53.0
<i>Unweighted N</i>	70	67	137	74	39	113	192	130	322
ARD Low & With PRD	21.7	36.4	31.6	85.7	35.7	50.0	59.4	40.5	50.0
<i>Unweighted N</i>	7	8	15	11	10	21	20	26	46
ARD High & No PRD	58.0	40.2	40.1	29.5	42.4	57.3	61.0	21.7	43.6
<i>Unweighted N</i>	83	47	130	62	22	84	129	54	183
ARD High & With PRD	55.0	31.6	35.6	19.4	45.8	65.0	54.5	44.8	45.5
<i>Unweighted N</i>	11	7	18	22	17	39	33	81	114
Significance	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	**	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table F.24: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have ever committed any crime by age and sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 2 – deprived of leisure pursuits)**

	12 to 16 years			17 to 21 years			22 to 30 years		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	42.0	26.9	34.7	66.7	33.0	51.6	65.2	34.9	51.7
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>64</i>	<i>57</i>	<i>121</i>	<i>72</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>110</i>	<i>178</i>	<i>112</i>	<i>290</i>
ARD Low & With PRD	57.1	41.9	46.7	63.6	34.2	43.3	67.1	44.2	55.9
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>78</i>
ARD High & No PRD	40.9	31.9	35.9	73.2	41.3	58.8	57.9	21.4	42.9
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>69</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>108</i>	<i>63</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>81</i>	<i>102</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>142</i>
ARD High & With PRD	45.9	55.3	49.5	73.0	45.2	59.3	63.3	39.4	46.2
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>40</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>155</i>
Significance	ns	*	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	*	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

## Appendix G

### Analysis of involvement in crime (in last 12 months) based on four actual / perceived relative deprivation groups

**Table G.1: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have committed burglary in last year by sex (based on feeling deprived of any one of 16 items)**

	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	0.3	0.3	0.2
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>
ARD Low & With PRD	0.3	0.0	0.1
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>
ARD High & No PRD	1.0	0.0	0.9
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>3</i>
ARD High & With PRD	0.5	0.7	0.6
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>4</i>
Significance	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table G.2: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have committed burglary in last year by sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 1 – deprived of bare necessities)**

	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	0.3	0.1	0.2
<i>Unweighted N</i>	2	1	3
ARD Low & With PRD	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Unweighted N</i>	0	0	0
ARD High & No PRD	0.6	0.9	0.7
<i>Unweighted N</i>	4	1	5
ARD High & With PRD	1.9	0.0	0.6
<i>Unweighted N</i>	2	0	2
Significance	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \*= $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table G.3: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have committed burglary in last year by sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 2 – deprived of leisure pursuits)**

	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	0.3	0.2	0.2
<i>Unweighted N</i>	2	1	3
ARD Low & With PRD	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Unweighted N</i>	0	0	0
ARD High & No PRD	0.5	0.0	0.4
<i>Unweighted N</i>	3	0	3
ARD High & With PRD	1.1	1.2	1.2
<i>Unweighted N</i>	3	1	4
Significance	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \*= $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table G.4: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have committed a property crime similar to burglary in last year by sex (based on feeling deprived of any one of 16 items)**

	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	2.3	0.6	1.3
<i>Unweighted N</i>	6	2	8
ARD Low & With PRD	2.8	0.2	1.6
<i>Unweighted N</i>	8	1	9
ARD High & No PRD	4.6	0.0	3.2
<i>Unweighted N</i>	8	0	8
ARD High & With PRD	3.6	1.0	2.0
<i>Unweighted N</i>	14	3	17
Significance	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table G.5: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have committed a property crime similar to burglary in last year by sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 1 – deprived of bare necessities)**

	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	2.5	0.3	1.5
<i>Unweighted N</i>	12	3	15
ARD Low & With PRD	1.5	0.0	0.6
<i>Unweighted N</i>	2	0	2
ARD High & No PRD	3.2	1.2	2.1
<i>Unweighted N</i>	15	2	17
ARD High & With PRD	7.4	0.0	2.6
<i>Unweighted N</i>	7	1	8
Significance	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table G.6: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have committed a property crime similar to burglary in last year by sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 2 – deprived of leisure pursuits)**

