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Suicide in Cricket: A Sociological Explanation

By

Shaun McNee

Dissertation submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University of Chester
for the degree of Master of Science

September 2013

Declaration

I confirm that this work has not been submitted for any other degree or examination. I have read and understood the University's regulations on plagiarism and I declare this as my own original work.

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Signed.....

Date.....

Table of contents

Pages	Chapter
4	Acknowledgements
5	Abstract
6-9	Introduction
10-20	Chapter One: Suicide as a Sociological Problem
21-32	Chapter Two: Contemporary Sociological Literature Review
33- 41	Chapter Three: Research Methods
42-64	Chapter Four: Discussion
65-68	Conclusions
69- 77	References

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Abstract

Statistic's from David Friths' (2001) book 'Silence of the Heart: Cricket Suicides' indicates cricket players are almost twice as likely as the average male to commit suicide, and furthermore have a higher rate of suicide than participants of any other sports. This thesis proposes to draw on the sociology of suicide devised by Emile Durkheim during the late 19th century. Accordingly, the objective of this study is to examine the social causes of the suggested suicide rate in cricket. Using data generated from 9 cricket players' auto/biographies, the findings suggest that cricket, specifically long tours spent away from home, place unique strains on family relations when compared with those from other sporting occupations. Furthermore, findings allude towards a high divorce rate in cricket and high divorce rates have long been associated with an increase in suicide (Durkheim, 1966). Moreover, findings suggest retirement impacts on the suicide rate in cricket, as retirement leads to a loss of social regulation among cricketers, thus, creating an increase in the sense of anomie, or 'normlessness' among players, which causes an increase in the rate of anomic suicide. However, findings also propose retirement's impact on the suicide rate is contingent on the presence of the family group; where a family group is present, retirement may negatively impact the suicide rate as retirement allows cricket players to re-integrate into the family group, thus increasing their sense of social integration which acts as a barrier, preventing an increase in the suicide rate.

Introduction

Testing Emile Durkheim's sociology of suicide, focusing on the suicide rate in cricket, this thesis will attempt to explain the hypothesis; cricket players are almost twice as likely to commit suicide as the average male and furthermore, have a suicide rate higher than players of any other sport (Frith, 2001).

This introduction will illustrate why this topic is of sociological significance. Additionally, this chapter will both present and describe the chapters which will follow this introductory chapter.

We will never know exactly why people kill themselves, but we can investigate the reasons why cricket may play a role in a man deciding to end his life (Harris, 2011). Indeed Malcolm and Scott (2012) hypothesize, the frequency of suicide among cricket players is mainly attributed to the social disintegration and reduced regulation that comes with retirement from sport. Sport therefore, also conforms to sociological explanations of suicide. In other words, the rate of suicide in cricket is of sociological significance because of the high rate of suicide and subsequent social causes of suicide, as proposed by Emile Durkheim (1966), of which consequently explain such phenomenon, using social concepts of social integration and social regulation derived from Durkheim's (1966) seminal work within the sociology of suicide.

David Frith (2011), former editor of *The Cricketer* magazine and founding editor of *Wisden Cricket Monthly* certainly highlights the significance of the problem in his first book, 'By His Own Hand', which was published in 1991. The second, an updated, expanded edition of the same material, was written and published in 2001 as 'Silence of

the Heart: Cricket Suicides' (Harris, 2011). Within this book Frith (2001) explored a total of 151 cricketing suicides from the Victorian era right through to the date of publication. Among those Harris (2011) cites, 23 were test players and six were men who had played test cricket for England. For example, David Bairstow, father of current England player Jonny Bairstow, who tragically committed suicide in 1998. The most recent and widely publicised example of a cricket player's suicide was that of Tom Maynard. Maynard was 23 and one of cricket's brightest lights when he died on a railway line near Wimbledon Park station early one morning in June 2012 (Daily Mail, 2013).

According to Frith (2001) suicide in cricket is of particular concern as 4.12 per cent of cricket players in South Africa take their lives, in New Zealand the suggested suicide rate of cricketers is 3.92 per cent and in Australia 2.75 per cent. In the UK, Frith's (2001) headline grabbing statistic that English cricketers are almost twice as likely to commit suicide as the average male is based on the suicide rate for British men being 1.07 per cent with the suicide rate for cricket players being 1.77 per cent. Furthermore, significance of the suicide rate in cricket does not appear to be an isolated issue, rather one that has simmered beneath the surface since cricket conception back in the late 19th century. Indeed David Frith (2001) noted, the suicide rate in cricket is a hidden burden upon cricket and thus devoid of any explanation, of which this thesis proposes to address. Frith (2001) illustrates the longevity of suicide in cricket; four cricket players are known to have committed suicide as far back as 1880. Hundertmark (2007) highlights incidents of suicide as far back as the Victorian era. For example, William Scotton and Andrew Shrewsbury, who for almost a decade starting in the late 1880s, were arguably the finest batsman in the world apart from WG Grace. Shrewsbury

played 23 Tests, scored three centuries and averaged 35 as did his counterpart Andrew Stoddart. Even in his final season, Shrewsbury topped the first class averages. However, he shot himself the following year (Hundertmark, 2007).

Frith (2001) concluded British ex-cricketers are 75% more likely to kill themselves than the general population. The majority of the suicides over the past 30 years took place in the 1980s and 1990s, with the fewest in the 1960s. Most deaths were among players aged between 40 and 49 who had been forced into retirement.

This study, therefore, provided the opportunity to shed new light on the social processes and relationships experienced by cricket players in order to attribute the social causes that may both influence and explain the suicide rate of cricket players.

Thesis Structure

Chapter One highlights the origins of suicide as an area of sociological investigation. In particular, the chapter highlights Emile Durkheim's work on suicide during the late 19th century, of which will be the sociological theory employed by this thesis.

Chapter Two then outlines the modern sociological literature on the suicide rates, specifically illustrating the social factors which influence the rate of suicide. For example, this chapter will outline the influences of marriage, divorce, age and gender upon the suicide rate.

Chapter Three describes the practical aspects of the research by outlining the procedures used to select auto/biographies for the thesis and the processes involved in the subsequent analysis of the auto/biographies.

Chapter Four will focus on the most prominent themes identifiable in the auto/biographies produced by cricket players in the study, on the impact of playing cricket has in potentially influencing the suicide rate.

Chapter One – Suicide as a Sociological Problem

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the work of Emile Durkheim's classical sociological work on suicide and how concepts which emerged from his study propose to explain the data generated for this thesis. Specifically, explaining the historical background to Emile Durkheim's study of suicide, and the central thesis of Durkheim's work. In addition, Durkheim's concept of 'social suicide rate' will be analysed, before explaining further concepts of social integration and regulation which help this thesis illustrate Durkheim's four types of social suicide; anomic, egoistic, altruistic and fatalistic.

Historical Background and Central Thesis

In order to begin, it is prudent to observe the historical context which Durkheim's interest in the problem of suicide arose. Morrison (2006) propounds, historical processes explain why Durkheim adopted the theme of suicide when he did. Firstly, suicide was deemed as a growing social problem by many in England by 1850 and blame was attributed to the development of an industrial society. It was widely hypothesized that industrial society had advanced individualism, accelerated social fragmentation and weakened social bonds tying individuals to society (Morrison, 2006). To put the matter differently, individuality became the centre of social life thus reducing levels of social restraint and collective social purpose. Furthermore, Ritzer (2008) noted, availability of mortality data was important, as Durkheim utilised such data to compare suicide rates both within and between different groups, institutions and nations. Availability and quality of mortality data was also important for Durkheim within

an academic context as Thompson (1982) explains; Durkheim wanted to establish sociology as a legitimate scientific discipline which required, firstly, that sociology have its' own distinctive subject matter and, secondly, that it was to be studied scientifically, in order to be considered alongside other established sciences (Pope, 2008). Thus, availability of significant mortality data allowed Durkheim to propose the study of social facts, which Ritzer (2008) defines as social structures and cultural norms and values that are external to, and coercive of, actors. Coser (1978) elucidates, social facts were to be the subject matter for sociology and they have, according to Durkheim, clear social characteristics and determinants which were not amenable to explanations from psychology. Therefore, Durkheim would refer to social facts as *sui generis* which means 'unique' and thus, illustrating social facts cannot be reduced to individual levels of explanation (Ritzer, 2008). In other words, Durkheim (1966) argues, suicide can only be explained by sociology as the cause and consequent explanation lies within society and thus, sociology. In doing so, Durkheim achieved his two objectives, firstly, highlighting suicide as the distinctive subject matter for sociology and secondly, the availability of mortality data facilitated the scientific empirical enquiry of suicide which would enable sociology to be compared with other established sciences.

Let us be clear, Durkheim was not the first academic who engaged in the study of suicide. Wray, Colen and Pescosolido (2011) refer to moral statisticians Quetelet (1842) and Morselli (1882) who preceded Durkheim in attempting to inductively analyse a large body of suicide statistics and discovered a regularity and stability of national suicide rates from year to year. Thus, Durkheim's starting point was the observation, not original to him, that suicide occurs with varying frequency and Durkheim intended to

devise a theory to explain this variation in the suicide rates (Johnston, 1965). However, Durkheim offered a different explanation of the statistics, which was described as a 'great leap' within the study of suicide (Wray et al, 2011, p506). Durkheim sought to understand how negative meanings and emotions were produced during times of dramatic social change and how such changes made some groups more vulnerable than others to suicide. Durkheim provided a multifaceted theoretical scheme that privileged social explanations, and dismissed, in strongly polemical terms, other popular lay and scientific explanations such as mental illness, imitation, climate, and temperature (Pope, 1976). In other words, Durkheim disregarded the individual as such, his motives and his ideas, and sought directly the states of the various social environments such as occupation and family, in terms of which the variation of suicide rates occur. Thus, we can state the central thesis of Durkheim's study was that people take their own lives not because of the psychological states of depression or mental illness, but rather because of the social forces acting upon them which reduce their attachments to the wider society to the point where they become isolated, separate and autonomous from others.

Social Suicide Rate

Coser (1978) asserts no complete understanding of Durkheim's supposition that suicide has social causes is possible without looking at the concept of the social suicide rate. Durkheim (1966) arrived at the concept of a social suicide rate after careful examination of the mortality data obtained from public records from societies such as France, Germany and England amongst others. The suicide rates for these countries were

collected between 1841 and 1872 and they contained a substantial amount of information relating to social rate of suicide such as marital status, religion, occupation and military service (Morrison, 2006). Therefore, in order to explain, the social suicide rate was a term used by Durkheim referring to the number of suicidal deaths in a given society and the extent suicide rates could be analysed to establish a pattern within society. Durkheim (1966) noted suicide rates for each society remained relatively stable from year to year, for example, between 1841-1842 the number of suicidal deaths in France was 2814 and 2866 respectively; Germany for the same years had 1630 and 1598 (Morrison, 2006). Accordingly, Durkheim (1966) argued, such correlation indicates decisively that each society has a collective inclination towards suicide, thus, each society has a rate of suicide which is fairly constant within each society so long as the basic social conditions of its existence remain the same, i.e. economic situations. Consequently, the stability of the suicide rate indicates a relationship with certain states of the social environment, it has been shown to be constant and direct, whereas the relations of the suicide rate in comparison to biological and physical character were uncertain and ambiguous (Durkheim, 1966). Accordingly, Morrison (2006) explains, this led Durkheim to argue that predisposing causes of suicide lay not within the psychological motives but within the social framework of society, as demonstrated by the social rate of suicide. Furthermore, such stability within the suicide rates between societies indicated to Durkheim (1966) that each society had a distinct social environment which impacted upon the social rate of suicide. Each society thus had different social characteristics, different religions, patterns of family life and military obligation and therefore, different suicide characteristics. Let us demonstrate this

further. Beforehand this thesis highlighted the similarity of suicide rates between years in both France and Germany, this can be further seen in England, where between the years 1858-1859 there were 1275 and 1248 suicides respectively (Durkheim, 1966). Perhaps the best indication of this can be found in the social rate of suicide in Denmark. Statistics indicate a lower but stable rate of suicide in comparison with France, Germany and England, for example, between the years 1858-1859 there were 457 and 451 suicides respectively (Durkheim, 1966). Thus, Durkheim (1966) illustrated the *sui generis* nature of suicide and how explanations of the suicide rate should be sought from sociology.

Morrison (2006) synthesizes three fundamental conclusions regarding the social rate of suicide. Firstly, whilst stability of the rates showed individual motives may vary case to case, the regularity of the social rate was constant. Secondly, each society produces what Durkheim (1966) termed, 'a quota of suicidal deaths' and finally, the social suicide rate must represent a factual order, in other words, is separate from the individual disposition and therefore was a regular feature which could be studied sociologically.

Social Integration

Ritzer (2008) noted, examining Durkheim's sociological theory of suicide requires an examination of the relationship between the types of suicide and his two underlying social facts – social integration and social regulation. Pope (2008) explains, too much or too little of either causes suicide. Thus, both high levels of integration (altruism) and low levels of integration (egoism) cause suicide, just as high levels of regulation (fatalism) and low levels of regulation (anomie). Henceforth, this thesis will examine concepts of

social integration and social regulation before illustrating to the reader how these social concepts affect suicide rates of society.

Durkheim did not explicitly define the term social integration within his work on suicide, despite being a central concept to understanding the connection between individual and the social suicide rate. However, Durkheim had used the term social integration in *The Division of Labour* (1933). Social integration therefore, can be defined as the extent to which individuals are linked to and feel allegiance for social groups to which they are attached (Morrison, 2006). To put the matter differently; social integration is the degree to which individuals feel involved in the groups they belong, such as the family group.

Durkheim (1966) argued social integration creates social duties; social duties operate to connect individuals to society by ensuring a high degree of social attachment to commonly held beliefs and collective purposes. Collective purposes, Morrison (2006) explains, act to focus individual interests outside the self and promote social bonds i.e. relationships between individuals, institutions and groups which Durkheim (1966) suggests reduce self-preoccupation, excessive self-reflection and withdrawal to the self. Therefore, social integration acts as a buffer, creating a sense of belonging and purpose which protects individuals from a sense of loneliness which may cause egoistic suicide. However, as aforementioned too much social integration may cause altruistic suicide, but this shall be discussed later in the chapter.

Social Regulation

In order to understand social regulation, it is important to understand and define the term anomie. Pope (2008) elucidates, Durkheim (1966) used anomie to refer to the

decline that takes place in the regulatory functions of society and social institutions during industrial development when the capacity to set the necessary level of social restraint begins to weaken. In other words, regulation refers to the degree of external constrain on people from society. For Durkheim, individuals require moral guidance and external restraint because without them their desires and expectations will exceed their grasp, with the resulting failures and frustrations leading to continuous states of despair (Wray et al, 2011). As Coser (1971) noted, Durkheim's (1966) supposition was that human appetites for wealth, prestige and power are essentially unlimited and therefore require regulation from within society to restrain such appetites. For Durkheim (1966) limitations on social needs and wants can only be regulated by society and are imposed externally, thus the individual is not aware of the control that is being imposed upon him. Social regulation serves to set limits on individual desires by placing restrains upon these social wants by balancing individual wants with the individual prospects of achievement (Morrison, 2006). Therefore, society mediates the individual's ambitions, limiting them only to what they can achieve and thus, negating any ill-effect upon the suicide rate. Durkheim (1966) observes, this became increasingly difficult as historically social regulation was performed by society through specific social institutions, such as the church, which set social and moral restraints on individual appetites. However, a decline in restraints of this type resulted as a consequence of the economy, which became a dominant social institution, thus, limitations imposed on social needs and wants become incompatible with economic life and achievement (Morrison, 2006). Accordingly, suicide rates are now affected by economic booms and depressions. Durkheim (1966) explains, this is not because of levels of prosperity or poverty, rather

the explanation lies within the abrupt shift of social stability which creates a vacuum while social norms realign with the new social condition which can be regulated. To put the matter differently, when social conditions change, the suicide rates also fluctuate; only when the social conditions and norms have reset will the suicide rate then remain relatively stable.

Egoistic Suicide

This thesis will now begin to discuss Durkheim's four types of suicide; egoistic, altruistic, anomic and fatalistic.

Egoistic suicides as aforementioned are likely to be found in those societies or groups in which the individual is not well integrated into the larger social unit (Berk, 2006). Ritzer (2008) highlights, a lack of integration leads to a feeling that an individual is not part of society, but also that society is not part of the individual therefore, leaving the individual feeling a sense of isolation. Pope (2008) elucidates, egoistic groups have lower rates of interaction, people think more about themselves rather than others and are less bound to others and, as such, there is less of a community feel. Durkheim (1966) explains, individuals gain morality, values and a sense of purpose from society which acts to support an individual through the daily small indignities and trivial disappointments, which Ritzer (2008) suggests, without we are liable to commit suicide at the smallest frustration.

For example, Durkheim (1966) suggested, a family unit can help protect against egoistic suicide as the suicide rates show that when adjusted for age, unmarried persons take their own lives more frequently than do married persons. Morrison (2006) explains that

social factors within a domestic environment that can account for social integration are found within a union of marriage, which creates a social bond based on similarity and intimacy. Also, where children are present, social integration arises from blood ties, whose links connect members of one generation with another and create a sense of loyalty (Morrison, 2006). Therefore, family life reduces egoism by ensuring greater levels of commitment and social integration around the domestic environment rather than the individual and suppresses any tendency for the individual to withdraw into him/herself.