	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	2.6	0.3	1.6
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>15</i>
ARD Low & With PRD	1.5	0.0	0.7
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>2</i>
ARD High & No PRD	2.6	0.0	1.6
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>13</i>
ARD High & With PRD	6.8	1.6	3.4
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>12</i>
Significance	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table G.7: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have committed any property crime in last year by sex (based on feeling deprived of any one of 16 items)**

	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	15.9	5.3	10.6
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>77</i>
ARD Low & With PRD	23.5	9.0	16.5
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>72</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>108</i>
ARD High & No PRD	9.7	8.0	9.3
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>30</i>
ARD High & With PRD	19.5	9.5	13.8
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>82</i>	<i>48</i>	<i>130</i>
Significance	*	ns	*

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table G.8: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have committed any property crime in last year by sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 1 – deprived of bare necessities)**

	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	20.1	8.0	14.4
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>110</i>	<i>51</i>	<i>161</i>
ARD Low & With PRD	18.8	4.7	9.7
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>19</i>
ARD High & No PRD	14.8	9.8	12.3
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>74</i>	<i>33</i>	<i>107</i>
ARD High & With PRD	24.0	8.0	13.8
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>53</i>
Significance	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table G.9: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have committed any property crime in last year by sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 2 – deprived of leisure pursuits)**

	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	20.8	7.6	14.7
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>107</i>	<i>47</i>	<i>154</i>
ARD Low & With PRD	15.8	6.7	10.7
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>26</i>
ARD High & No PRD	12.8	5.7	10.0
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>59</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>81</i>
ARD High & With PRD	25.0	13.3	16.8
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>35</i>	<i>79</i>
Significance	*	ns	*

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table G.10: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have committed any crime in last year by sex (based on feeling deprived of any one of 16 items)**

	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	21.8	7.7	14.9
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>66</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>98</i>
ARD Low & With PRD	31.6	10.5	21.5
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>141</i>
ARD High & No PRD	17.2	11.4	14.7
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>33</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>44</i>
ARD High & With PRD	27.7	11.9	18.6
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>110</i>	<i>57</i>	<i>167</i>
Significance	*	ns	*

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \*= $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table G.11: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have committed any crime in last year by sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 1 – deprived of bare necessities)**

	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	27.7	9.6	19.3
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>147</i>	<i>67</i>	<i>214</i>
ARD Low & With PRD	22.4	7.0	12.8
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>25</i>
ARD High & No PRD	23.1	11.5	17.3
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>108</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>147</i>
ARD High & With PRD	30.5	11.8	18.2
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>35</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>64</i>
Significance	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \*= $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table G.12: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have committed any crime in last year by sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 2 – deprived of leisure pursuits)**

	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	27.9	9.9	19.6
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>139</i>	<i>65</i>	<i>204</i>
ARD Low & With PRD	23.8	7.6	14.7
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>35</i>
ARD High & No PRD	21.2	8.2	15.4
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>90</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>119</i>
ARD High & With PRD	31.7	15.4	20.8
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>53</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>92</i>
Significance	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \*= $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table G.13: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have committed burglary in last year by age and sex (based on feeling deprived of any one of 16 items)**

	12 to 16 years			17 to 21 years			22 to 30 years		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	0.0	0.7	0.0	1.6	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
ARD Low & With PRD	1.1	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
ARD High & No PRD	2.4	0.0	1.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
ARD High & With PRD	1.4	3.3	2.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
Significance	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table G.14: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have committed burglary in last year by age and sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 1 – deprived of bare necessities)**

	12 to 16 years			17 to 21 years			22 to 30 years		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	0.6	0.5	0.3	0.7	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
ARD Low & With PRD	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
ARD High & No PRD	1.5	2.7	1.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
ARD High & With PRD	10.0	0.0	4.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>
Significance	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table G.15: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have committed burglary in last year by age and sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 2 – deprived of leisure pursuits)**