Altruistic Suicide

Secondly, Durkheim (1966) discussed a form of suicide known as altruistic suicide. Conversely, where egoistic suicide is more likely to occur when social integration is too weak, altruistic suicide occurs when social integration is too strong, in other words, an individual is literally forced into committing suicide by society (Durkheim, 1966).

Ritzer (2008) cites followers of the Reverend Jim Jones in Jonestown, Guyana in 1978 as an example of altruistic suicide. Followers of John Jones knowingly poisoned themselves as a consequence of the overt levels of social integration into the society created by Jones. Furthermore, Durkheim (1966) highlights, those who seek to be martyrs also commit altruistic suicide, for example terrorists. Durkheim (1966, p225) explains, altruistic suicide 'springs from hope, for it depends on the belief in beautiful perspectives beyond this life'. In other words, those who commit altruistic suicide do so in the belief that they are doing so in the name of the greater good and are serving a purpose beyond this world. Furthermore, under these circumstances, people take their

own lives not because of their personal choice, but rather because they feel a social duty is imposed upon them (Ritzer, 2008) and in doing so, illustrate Durkheim's central hypothesis which favours social explanations of suicide rates. Morrison (2006) noted, so strong is the duty, that when individuals avoid such social obligations, they risk the wrath of the social group resulting in either disgrace or religious sanction. However, when such duties are carried out, society confers social honour upon them which is thought to extend to the afterlife. As such, Coser (1978, p134) argued, altruistic suicide 'is of great importance for an understanding of Durkheim's general approach'. To explain, altruistic suicide appears to be the clearest case of a 'social suicide' and as such, highlights Durkheim's argument that suicide rates are controlled by society rather than being susceptible to individual based explanations. Altruistic suicide demonstrates this perfectly, showing how social forces from within society essentially control the individual, in other words, suicide is imposed externally upon the individual as a social duty and is the result of social, rather than individual ends (Morrison, 2006).

Anomic Suicide

The third major form of suicide was anomic suicide; anomic suicide is related to low levels of Durkheim's concept of social regulation. Firstly, it is important to understand what Durkheim meant by anomie. Durkheim (1966) defined anomie as the state that results from the weakening of the powers of society, which regulate social equilibrium by setting the acceptable level of social restraint. Therefore, Anomic suicide is more likely to occur when the regulative powers of society are disrupted (Ritzer, 2008). To put the matter differently, anomic suicide occurs when social regulation upon the individual

is low. For example, Durkheim (1966) noted, rates of anomic suicide are likely to rise upon disruption from major social institutions. In this regard, such disruption may occur from either an economic depression or economic boom for example. Ritzer (2008) explains, such disruption renders society incapable of exercising authority over individuals, creating a void, whereby old social regulations do not apply to the individual. As a consequence, these periods of disruption unleash currents of anomie – moods of rootlessness and normlessness – which lead to an increase in anomic suicide (Ritzer, 2008). For example, during an economic depression an individual may lose their job, thus, lose the regulative effect that that job provides. Conversely, in an economic boom, an individual's dreams are no longer restrained, as society is unable to regulate them in a new social condition. Thus, people become slaves to their passions and as a result, commit the destructive act of suicide.

Fatalistic Suicide

Fatalistic suicide, the last category of suicide which was discussed by Durkheim occurs when there is excessive social regulation (Morrison, 2006). Acevedo (2005) notes, Durkheim had little to say about fatalistic suicide, indeed, Durkheim only referred to fatalistic suicide within the footnotes of his book. Durkheim (1966) however does explain that fatalistic suicide occurs because of an excessive degree of regulation and an overly developed degree of control over an individual. For example, Durkheim (1966) highlights the example of a slave; the slave will commit suicide as a consequence of seeing no alternative life except enslavement under a master, and as such, take their own life.

Chapter Two: Contemporary Sociological Literature Review

The objective of this chapter is to conduct a thorough review of modern sociological literature available on suicide. Specifically, focusing on aspects of the social environment in accordance with Emile Durkheim's' sociological theory of suicide, rather than on climatic elements, internal psychological states or biology (e.g. mental illness and genetic differences between populations). In doing so, this literature review will particularly focus on areas of social integration, or social bonds, analysing sociological factors such as social integration, which will be further analysed in relation to age and gender before discussing the impact of occupation on the social rate of suicide.

Wray, Colen and Pescosolido (2011) noted suicide as an object of sociological inquiry which has variously served as a foundational subject for the establishment of sociology, as a proving ground for methodological debates, and as an index of social integration. Although sociological investigations of suicide flourished through the 1970s, closing decades of the twentieth century saw sociological interest in suicide wane. As Shiner, Scourfield, Fincham and Langer (2012) explain, sociology is only a bit-part player in terms of suicide research. Agerbo, Stack, and Petersen (2009) explain, out of over 30,000 academic papers on suicide published since 1980 there were only 400 which could be categorised as sociological. Similarly, Wray et al (2011) in reviewing American sociological literature on suicide found only 41 articles, further suggesting that while the absolute number of articles fluctuates over time, percentages remained exceedingly small and failed to rise over 3%. Despite sociology's marginal position within suicide research, the best-known sociological approach to suicide, that of Durkheim ([1897]

1966), has been very influential both within and beyond sociological based research, and is still frequently used in contemporary studies.

Scourfield et al., (2012) highlight a bias in academic literature, suggesting in accordance with Stack's (2000) review papers, most contemporary sociological research on suicide is exclusively quantitative. Wray et al., (2011) emphasize alternative methodologies such as qualitative, or mixed methods are practically non-existent in sociological suicide research. While Durkheim's legacy may also be a factor, the nature of easily accessible data and funding priorities may also account for this pattern (Wray et al., 2011). Durkheim's sociology was often in search of 'social facts' and in order to do this utilised a positivist approach to sociology, for example, Durkheim used national statistics on suicide to generate data on the study of suicide. The extent to which qualitative methods are under-represented is arguably surprising, especially given the long history of valuable qualitatively based contributions (Wray et al., 2011). However, within suicide research a lack of qualitative data has an obvious explanation, as those who have committed suicide are no longer available to interview. Notwithstanding, Shiner et al., (2009) advocate usage of qualitative methods, in order to understand social meanings involved to suicidal social actors and reiterate, qualitative research remains under-developed in relation to suicide. Within sociology there needs to be a wider recognition that qualitative and quantitative approaches to suicide research are complimentary, with each informing the other (Scourfield et al., 2012). In other words, there is room within modern sociological literature on suicide for a study using qualitative methods as proposed in this thesis.

Domestic Integration

The theory of domestic integration, for instance marriage, as having protective effects for survival from suicide has lived for more than 100 years since Durkheim's sociological study of suicide (Rendall, Weden, Favreault & Waldron, 2011). Steven Stack (2000) performed a systematic review of literature over a 15-year period from 1980-1995, in total reviewing 84 sociological studies. Accordingly, this literature review will firstly summarise findings of Stack's (2000) literature review up until 1995 before reviewing more up to date literature. Stack (2000) wrote, Durkheim's sociology proposes that marriage constitutes a subordination of an individual's egoistical tendency to a spouse, thus giving and taking emotional support. In other words, marriage provides protection to an individual, by providing them with a greater sense of responsibility to others. Furthermore, marriage regulates various appetites' e.g. sex thus, reducing suicide rates (Durkheim, 1966).

Stack (2000) reviewed 132 studies and 789 findings between 1980 and 1995 with 77.9% (615) of findings demonstrating a clear link between suicide rates and divorce rates. In doing so, highlighting the protective effects of marriage, or conversely, potential traumatic affects of divorce upon suicide rates. A further 37 studies were found by Stack (2000) illustrating divorces' impact on suicide rates, in comparison to those who are married, citing the work of Breault (1986) who explains divorce rates are the most important correlate of suicide rates. Kpowsa, Breault and Singh (1995) elucidate further, indicating divorce increased the risk of suicide by 2.36 times.

The second aspect of domestic integration to be considered will be the impact of children. Parenting is often assumed to decrease suicide rates, through such means as increasing subordination to the family unit, thus, reducing self-destructive egoistic tendencies (Durkheim. 1966). Notwithstanding Durkheim's study of the family unit, Stack (2000) argues, in modern sociology the family unit is an under-researched area.

From this point, this thesis will review more contemporary academic research on aspects of domestic integration. Rendall et al., (2011) note inconsistencies in data surrounding the protective effect of marriage, citing Manzoli, Villari, Pirone, and Boccia's (2007) systematic review of marital status in the elderly. Manzoli et al., (2007) noted that out of 53 studies they reviewed, only half reported a statistically significant impact, proving marriage as a protective factor from suicide. Rendall et al., (2011) suggest such differences are caused by data limitations and insufficient statistical testing. In this regard, Rendall et al.,(2011) own analysis propounds unmarried people have significantly higher suicide rates, in comparison with the suicide rates of those who are married. Rendall et al., (2011) findings correlate with other contemporary academic work such as Cutright and Fernquist, (2007); Cutright, Stack and Ferquist, (2007); and Griffiths, Ladva, Brock and Barker (2008) in highlighting the positive relationships marriage can have in reducing suicide rates. A narrative review providing an update to Stack's (2000) literature review by Milner, Hjelemend, Arensman and De Leo (2013), cited further academic work supporting positive effects of marriage as a protective social factor against suicide such as, Masocco, Pompili, Vichi, Vannacore, Lester, and Tatarelli, (2008) and O'Reilly, Rosato and Cardwell, (2008). Denney (2010) suggests

people living within a family unit have stronger sources of social support and integration, thus a decreased risk of suicide.

However, Shiner et al., (2012) suggest, protective effects of marriage are a contingent factor; in other words, when a relationship is going well, risk of suicide is decreased, however when a relationship breaks down the risk of suicide will increase. In other words, the impact of divorce increases rates of egoism upon individuals, leaving individuals' increasingly isolated. Under these circumstances suicide rates may increase in accordance with Durkheim's (1966) original theory.

Numerous studies within sociological literature have indicated that divorce can result in an increased chance of suicide, via the decrease in social integration and subsequent increase in levels of egoism (Andres & Halicioglu, 2010; Corcoran & Nagar, 2010; Kpowsa, 2000). Furthermore, sociological studies of suicide have explored the implication not only of divorce, but separation from a spouse and family suggesting separation can also result in higher rates of suicide (Barstad, 2008; Ide, Wyder, Ward & De Leo, 2011). To explain, separation refers to being isolated from family for a prolonged period of time. Milner et al., (2013) suggest loss of a spouse through divorce appears to be associated with an increase in suicide rates, in contrast to other factors such as religion (Bussu, Detotto & Sterzi, 2013). In other words, a loss of spouse and the impact this has on the suicide rate is stable over time, while for example, religions influence varies over time and also between different social contexts, such as an economic depression. To put the matter differently, the significance of divorce upon suicide rates is stable, however, the social significance of religion can vary over time

and furthermore, is no longer the dominant social institution as Durkheim (1966) noted. The economy is now the dominant social institution for modern society.

Milner et al., (2013) indicate, marriage and divorce can often differ both by gender (Stack, 2000; Rendall et al., (2011) and throughout the life course (Shiner et al., 2009; Cutright, Stack & Fernquist, 2006). Thus, what will follow this chapter will be a section reviewing the sociological explanations available from the literature on firstly, gender followed subsequently by age.

Domestic Integration – Gender

In terms of gender, it appears from reviewing contemporary sociological literature that males are frequently cited as having higher rates of suicide compared to females, when the impact of divorce is taken into consideration and controlled for statistically (Milner et al., 2013; Shiner et al., 2009; Cantor, 2000 & Gunnell, Middleton, Whiteley, Frankel & Dorling, 2003). Wray et al., (2011) elucidate, further highlighting that men are 3-4 times more likely to commit suicide in comparison to females.

Modern sociological explanation primarily focuses around Durkheim's theory of social integration and regulation. Firstly, with regard to a sociological explanation of an apparent male 'weakness' to suicide from divorce, Stack (1992) notes, explanations revolve around male social integration levels being significantly lowered by divorce/separation, in comparison to female levels of social integration. In other words, marriage appears to provide a greater sense of social integration and regulation for males than it does for females. Specific explanations of this phenomenon have been offered by Wray et al., (2011) and Pescosolido and Wright (1990). However, Stack

(1992) explains, male social integration levels are decreased more than women's by divorce. Rendall et al., (2011) suggests, a sociological explanation highlights a greater tendency towards more health-threatening behaviour by unmarried men than unmarried women (Waldron, 1990). Furthermore, Waldron (1990) argues there is a greater monitoring of men's health promoting behaviour by wives, rather than vice-versa. Umberson (1987) similarly suggests women provide greater social support and social integration provided by wives to husbands than vice-versa thus, explaining why males suffer from higher rates of suicide than women. Furthermore, women's suggested immunity to suicide can be explained by closer social ties with friends and family (Maum, 2006). In other words females are less dependent on their spouse for sufficient levels of integration, as a consequence of their greater social network which acts as a buffer, thus negating any loss of social integration from the former spouse.

Sociological literature propounds males higher rates of suicide may be further exacerbated by the presence of children. In this regard, when children are involved, it is impossible to disentangle the breakdown of a relationship with that of the role of the parent (Shiner et al., 2009). Traditionally, as a consequence of prevailing social and legal norms, women often get custody of the children in the event of a relationship breakdown; thus, familial integration is higher for women than it is for men (Randall et al., 2011; Stack, 1992). Therefore, divorce routinely distances males from their children, as a consequence divorce comes with an added cost for men, as it is often exacerbated by loosening of social ties males hold with their children. In other words, male sense of social integration can be reduced almost entirely as a consequence of a relationship breakdown which may lead to a diminished sense of meaning and purpose.

Consequently, this explains how modern legal and social norms potentially explain males increased rates of suicide, as males are frequently distanced from their children when compared to females. Thus, reducing levels of social integration which Durkheim (1966) has long hypothesized leads to an increase in suicide rates.

Domestic Integration - Age

Milner et al., (2013) narrative literature review correlates with most contemporary literature in suggesting males are more vulnerable to suicide as a result of divorce. However, it also appears this vulnerability may increase further with age. Gunnell et al., (2003) note suicide rates have dropped for all ages and genders, except for males under 45, for whom it has doubled. Furlong and Cantel (2007) suggest, when suicide does occur in the young (16-24) the explanation resides in increasingly complex and protracted transitions that now take place into adulthood. However, whilst rates of suicide for males under 45 may have doubled, this may be too broad a statement. In other words, the answer may lie within a more specific age bracket. Meltzer, Lader, Corbin, Singleton, Jenkins and Brugha (2002) highlight 5% of 16-24 year olds attempt or commit suicide, in spite of their turbulent transitions into adulthood. Instead Violato & Arato (2004) and Shiner et al., (2009) explain suicide may not be deemed an 'ordinary' feature of adolescence; when suicide does occur, it may be linked with family problems involving loss of, disturbed or insecure attachments during childhood. Furthermore, young people are generally less embedded within social groups than at any other time. To explain, young people are less socially integrated/regulated, it is suggested by Maimon & Kuhl, (2008) who elucidate that this is a relatively normal experience, whereby a certain distancing from family is considered part and parcel of growing up.

Moving into mid-life Stack (2000) explains, middle age is often perceived to be a time of stability, acceptance and comfort in family life, or simply a time of high social integration. Girard (1993) elucidates, during this time a person typically settles down into a job, marries, consolidates friendships and other social commitments, and participates in neighbourhood and surrounding community activities. Furthermore, children mature into significant others, with whom intimate and meaningful interaction is possible (Girard, 1993). Shiner et al., (2009) stipulate that in the event of divorce, loss of a spouse can carry a rather different set of connotations and convey a sharper sense of loss and personal failure than in any other time of life. In other words, those in their mid-to-late 30s have begun to accumulate a considerable investment in work and family life and as a consequence it is likely to be a central theme to their sense of self within the social world. Their levels of social integration/regulation are significantly impacted by divorce and therefore, suicide rates.

Within the elderly population, sociological explanation centres on the loss of friends/spouse who have died (Cantell, 2000) and loss of work commitments which can result in reduced sense of meaning (Carney, Rich, Burke & Fowler, 1994). Furthermore, institutionalization, which often results in a perceived loss of freedom (Shiner et al., 2009; Girard, 1993). Therefore, these myriad of social factors may combine to create a sense of isolation, or loneliness, thus, leaving them with low levels of social integration/regulation, which increase the rates of suicide.

Occupation

Finally, occupational status and any perceived relationship with the social rates of suicide offered by sociological literature will be explored in this section. Roberts, Jaremin and Lloyd (2013) identify consistent relationships between occupation and suicide, in other words, certain occupations make people more vulnerable to mortality via suicide and have higher rates of suicide. To illustrate, persons in the following have some of the higher rates of suicide; Farmers (Anderson, Hawgood, Klieve, Kolves & De Leo, 2010; Stark, Gibbs, Hopkins, Belbin, Hay, & Selvaraj, 2006), doctors (Hawton, Agerbo, Simkin, Platt & Mellenby, 2011), nurses (Anderson et al., 2010) dentists (Meltzer, Griffiths, Brock, Rooney & Jenkins, 2008), veterinarians (Platt, Hawton, Simkin & Mellenby, 2010) and police officers (Cantor, Tyman & Slater, 1995).