	12 to 16 years			17 to 21 years			22 to 30 years		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	0.6	0.5	0.3	1.0	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Unweighted N</i>	1	1	2	1	0	1	0	0	0
ARD Low & With PRD	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Unweighted N</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
ARD High & No PRD	1.2	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Unweighted N</i>	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
ARD High & With PRD	3.3	7.9	5.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Unweighted N</i>	3	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Significance	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table G.16: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have committed a property crime similar to burglary in last year by age and sex  
(based on feeling deprived of any one of 16 items)**

	12 to 16 years			17 to 21 years			22 to 30 years		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	3.1	0.7	1.5	1.6	1.8	0.9	2.2	0.0	1.3
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>2</i>
ARD Low & With PRD	5.6	0.0	2.9	1.1	1.0	1.2	2.4	0.0	1.2
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>2</i>
ARD High & No PRD	5.8	0.0	3.1	2.7	0.0	3.1	5.4	0.0	3.3
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>2</i>
ARD High & With PRD	5.7	4.4	4.3	6.2	0.0	3.4	1.0	0.0	0.4
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>2</i>
Significance	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \*= $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table G.17: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have committed a property crime similar to burglary in last year by age and sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 1 – deprived of bare necessities)**

	12 to 16 years			17 to 21 years			22 to 30 years		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	4.3	0.5	2.1	1.4	0.8	1.2	2.2	0.0	1.2
<i>Unweighted N</i>	7	1	8	2	2	4	3	0	3
ARD Low & With PRD	4.3	0.0	2.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.1	0.0	1.1
<i>Unweighted N</i>	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
ARD High & No PRD	4.9	3.5	4.1	1.1	0.0	1.1	2.4	0.0	1.1
<i>Unweighted N</i>	9	2	11	3	0	3	3	0	3
ARD High & With PRD	10.0	0.0	4.4	16.1	0.0	7.9	1.7	0.0	0.5
<i>Unweighted N</i>	3	0	3	3	1	4	1	0	1
Significance	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table G.18: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have committed a property crime similar to burglary in last year by age and sex  
(based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 2 – deprived of leisure pursuits)**

	12 to 16 years			17 to 21 years			22 to 30 years		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	3.8	0.5	1.9	0.8	0.8	0.9	2.8	0.0	1.6
<i>Unweighted N</i>	7	1	8	1	2	3	4	0	4
ARD Low & With PRD	3.6	0.0	1.6	3.0	0.0	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
<i>Unweighted N</i>	1	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0
ARD High & No PRD	3.7	0.0	2.3	2.4	0.0	2.0	2.3	0.0	1.2
<i>Unweighted N</i>	7	0	7	4	0	4	2	0	2
ARD High & With PRD	9.8	10.3	9.1	10.8	0.0	5.4	2.2	0.0	0.7
<i>Unweighted N</i>	5	2	7	2	1	3	2	0	2
Significance	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table G.19: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have committed any property crime in last year by age and sex (based on feeling deprived of any one of 16 items)**

	12 to 16 years			17 to 21 years			22 to 30 years		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	13.2	5.9	8.3	14.3	7.5	11.2	17.4	4.0	11.9
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>35</i>
ARD Low & With PRD	17.0	6.7	11.2	25.5	16.7	22.6	25.2	7.1	16.2
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>56</i>
ARD High & No PRD	10.1	7.1	9.1	8.6	17.6	13.1	10.0	6.9	7.7
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>8</i>
ARD High & With PRD	14.1	14.8	14.2	35.0	17.1	24.4	16.4	5.4	9.7
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>41</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>57</i>
Significance	ns	ns	ns	*	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \*= $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table G.20: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have committed any property crime in last year by age and sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 1 – deprived of bare necessities)**