In conducting a review of sociological literature, it is apparent the relationship between occupation and suicide rates are marked by inconsistent findings, and Stack, (2001; 2004a) notes, the link is not well understood. Furthermore, Stack (2004b) highlights, occupations impact on suicide rates has received relatively little attention from sociologists. Stack (2004a) elucidates, previous research had led to the belief that doctors faced increased rates of suicide mortality. However, previous research had not considered other factors such as marital status and socio-demographic factors and the potential effect this may have on the results of previous studies (Stack, 2004b). In this regard, despite removing the potential suppressing effects of marital status and socio-demographic factors, Stack (2004a) explains, the relationship between suicide mortality and doctors still existed.

However, broadly speaking Denney, Rogers, Krueger & Wadsworth (2009) explain, employment may increase levels of social integration providing meaning and organisation to routines of daily life, affording opportunities to make friends and encouraging a sense of responsibility. In other words, work is one way in which people are integrated into wider society.

Moreover, occupation may be a contingent protective factor, similar to that afforded by marriage. Studies by the aforementioned Andres and Halicoglu (2010); Fernquist (2007) have all found rates of high unemployment are accompanied by an increase in suicide rates. Milner et al., (2013) note, relationships' between suicide and unemployment may be influenced, by a myriad of factors both individual and contextual.

Therefore, after conducting a thorough review of the literature, this thesis suggests, there is scope for a qualitative study exploring the suggested high rate of suicide in cricket from a sociological perspective. Malcolm and Scott (2012) explain, studies show suicide is more prevalent in certain occupations and it is believed that the suicide rate among English test cricketers is almost double that of the UK's male population (Frith, 2001). Malcolm and Scott (2012) hypothesize, the increased suicide rate among cricketers is mainly attributed to the social disintegration and reduced regulation that comes with for example, prolonged tours. Sport, therefore, also conforms to sociological explanations of suicide of which this thesis seeks to achieve.

This chapter will be followed by the Research Methods chapter, which explains how the research method of documentary analysis of auto/biographies could help make sociological sense of the why cricket players are almost as twice as likely as the

average male to commit suicide, and furthermore, have a higher rate of suicide than any other sport.

Chapter Three – Research Methods

The objective of this chapter will be to examine the research method employed to ascertain data for this thesis, in this case, documentary analysis of auto/biographies. In doing so, this chapter will attempt to justify why auto/biographies were deemed the most pertinent in resolving explaining why the suicide rate in cricket is twice that of the average male, and higher than in any other sport. Additionally, this chapter will comprise of information on the selected auto/biographies, before finally describing the research procedures and how the data analysis was conducted.

Justifying Methods

The selected research method for this thesis was documentary analysis; specifically, auto/biographies of elite level cricketers. Mogalakwe (2006) argues, although social surveys, in-depth interviews and participant observations have been tried and tested research methods, they are not the only research methods available, nor are they always most beneficial. Mogalakwe (2006) contends, documentary analysis is often marginalised or, when it is used, used to supplement other research methods. Specifically, Stewart, Smith and Sparkes (2011) suggest, despite auto/biographies providing a potentially rich source of data within the field of sports studies, published auto/biographies have to date been a neglected resource.

Documentary analysis refers to the analysis of documents that contain information about the phenomenon we wish to study (Bailey, 1994). In this case, autobiographies, which literally mean the description of one's own life (McNeil & Chapman, 2009). Stewart et al., (2011) propound that various forms of analysis can be applied to

auto/biographies, thus generating insights which enhance our understanding of the social phenomena, as experienced by in this instance, cricket players. McNeil and Chapman (2009) explain, auto/biographies are descriptions of social events or everyday life, written by an individual who was involved in those happenings and can provide a very clear subjective and intimate picture of social behaviour and attitudes. In other words, auto/biographies allow the exploration of the social world of cricket players, such as their social relationships with the family and wider society, in order to infer any potential social causes on the suggested suicide rate in cricket.

Auto/biographies facilitated the examination of the social relationships of elite level cricketers at a time when the researcher may not have been born, or simply was not present (May, 2003). Therefore, documentary analysis enabled the investigation into the social world of cricketers, for example the frequency of social interaction, at a time when the researcher was not present to witness such occurrences. McNeil and Chapman (2009) explicate the crucial role auto/biographies can play in exploring the intimate and private especially that associated with one's private life, which may not be accessible using questionnaires or interviews. For example, this thesis could examine the family environment, in order to examine if playing cricket impacts on these relationships, of which Durkheim (1966) has long suggested influence the suicide rates.

Bjorklund (1998, cited in Stewart et al., 2011) advocates using auto/biographies, suggesting auto/biographies are plenteous sources of information, which enable researchers to analyse and examine transitions in self-understanding over a period of time. Thus, auto/biographies allowed the researcher to probe for social causes affecting the suicide rate. Therefore, as Bloyce (2004) explains, to make sense of the present, we

must also inquire into the past, as past influences are believed to influence the present. In doing so, the researcher looked for differences between a player's social life prior to, on becoming and post cricket career which may have influenced the suggested suicide rate in cricket.

Stewart et al. (2011) postulate, writers of auto/biographies use their books as a means to affix themselves, the individual, to the society of which they are a part of. Therefore, the use of autobiographies allows elite cricketers to connect with others in wider society, providing an insight into their lives as cricket players. Roderick (2003) noted, in his study of professional football that researching elite sports is difficult, describing elite sport as a closed social world. Thus, auto/biographies afforded the researcher the chance to explore the personal reflections and interpretations of, in this instance, elite cricket players (Denscombe, 2010). Additionally, further advantages that can be derived from the documentary analysis of auto/biographies, as Creswell (2013) proclaims, are convenient access to data as documents, in this case auto/biographies, as they are widely obtainable to members of the general public (Momeni, Jirwe, & Emani, 2008). To put the matter differently, it may have proven difficult for this thesis to ascertain participants' willing to be interviewed, due to the closed social world of elite sport (Roderick, 2003). Therefore, auto/biographies provided an effective and accessible way to explore the social lives of cricket players in order to infer potential social causes of the suicide rate in cricket.

However, whilst auto/biographies can offer useful insights for the sociologist, they must be approached with caution (McNeil & Chapman, 2009). Grix (2001) explains, that documents, such as auto/biographies are produced by individuals in the course of their

everyday practices and are geared exclusively for their own immediate needs. They have been written with a purpose and are based on particular assumptions and presented in a certain way or style and to this extent, the researcher must be fully aware of the origins, purpose and original audience for whom it is intended (Grix, 2001). Gomm (2004) elucidates, auto/biographies are stories that people tell about their experiences and are aimed at convincing their audience that they are 'likeable' and 'trustworthy'. Thus, in the analysis of auto/biographies, Bryman (2012) proposed, a strategy of healthy scepticism regarding the sincerity to which the writer, in this case elite cricketers, reported any issues regarding for example, family relationships, must be adopted. It was therefore essential when analysing documents that the social context in which the auto/biographies were produced were clearly understood by the researcher (Gomm, 2004). McNeil and Chapman (2009) conclude, despite all the potential pitfalls, the use of documentary evidence can prove illuminating and provide detailed sociological insights into the cultural practices and social meanings found in both the past and the present.

Documentary Analysis

This thesis involved the use of nine elite cricket players auto/biographies, whose personal details of the cricketers can be found in table one. Auto/biographies of elite cricket players are situated within a similar cultural context, thus, Stewart et al., (2011) explain, cricketers will attribute similar values to the data they provide and enable exploration of potential social causes of the suicide rate in cricket.

In order to answer the set research questions, the nine auto/biographies were chosen using a non-probability form of sampling known as purposive sampling (Bryman, 2012). Purposive sampling allowed the researcher to focus on a relatively small number of individuals based on their relevance to the topic in question (Denscombe, 2010). Thus, to gain a purposive sample, the researcher had to review the available cricketing auto/biographies in which they discussed their experiences of playing cricket. This was done via an internet search of both Google and Amazon, and a list of characteristics of the selected auto/biographies which were purposively selected was made regarding year of publication and author/co-authors, of which were found in table one.

Accordingly, purposively selecting auto/biographies allowed the researcher to select auto/biographies that would be most appropriate to answer the research question(s) of the thesis. A similar approach had been used by Stewart et al., (2011) in which, purposively selected auto/biographies facilitated the study of metaphors in relation to illness. By utilising a similar approach to Stewart et al., (2011) the researcher was able to select auto/biographies which elucidated on the social world of cricket players and allow this thesis to subsequently apply a sociological explanation of the suicide rate in cricket. The majority (N=7) of auto/biographies are written by cricketers who have represented England, with one representing South Africa at international level. Furthermore, David Frith (2001) biography 'Silence of the Heart: Cricket Suicide' was also analysed. Frith (2001) noted over 151 cricket players who had committed suicide and, importantly, described the social context upon which they committed suicide.