	12 to 16 years			17 to 21 years			22 to 30 years		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	16.0	6.4	10.2	18.9	15.7	18.0	22.4	6.2	15.3
<i>Unweighted N</i>	26	14	40	22	17	39	62	20	82
ARD Low & With PRD	4.5	4.5	5.4	42.9	7.1	19.4	15.6	5.1	8.7
<i>Unweighted N</i>	2	1	3	5	2	7	5	4	9
ARD High & No PRD	10.7	13.5	12.0	23.0	17.2	18.9	15.7	4.0	9.9
<i>Unweighted N</i>	22	14	36	23	7	30	29	12	41
ARD High & With PRD	36.8	0.0	15.9	41.4	17.4	30.5	10.7	7.4	8.2
<i>Unweighted N</i>	7	1	8	13	8	21	9	15	24
Significance	*	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	*

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \*= $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table G.21: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have committed any property crime in last year by age and sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 2 - deprived of leisure pursuits)**

	12 to 16 years			17 to 21 years			22 to 30 years		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	16.0	5.6	10.6	23.4	18.2	20.9	22.1	4.9	14.5
<i>Unweighted N</i>	26	12	38	24	18	36	57	17	74
ARD Low & With PRD	7.1	9.3	4.9	12.1	2.6	8.3	19.4	7.8	13.7
<i>Unweighted N</i>	2	3	5	3	1	4	10	7	17
ARD High & No PRD	9.6	5.4	8.1	22.5	11.1	18.2	11.3	3.6	8.2
<i>Unweighted N</i>	18	9	27	24	6	30	17	7	24
ARD High & With PRD	21.1	26.3	24.5	38.9	23.8	26.7	20.9	6.8	10.7
<i>Unweighted N</i>	11	6	17	12	9	21	21	20	41
Significance	ns	ns	**	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table G.22: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have committed any crime in last year by age and sex (based on feeling deprived of any one of 16 items)**

	12 to 16 years			17 to 21 years			22 to 30 years		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	21.7	10.4	15.0	24.4	9.4	17.9	20.8	4.1	13.8
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>17</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>27</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>39</i>
ARD Low & With PRD	30.6	11.4	20.4	36.2	18.6	29.2	30.1	7.1	18.8
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>24</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>65</i>
ARD High & No PRD	18.2	9.5	15.2	26.5	23.5	26.2	10.3	6.9	7.8
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>9</i>
ARD High & With PRD	25.4	20.0	22.8	50.0	18.8	32.3	19.7	6.6	11.8
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>35</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>65</i>
Significance	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	*	ns	*

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table G.23: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have committed any crime in last year by age and sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 1 – deprived of bare necessities)**

	12 to 16 years			17 to 21 years			22 to 30 years		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	28.4	10.6	18.2	30.1	16.5	25.1	26.6	6.3	17.8
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>64</i>	<i>36</i>	<i>20</i>	<i>56</i>	<i>73</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>94</i>
ARD Low & With PRD	9.5	13.6	11.1	57.1	10.3	25.0	15.6	5.1	8.7
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>10</i>
ARD High & No PRD	20.8	17.4	19.2	44.0	19.0	30.2	16.3	4.0	10.2
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>39</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>57</i>	<i>37</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>46</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>44</i>
ARD High & With PRD	42.1	11.1	25.6	41.4	21.7	32.2	19.6	10.0	12.4
<i>Unweighted N</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>30</i>
Significance	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	ns	*

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \* =  $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

**Table G.24: Proportion of each of four relative deprivation groups who have committed any crime in last year by age and sex (based on feeling deprived of any one item in factor 2 – deprived of leisure pursuits)**

	12 to 16 years			17 to 21 years			22 to 30 years		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
ARD Low & No PRD	24.0	10.8	16.9	36.3	20	29.3	26.5	5.6	17.2
<i>Unweighted N</i>	35	24	59	38	22	60	66	19	85
ARD Low & With PRD	38.5	11.6	18.6	15.2	2.6	10.0	22.5	7.9	15.1
<i>Unweighted N</i>	6	5	11	4	1	5	12	7	19
ARD High & No PRD	20.3	10.1	15.7	41.0	13.6	29.6	12.7	4.5	8.8
<i>Unweighted N</i>	33	13	46	36	8	44	21	8	29
ARD High & With PRD	29.3	31.6	31.1	48.6	26.2	32.2	25.6	8.2	13.3
<i>Unweighted N</i>	16	7		14	10	24	23	22	45
Significance	ns	*	*	ns	ns	ns	*	ns	*