Table 1. Key characteristics of the auto/biographies

Author (s)	Year Published/Title	Nation
Andrew Flintoff	(2009) Andrew Flintoff: Ashes to Ashes	England
Paul Smith	(2007) Wasted! The Incredible True Story of Cricket's First Rock and Roll Star	England
Paul Nixon and John Colman	(2012) Keeping Quiet	England
Graham Thorpe	(2005) Graham Thorpe: Rising from the Ashes	England
Marcus Trescothick and Peter Hayter	(2008) Coming Back to Me	England
Matthew Hoggard	(2010) Hoggy: Welcome to My World	England
Herschelle Gibbs and Steve Smith	(2011) To the Point: The No- Holds-Barred Autobiography	South Africa
Phil Tufnell	(2003) Get Me Out of Here! What Now?	England
David Frith	(2001) Silence of the Heart: Cricket Suicides	Various

Procedure

Firstly, it was prudent to acquire auto/biographies for analysis, to do as an internet search was performed for current and former cricket players' auto/biographies, in which they discuss their experiences as cricket players. Upon procuring auto/biographies, primarily from internet supplier Amazon, the researcher then proceeded to read and analyse the auto/biographies. Whilst doing so, if the researcher came across any incidence of, for example, a social relationship being affected the researcher would make a note of the page number. Once the auto/biographies had been thoroughly analysed, the researcher would return to each noted page number and highlight quotes in which the cricketer may infer a social cause of suicide. These quotes were then word processed and saved under the players name and title of his autobiography, in order to avoid any mishandling of data. Upon doing so, quotes were analysed using a process known as thematic analysis, which will be explained in more detail in the next section of this research methods chapter. Finally, once all nine auto/biographies were fully read and the quotes selected, typed up and saved to the appropriate word document, the researcher then looked for recurring themes from the selected quotes, focusing upon the potential social causes of crickets' suicide rate

Data Analysis

Data generated from documentary analysis of cricketers' auto/biographies were subjected to thematic analysis. Bryman (2012) explains, thematic analyses was a way for the researcher to both order and synthesize the data ascertained. Thus, the idea was to construct an index of central themes and sub-themes, which are then

represented in a matrix that resembled a SPSS spread sheet (Bryman, 2012). Themes and sub-themes were acquired by thorough reading and re-reading of the data generated from the nine aforementioned auto/biographies (Bryman, 2012). Once the matrix was assembled data was inserted from the auto/biographies into the matrix constructed by the researcher. When inserting data into the matrix, it was important to indicate the origin of the fragment by referencing the cricketer and highlighting the page number (Ritchie, Spencer & O'Connor, 2003). Furthermore, where possible direct quotes from the auto/biographies were used and placed into the matrix as much as possible (Ritchie et al., 2003). Ryan and Bernard (2003) suggest that doing so enabled the researcher to take note of any metaphors or analogies used by the cricket players. Accordingly, by using the language presented in auto/biographies it ensures that the data remains as raw as possible, in other words, it has not at risk of being misinterpreted by the researcher.

Repetition was a key factor. The researcher looked for repetition of certain topics which appear in a number of auto/biographies (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). However, Bryman (2012) forewarned, repetition per se is an insufficient criterion for data to be considered a theme. Bryman (2012) suggested, to become a theme, the text under analysis had to be relevant to the questions this thesis sought to answer, for example social factors known to increase suicide rates such as divorce, for example, it was important for this thesis not to look solely at any individual cause of potential suicide. Rather, it was important to look at repetitions involving any potential social causes of suicide in accordance with Durkheim's theory, for example, a cricketer's family life or lack of, which may result in a loss of integration or regulation.

The purpose of thematic analysis was to identify quotes of which then could be presented in this thesis as part of the discussion chapter. As such, the following themes were derived upon completion of the documentary analysis of the chosen auto/biographies. The themes selected for discussion were:

- I) Touring
- II) Divorce
- III) Access to Children
- IV) Retirement

The above themes now provide a structure for the next chapter of this thesis; the discussion chapter. The above themes will now be discussed and explained sociologically, using Durkheim's theory on suicide. The discussion chapter will now follow.

Chapter Four – Discussion

The objective of this chapter is to examine the social world of cricket players in order to help explain why cricket players are twice as likely to commit suicide as the average male, and have a suicide rate higher than any other sport. Based on data generated through analysis of cricket players' auto/biographies, this chapter examines some of the key aspects of players' social lives, in order to infer a sociological explanation of suicide rates in cricket. In this regard, findings indicated the following themes as important for explaining the rate of suicide amongst cricket players- (i) Touring; (ii) Divorce; (iii) Access to Children; (iv) Retirement.

Touring

Upon analysing auto/biographies, touring was frequently mentioned as an important factor causing the rate of suicide in cricket. Specifically the frequency and longevity of tours appeared to be an issue, as described in the following quotes from cricket players;

I was now set upon a life of regularly spending winter on tour. In fact, I would be chosen to tour with either the full England side or England A every winter from then until I retired 15 years later. (Thorpe, 2005 p.78.)

When you sign up for a life as a cricketers wife, part of the deal is that the man of the house will not actually be in your house for long periods because he will have to go away on tour. (Hoggard, 2010, p.242)

One or two of the players had been on the road with England without a break for four to five years and now faced the prospect of another winter tour without any family contact whatsoever. (Tuffnell, 1999, p.245).

Collectively, such views emphasise the length of time players can be separated from their wives and family when touring. The length of which players typically spend away from home is further illustrated by Matthew Hoggard who elucidates,

‘When...we worked out how much time I had spent in that house since the two and a half years since we had moved in. This was at the stage when I was still playing quite a bit of one day cricket for England so I would stay on tour longer and be away longer in the summer. In those two and a half years... only spent three months at home. (Hoggard, 2010, p.242)

Matthew Hoggards’ excerpt provides a quantitative example of potentially how little time players spend at home with their wives. Rather, Hoggard highlights the considerable time players spend separated from their social support networks. On such a point, South African international cricket player Herschelle Gibbs contends,

As a professional sportsman who played international cricket, I wasn’t at home long enough to actually work on the relationship. If one partner in marriage is home only for a few months of the year, it follows that the relationship is going to struggle. You simply don’t spend enough time with your partner to actually build a strong relationship. (Gibbs & Smith, 2011, p.94.)

Consequently, separation from home and family for such extensive periods of time prohibits cricket players from establishing any meaningful relationships, and also

impedes any meaningful relationships players have previously established with wives or family members.

Furthermore, during an international career, whether abroad or domestically, cricketers are still isolated from their families. As Marcus Trescothick notes,

The effects of life on the road as an international cricketer; and particularly life on the road as an England cricketer for whom the unique demands of playing every northern hemisphere summer at home as well as every southern hemisphere summer on tour meant we now spent almost twelve months a year living out of suitcases and hotel rooms. (Trescothick & Hayter, 2008, p.104).

Additionally, Marcus Trescothick recounts, living in hotels made him feel ostracized from wider society and placed tension upon the social bonds between himself and his wife.

‘Four wall fever that can strike when you are stuck inside a hotel room... for days on end prior to moving onto the next one, was simply not a natural way to live. It creates extra-ordinary strains for the players not to mention their wives and families. (Trescothick & Hayter, 2008, p105).

Marcus Trescothick depicts how cricket players possibly struggle to maintain meaningful relationships with their wives as a consequence of extensive touring schedules. In this regard, evidence suggests cricket players can be away from the family environment living in hotels more often than they are in the family environment, thus, highlighting a causal factor weakening social bonds within the domestic environment. Furthermore,

constantly living in hotels increases cricket players' sense of isolation from not just their family, but also wider society. Upon such matter, Marcus Trescothick characterized staying in hotels to that of a 'five star prisoner' (Trescothick & Hayter, 2008, p. 195). Such an analogy reflects the potential for cricket players to become detached from both wider society and family. David Ffrith's (2011) study of suicide rates in cricket surmises, a repetitive routine of travelling, practicing, eating, playing, sharing hotel accommodation with the same bunch of players, leaves cricket players feeling as if they were a group of monks who eschewed the world and its people. In other words, cricket players have restricted social interaction to that of just their team-mates. Importantly, by means of explanation for the suicide rate in cricket, little to no contact takes place with those in the outside world, including their loved ones, of which induces a lessened sense of social integration with family.

At this juncture, it is prudent to explain how such extensive and prolonged tours may explain the suicide rate in cricket. Specifically, how touring causes a reduction in Durkheim's (1966) concept of social integration and consequently that the suicide rate in cricket may be attributable to a form of suicide termed, egoistic suicide (Durkheim, 1966).