Significance: ns = Not Significant, \*= $p < 0.01$ , \*\* =  $p < 0.001$

## Appendix H

### Logistic regression models predicting involvement in property crime (ever) with measures of actual and perceived relative deprivation included

Table H1: Logistic regression model predicting property offending ever by 12 to 16 year old males (RDFACT1 included in model)

Factor	Exp. (B)
<b>Company</b>	
Has delinquent friends or acquaintances	2.48
Doesn't have delinquent friends or acquaintances	1
<b>Truancy</b>	
Truanted from school at least once a month	22.62
Truanted from school less than once a month / never	1
<b>Hanging around in public places</b>	
Hangs around in public	3.02
Doesn't hang around in public	1
<b>Drug use</b>	
Not used drugs in the last year	1
Used drugs in the the last year	2.22

Unweighted N = 385

**Table H2: Logistic regression model predicting property offending ever by 12 to 16 year old males (RDFACT2 included in model)**

Factor	Exp. (B)
<b>Parental supervision</b>	
Parents sometimes / often / always know whereabouts	1
Parents rarely or never know whereabouts	1.81
<b>Company</b>	
Has delinquent friends or acquaintances	2.69
Doesn't have delinquent friends or acquaintances	1
<b>Truancy</b>	
Truanted from school at least once a month	20.29
Truanted from school less than once a month / never	1
<b>Hanging around in public places</b>	
Hangs around in public	3.19
Doesn't hang around in public	1
<b>Relatively deprived of leisure pursuits</b>	
Feels deprived of at least one item in factor 2	2.15
Doesn't feel deprived of an item in factor 2	1

*Unweighted N = 385*

**Table H3: Logistic regression model predicting property offending ever by 12 to 16 year old males (RDANY included in model)**

Factor	Exp. (B)
<b>Company</b>	
Has delinquent friends or acquaintances	2.48
Doesn't have delinquent friends or acquaintances	1
<b>Truancy</b>	
Truanted from school at least once a month	22.62
Truanted from school less than once a month / never	1
<b>Hanging around in public places</b>	
Hangs around in public	3.02
Doesn't hang around in public	1
<b>Drug use</b>	
Not used drugs in the last year	1
Used drugs in the the last year	2.22

*Unweighted N = 385*

**Table H4: Logistic regression model predicting property offending ever by 12 to 16 year old females (RDFACT1 included in model)**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Exp. (B)</b>
<b>Company</b>	
Has delinquent friends or acquaintances	2.94
Doesn't have delinquent friends or acquaintances	1
<b>Truancy</b>	
Truanted from school at least once a month	4.55
Truanted from school less than once a month / never	1
<b>Hanging around in public places</b>	
Hangs around in public	3.03
Doesn't hang around in public	1
<b>Drug use</b>	
Not used drugs in the last year	1
Used drugs in the the last year	2.94
<b>Actual relative deprivation</b>	
Low actual relative deprivation	1
High actual relative deprivation	1.83

*Unweighted N = 374*

**Table H5: Logistic regression model predicting property offending ever by 12 to 16 year old females (RDFACT2 included in model)**

Factor	Exp. (B)
<b>Company</b>	
Has delinquent friends or acquaintances	2.78
Doesn't have delinquent friends or acquaintances	1
<b>Truancy</b>	
Truanted from school at least once a month	4.7
Truanted from school less than once a month / never	1
<b>Hanging around in public places</b>	
Hangs around in public	3.08
Doesn't hang around in public	1
<b>Drug use</b>	
Not used drugs in the last year	1
Used drugs in the the last year	2.9
<b>Relatively deprived of leisure pursuits</b>	
Feels deprived of at least one item in factor 2	2.96
Doesn't feel deprived of an item in factor 2	1

**Unweighted N = 374**

**Table H6: Logistic regression model predicting property offending ever by 12 to 16 year old females (RDANY included in model)**

Factor	Exp. (B)
<b>Company</b>	
Has delinquent friends or acquaintances	2.72
Doesn't have delinquent friends or acquaintances	1
<b>Truancy</b>	
Truanted from school at least once a month	5.09
Truanted from school less than once a month / never	1
<b>Hanging around in public places</b>	
Hangs around in public	3
Doesn't hang around in public	1
<b>Drug use</b>	
Not used drugs in the last year	1
Used drugs in the the last year	3.11
<b>Relatively deprived of any item</b>	
Feels deprived of any item (from list of 16)	1.94
Doesn't feel deprived of any item (from list of 16)	1

*Unweighted N = 374*

**Table H7: Logistic regression model predicting property offending ever by 17 to 21 year old males (RDFACT1 included in model)**

Factor	Exp. (B)
<b>Company</b>	
Has delinquent friends or acquaintances	2.54
Doesn't have delinquent friends or acquaintances	1
<b>School exclusion</b>	
Temporarily or permanently excluded from school	2.71
Has never been excluded from school	1
<b>Drug use</b>	
Uses at least once a month	3.32
Uses less than once a month / never	1

*Unweighted N = 221*

**Table H8: Logistic regression model predicting property offending ever by 17 to 21 year old males (RDFACT2 included in model)**

Factor	Exp. (B)
<b>Company</b>	
Has delinquent friends or acquaintances	2.66
Doesn't have delinquent friends or acquaintances	1
<b>School exclusion</b>	
Temporarily or permanently excluded from school	3.01
Has never been excluded from school	1
<b>Drug use</b>	
Uses at least once a month	4.18
Uses less than once a month / never	1
<b>Relatively deprived of leisure pursuits</b>	
Feels deprived of at least one item in factor 2	0.42
Doesn't feel deprived of an item in factor 2	1

*Unweighted N = 221*

**Table H9: Logistic regression model predicting property offending ever by 17 to 21 year old males (RDANY included in model)**

Factor	Exp. (B)
<b>Company</b>	
Has delinquent friends or acquaintances	2.54
Doesn't have delinquent friends or acquaintances	1
<b>School exclusion</b>	
Temporarily or permanently excluded from school	2.71
Has never been excluded from school	1
<b>Drug use</b>	
Uses at least once a month	3.32
Uses less than once a month / never	1

*Unweighted N = 221*

**Table H10: Logistic regression model predicting property offending ever by 17 to 21 year old females (RDFACT1 included in model)**

Factor	Exp. (B)
<b>Company</b>	
Has delinquent friends or acquaintances	3.2
Doesn't have delinquent friends or acquaintances	1
<b>School exclusion</b>	
Temporarily or permanently excluded from school	3.35
Has never been excluded from school	1
<b>Drug use</b>	
Uses at least once a month	5.09
Uses less than once a month / never	1
<b>Actual relative deprivation</b>	
Low actual relative deprivation	1
High actual relative deprivation	2.49

*Unweighted N = 209*

**Table H11: Logistic regression model predicting property offending ever by 17 to 21 year old females (RDFACT2 included in model)**

Factor	Exp. (B)
<b>Company</b>	
Has delinquent friends or acquaintances	3.2
Doesn't have delinquent friends or acquaintances	1
<b>School exclusion</b>	
Temporarily or permanently excluded from school	3.35
Has never been excluded from school	1
<b>Drug use</b>	
Uses at least once a month	5.09
Uses less than once a month / never	1
<b>Actual relative deprivation</b>	
Low actual relative deprivation	1
High actual relative deprivation	2.49

*Unweighted N = 209*

**Table H12: Logistic regression model predicting property offending ever by 17 to 21 year old females (RDANY included in model)**

Factor	Exp. (B)
<b>Company</b>	
Has delinquent friends or acquaintances	3.2
Doesn't have delinquent friends or acquaintances	1
<b>School exclusion</b>	
Temporarily or permanently excluded from school	3.35
Has never been excluded from school	1
<b>Drug use</b>	
Uses at least once a month	5.09
Uses less than once a month / never	1
<b>Actual relative deprivation</b>	
Low actual relative deprivation	1
High actual relative deprivation	2.49

*Unweighted N = 209*

**Table H13: Logistic regression model predicting property offending ever by 22 to 30 year old males (RDFACT1 included in model)**