To explain, social integration is the extent to which individuals are linked and feel a sense of belongingness or allegiance for a social group (Morrison, 2006). Pope (2008) explains, too little or too much social integration affects the suicide rate, in this case evidence advocates there is too little social integration of cricket players as they appear to be marginalised away from wider society and their families as a result of extensive tour schedules in cricket. Resultantly, cricket players may be susceptible to a form of

suicide which Durkheim (1966) termed, egoistic suicide. Egoistic suicides are found in those societies or groups in which the individual is not well integrated into the larger social unit (Berk, 2006). Specifically to this case, egoistic suicides can be seen where there is little integration of the individual into the family life (Durkheim, 1966). As stipulated, it appears cricket players are not well integrated into larger social units, nor are they well integrated into family. This is demonstrated in aforementioned quotes from Graham Thorpe, Matthew Hoggard and Phil Tuffnell, in which, they stipulated how long tours away from home leave them isolated from the family group. To explain, domestic environments can help shield against egoistic suicide (Durkheim, 1966; Shiner et al., 2012). Family is divided up into two distinct groups. Firstly, the conjugal group which consist of partners, such as husbands/wives, whose social bonds are based on intimacy and similarity (Morrison, 2006). When cricketers are separated for extensive periods touring away from a partner, this agitates social bonds, as in the case of Herschelle Gibbs, evidence propounds, cricket players are never with their partners long enough to establish or maintain these social bonds, thus suggesting their levels of social integration are reduced, which Durkheim (1966) highlighted increase the rates of suicide. Such matter was best exemplified by Matthew Hoggard who described how little time he had spent at home with his wife in the last two and a half years. Furthermore, Durkheim (1966) termed the second distinct group of the family the 'family group', which contains both spouses and any children conceived. To explain, social integration occurs from blood ties whose links importantly connect members of one generation to another, thus, raising levels of social integration as it creates allegiances and loyalty to the family group (Morrison, 2006). Correspondingly, analysis of cricket

players' auto/biographies insinuates cricketers relationships are obstructed as a consequence of strained family relations whilst away on tour (Barstad, 2008). In other words, for cricket players, family may have an adverse effect on the suicide rate, as players yearn for contact with the family when touring (Shiner et al., 2012). For example, evidence indicates 'to be a good tourist, you had to force thoughts of home out of your mind, I was always reluctant to do that, fearing it might have some permanent affect' (Graham Thorpe, 2005. p.6). Such yearning from a lack of integration leaves the cricket players potentially feeling that they are not a part of the family, thus reducing their levels of social integration (Ritzer, 2008; Ide et al., 2011). In doing so alluding to why the suicide rate in cricket is so high and thus, explaining why the cricket players are almost twice as likely to commit suicide as the average male, and higher than in any other sport.

Moreover, touring and living in hotels could potentially exacerbate low levels of social integration, as evidence alludes towards a consensus that cricketers are separated from wider society, as in the case of Phil Tuffnell and Marcus Trescothick. In doing so, exacerbating susceptibility to egoistic suicide, as cricket players were not well integrated within an array of social groups, for instance wider society (Durkheim, 1966). In this regard, Andrew Flintoff (2009) reflected, 'the trip seemed to drag. Not many of us left the confines of the hotel'. Durkheim (1966) explained, interaction within society is important, as individuals gain a sense of purpose from society and society acts to support individuals through any disappointments they may have suffered. To put the matter differently, through social integration into society, society will act to support cricket players through any troubles they are going through, protecting them from

suicide. However, the cause of the high suicide rate in cricket may be explained by the low levels of social integration into these groups. Touring, it may be suggested on the basis of evidence, isolates and reduces social integration of which Durkheim (1966) contends causes an increase in the rate of suicide. Further evidence of isolation and withdrawal into the self, or as Durkheim (1966) termed, egoism, is evident from Phil Tuffnell.

'I tried to explain just how low I was feeling...I don't feel very happy with life. I don't feel very happy with myself... I can't see anything working out for the best. I still have another three and a half months left on this tour and I can't see the end of it. I can't see how to resolve any of this. All I want to do is curl up and die.'
(Tufnell & Hayter, 1999, p.217.)

Thus, attesting cricket players may possibly suffer from lower levels of social integration, and how these reduced levels of social integration affect cricketers, who start to withdraw into themselves more than other social groups who are better integrated. Note, how often in the quote Phil Tufnell refers to 'I', thus, suggesting, suicide rates in cricket could be attributable to egoism and egoistic suicide as a result of decreased social integration through touring.

Divorce

Upon conducting documentary analysis cricket players' auto/biographies, a prominent theme of divorce emerged. In this regard, divorce was mentioned frequently throughout the analysis of auto/biographies. A high divorce rate has long been mooted as a key factor influencing the suicide rate (Durkheim, 1966). Thus, a high divorce rate among

cricket players may help explain why cricket players are almost twice more likely to commit suicide than the average male, and higher than in any other sport. In this respect, an apparent source of the high divorce rate in cricket appears associated with tensions placed on social relations when separated on prolonged tours.

Indeed, it appears cricket players' ability to develop or maintain relationships are severely hindered by long tours away from the family environment. Therefore, this thesis will now provide evidence of a potential high divorce rate, and provide examples of divorced cricket players, before subsequently explaining how a high divorce rate may provide a sociological explanation for the high suicide rate in cricket.

Evidence from this thesis alludes to a high divorce rate in cricket, as Frith (2011) indicates matrimonial disturbances were a classic factor influencing the rate of suicide in cricket. Calcetta (2010) notes the unduly high divorce rate in cricket compares only to that of Hollywood and may help provide the answer to the high suicide rate. Thus, Stack (2009) elucidates, relationships between divorce rates and suicide rates are well established since the seminal work of Emile Durkheim during the nineteenth century. Furthermore, Agerbo et al., (2011) advocates, divorce rates have offered accurate predictions of suicide rates for well over a century thus, claim the relationships between divorce rates and suicide rates are robust (Cutright et al., 2007; Stack, 2000; Kpowsa et al., 1995). This provides a possible sociological explanation for the high rate of suicide in cricket.

By way of illustration, Phil Tufnell recites the relationship status of his team-mates,

'I worked with mostly single cricketers, who like me, had spent a good deal of their professional lives drinking, having a good time and getting laid.' (Tufnell & Hayter, 1999, p.144.)

Notwithstanding, Phil Tufnell does not provide clear evidence of a high divorce rate. Such a quote does however illustrate that many players are single, possibly, as a consequence of divorce. Pringle (2003) notes, within his article entitled 'Don't marry a cricketer', cricket and family have never been easy bedfellows, suggesting, it is a relationship that has long been at odds and appears to have reached a crisis of late. In other words, cricket may have a long association with high divorce rates of which, subsequently helps explain the high rate of suicide in cricket. The suggested modern crisis is highlighted by aforementioned quotes from cricket player's auto/biographies in relation to prolonged and intensive tours away from home. Specifically, of the eight auto/biographies analysed, half of players reported being divorcees. While impossible to apply such findings to the wider cricket population, it does insinuate a potential high divorce rate in cricket, as suggested by Frith (2011) and Calcetta (2010). Furthermore, all eight auto/biographies highlighted knowing a player who is divorced. For example, Graham Thorpe (2005) cites Darren Gough, Dominic Cork and Mark Butcher as players whom he played with who were divorced. Also, Herschelle Gibbs elucidates, 'Just look at the former Proteas (South African) player Jonty Rhodes... and Darryl Cullinan whose marriage has also broken up (Gibbs & Smith, 2011, p.96.). Furthermore, Frith (2011) cites numerous examples of divorced cricket players attempting to, or committing suicide as a result of divorce, such as Joseph Wells, (father of the legendary H.G. Wells), Barry knight and Albert Relf amongst others. Indeed, Frith (2011) emphasised

the relationship between divorce and suicide frequently throughout his biography of suicide in cricket.

At this point, after implying a high divorce rate in cricket and underlining the link between divorce rates and suicide rate, this thesis proposes to provide a sociological explanation of how high divorce rates, can influence the suicide rates of cricketers.