Factor	Exp. (B)
<b>Company</b>	
Has delinquent friends or acquaintances	4.93
Doesn't have delinquent friends or acquaintances	1
<b>Drinking</b>	
Drinks at least 5 times a week	2.15
Drinks less than 5 times a week	1
<b>Drug use</b>	
Uses at least once a month	1.99
Uses less than once a month / never	1

*Unweighted N = 541*

**Table H14: Logistic regression model predicting property offending ever by 22 to 30 year old males (RDFACT2 included in model)**

Factor	Exp. (B)
<b>Company</b>	
Has delinquent friends or acquaintances	4.93
Doesn't have delinquent friends or acquaintances	1
<b>Drinking</b>	
Drinks at least 5 times a week	2.15
Drinks less than 5 times a week	1
<b>Drug use</b>	
Uses at least once a month	1.99
Uses less than once a month / never	1

*Unweighted N = 541*

**Table H15: Logistic regression model predicting property offending ever by 22 to 30 year old males (RDANY included in model)**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Exp. (B)</b>
<b>Company</b>	
Has delinquent friends or acquaintances	4.86
Doesn't have delinquent friends or acquaintances	1
<b>Drinking</b>	
Drinks at least 5 times a week	2.15
Drinks less than 5 times a week	1
<b>Drug use</b>	
Uses at least once a month	2
Uses less than once a month / never	1
<b>Relatively deprived of any item</b>	
Feels deprived of any item (from list of 16)	1.69
Doesn't feel deprived of any item (from list of 16)	1

*Unweighted N = 541*

**Table H16: Logistic regression model predicting property offending ever by 22 to 30 year old females (RDFACT1 included in model)**

Factor	Exp. (B)
<b>Company</b>	
Has delinquent friends or acquaintances	2.69
Doesn't have delinquent friends or acquaintances	1
<b>School exclusion</b>	
Temporarily or permanently excluded from school	2.54
Has never been excluded from school	1
<b>Qualifications</b>	
Qualifications	1
No qualifications	2.49
<b>Drinking</b>	
Drinks at least 5 times a week	2.23
Drinks less than 5 times a week	1
<b>Drug use</b>	
Uses at least once a month	4.73
Uses less than once a month / never	1
<b>Actual relative deprivation</b>	
Low actual relative deprivation	1
High actual relative deprivation	0.56

*Unweighted N = 737*

**Table H17: Logistic regression model predicting property offending ever by 22 to 30 year old females (RDFACT2 included in model)**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Exp. (B)</b>
<b>Company</b>	
Has delinquent friends or acquaintances	2.81
Doesn't have delinquent friends or acquaintances	1
<b>Qualifications</b>	
Qualifications	1
No qualifications	2.58
<b>Drinking</b>	
Drinks at least 5 times a week	2.24
Drinks less than 5 times a week	1
<b>Drug use</b>	
Uses at least once a month	4.18
Uses less than once a month / never	1
<b>Relatively deprived of leisure pursuits</b>	
Feels deprived of at least one item in factor 2	1.59
Doesn't feel deprived of an item in factor 2	1
<b>Actual relative deprivation</b>	
Low actual relative deprivation	1
High actual relative deprivation	0.51

*Unweighted N = 737*

**Table H18: Logistic regression model predicting property offending ever by 22 to 30 year old males (RDANY included in model)**

Factor	Exp. (B)
<b>Company</b>	
Has delinquent friends or acquaintances	2.69
Doesn't have delinquent friends or acquaintances	1
<b>School exclusion</b>	
Temporarily or permanently excluded from school	2.54
Has never been excluded from school	1
<b>Qualifications</b>	
Qualifications	1
No qualifications	2.49
<b>Drinking</b>	
Drinks at least 5 times a week	2.23
Drinks less than 5 times a week	1
<b>Drug use</b>	
Uses at least once a month	4.73
Uses less than once a month / never	1
<b>Actual relative deprivation</b>	
Low actual relative deprivation	1
High actual relative deprivation	0.56

*Unweighted N = 737*