In this regard, the relationship of suicide rates and divorce rates may be theoretically explained by the removal of protection ascertained from marriage. To explain, marriage has long been theorized to have protective effects for the longevity of life, specifically, through social pathways of social integration, social support, social control and social role attainment (Rendall et al., 2011). Thus, when cricketers are away on tour and suffering from reduced levels of social integration, divorce may exacerbate their situation, as it further removes cricketers legally, separating players from the family environment. On this point, Paul Smith (2007, p.43.) states, 'Divorce exacerbated my problems'. Stack (2009) notes divorce is a key indicator of low social integration. When divorced persons have lost a spouse they lose someone who can provide day to day emotional support. Accordingly, if divorce is a key indicator of social integration as stipulated by Stack (2009), a high divorce rate in cricket therefore accentuates this thesis argument that cricket player's high suicide rates may be resultant of the low levels of social integration as exemplified by the divorce rate, but also from the feelings of isolation from wider society. To put the matter differently, marriage is thought to guard against the increase in suicide rates by increasing levels of social integration amongst members of a group/society (Shiner et al., 2012). In doing so, giving cricket players a sense of belonging and responsibility which guards against excessive levels of egoism,

which is known to cause increases in the rates of egoistic suicide (Durkheim, 1966). Thus, when the protective effect of marriage is lost through divorce, cricket players will lose the level of social integration, of which they previously achieved through marriage. Importantly, cricketer's loss will be exacerbated by feelings of isolation that occur from frequently living in hotels for lengthy periods of time. Furthermore, it is suggested that marriage has a greater protective effect for men and therefore cricket players, when compared to women (Rendall et al., 2011). Stack (2009) explains, marriage has a greater protective effect for males, as in theory females are higher in social integration, thus, gain greater social support as a result of greater social networks of support. Maum (2006) elucidates, higher levels of social integration and social support for women are due to closer relationships with friends and family. In other words, evidence suggests cricket players are more likely to be left isolated by divorce, or in theoretical terms, suffer from increased egoism as a result of reduced levels of social integration, subsequently explaining the suicide rate in cricket. To illustrate, Wray et al., (2011) indicate, males are three-four times more likely to commit suicide resulting from divorce in comparison to females. Thus, attaining a sociological explanation of why cricketers are almost twice as likely to commit suicide as the average male, and other sports, as cricket has unduly high rates of divorce which correspond with high suicide rates.

Ergo, divorced and unmarried cricket players lack the protection of marriage (Rendall et al., 2011) and therefore this could allude to why cricket players have a high rate of suicide. Umberson (1987) notes, unmarried or single males are more prone to health-threatening behaviours. For example, Graham Thorpe (2005, p.151.) illustrates, 'We all learned to cope in our different ways. There were those like Tuffers who would go out

and have a few drinks, sometimes to excess'. Further examples of health threatening behaviours can be found in the autobiographies of Herchelle Gibbs and Paul Smith who recite candidly, as single males, about their respective issues with alcoholism and drug addiction. However, Matthew Hoggard exemplifies the lack of the protective effect of marriage, note, on his first winter away in South Africa Matthew Hoggard as an unmarried man describes,

'They were my first real taste of freedom, the slightly wilder days... no real responsibilities, no ties... I was being educated in a different sense (from university), concentrating my studies on wickets and downing beer' (Hoggard, 2010, p.4.)

In this regard, Matthew Hoggard highlights how unmarried or divorced men have no social ties and responsibilities, and so resultantly, actively talks about his experiences of binge drinking. In contrast, Waldron (1990) argues, married men's behaviour is better regulated by the social support network and social integration that is provided by marriage. For example, Matthew Hoggard explains, this time as a married man

'Off the field, my time in South Africa was spent much more sensibly than those wilder days.... that was partly because Sarah came out to stay with me in South Africa so I had someone to keep me company in the evening' (Hoggard, 2010, p.54.)

Note how this example demonstrates how females better regulate their husbands behaviour when married. Furthermore, in this example, Hoggards' wife provides him

with a sense of integration which may protect him from egoism. To explain, marriage has greater protective effects for men in comparison to women (Stack, 2000).

Subsequently, evidence suggests prolonged tours may be the root cause of the high rate of suicide in cricket. Accordingly, touring appears to cause players to feel isolated and suffer reduced levels of social integration through the strains placed on their relationships with their spouse. Furthermore, such strains may exacerbate the divorce rate, which in effect, legally severs the conjugal bond and increases cricket player's sense of isolation and thus, cricketers levels of integration are drastically altered (Malcom & Scott, 2012). As a consequence of divorce and further isolation from wider society, cricket's suicide rate may be explained by the potential for egoistic suicide.

Access to Children

Upon analysing the auto/biographies of selected cricket players, it was observed touring and separation from the family unit acts as a root cause of the subsequent high divorce rate in cricket, which is interrelated with suicide rates. Evidence insinuates effects of divorce are exacerbated by the difficulty players have gaining access to their children. Upon which, this thesis will argue impacts negatively on the rate of suicide in cricket.

Accordingly, this thesis will now describe the experiences of cricket players, elucidating on issues faced from separation whilst touring. On this matter, playing cricket for extensive periods of time appears to have significant effects on the social bond between players and their children. Marcus Trescothick noted,

At the end of the tour... what I encountered when we landed at Birmingham airport hardly lifted my mood. Hayley had brought eight month old Ellie to meet me... I realised she didn't recognise me...I'd been away for two and a half months and she was looking at me as if to say, who are you? And I hated it. It was a horrible feeling. (Trescothick & Hayter, 2008, p.189.)

Marcus Trescothick illustrates, touring creates tensions upon social bonds uniting parents and their young children. Further evidence is provided by Andrew Flintoff who indicates, he missed the birth of his son as a consequence of touring the West Indies.

'Like any new father I was delighted to hear I had a healthy son, but it wasn't easy being thousands of miles away. Of course, I had pictures emailed to me, but it's not the same as being there. I was missing Rachel and wasn't able to meet Corey, and I found that so hard. (Flintoff, 2009, p.19.)

Thus, Andrew Flintoff explains the difficulties cricketers' face being separated and isolated from the family group as a consequence of touring. For example, cricket players such as Andrew Flintoff are unable to, or are restricted in, integrating themselves into the family unit. Further evidence supporting this thesis supposition has been cited by Marcus Trescothick, of whom, considers separation from the family unit as a key antecedent of his suicidal thoughts. In this regard, Marcus Trescothick explains how he attempted to overcome the feelings of separation from the family by playing DVD's of his young daughter playing. Conversely, this worsened the sense of separation and is an example which underlines the isolation cricket players may suffer from the family group.

Upon loading a DVD of Ellie playing...an overwhelming wave of sadness and anxiety swept over me. It was like someone had sucked my spirit out of my body... The black wings fluttered. Exhausted, emotionally vulnerable, isolated from home, I was finally ready for the taking. (Trescothick & Hayter, 2008, p.189.)

At this juncture, this thesis will now explain why such separation can affect the suicide rates of cricket players. As previously discussed, Durkheim (1966) explains that the family is divided into two distinct groups, the first of which is the conjugal group consisting of spouses (Morrison, 2006). Secondly, Durkheim (1966) proposed family may be further divided into the family group which contains both spouses and also children. Thus to explain, cricket players gain a sense of social integration from children which differs from that of spouses. In this instance, social integration occurs from blood ties which serve to connect members of one generation to another (Durkheim, 1966). In doing so, raises levels of social integration, by instilling a sense of loyalty and allegiance to the family group (Morrison, 2006). In other words, as a result of reduced levels of social integration into the family group evidence proposes high suicide rates in cricket can be explained by the restricted access to children, resulting from divorce. Thompson (1982) explains that through limited interaction with the family group, a player's collective life may be diminished and the individual interests are asserted above that of the family. To put the matter differently, players seemingly lose the beneficial effects of group membership, i.e. family group, such as revitalisation and a sense of purpose (Ritzer, 2008). Thus, Thompson (1982) suggests that people, in this instance cricket players, may find little meaning in group life. Accordingly, Graham Thorpe recalls such loss of meaning in life, 'I needed the happiness of family life to go back to if my cricket

was to have a purpose. I was desperately missing my children' (Thorpe, 2005, p.43.). Furthermore, Paul Smith (2007, p.21.) recalls, 'I was also seeing my children less frequently, which gradually eroded all the responsibility and reasons for staying straight'. In this regard, both quotes highlight the importance of family in achieving a sense of purpose to their lives. Consequently, Malcom and Scott (2012) hypothesise; suicide rates may be explained by low social integration from the family group and thus, increases the rate of egoistic suicide.

In the above discussion, it has been suggested touring in cricket places exceptional strains on social integration. Furthermore, when relationships are severed through divorce, the effect for cricket players can be exacerbated, and as a consequence cannot be separated from the social relationships fathers have with their children (Shiner et al, 2009). For example,

'Seeing the children was difficult...now all these things (visits) had to be painfully negotiated and without the co-operation of Nicky (ex-wife) they were next to impossible to make happen' (Thorpe, 2005, p.52.)

. 'Though there have been times since when I've been allowed contact with my daughter, my former partner has put every obstacle in my path to stop it from happening. As I write this, it is over two years since I have seen my daughter.' (Smith, 2007, p.31.).

The above discussion suggests the effects of divorce, which are considerable for males, are further worsened by the illustrated difficulties fathers have in gaining

access to children after or during divorce proceedings. This is also illustrated in Phil Tuffnell's autobiography.

'During the five years between the trial taking place and the time of writing, I had still not been allowed to see Ellie. Time, I can tell you, has not healed this wound. (Tuffnell & Hayter 1999, p.208.).

From the above discussion, evidence highlights cricket players' face increasing difficulties seeing their children when divorced, and it appears to have a significant impact upon them. In other words, the social bonds created by the blood ties and allegiances between father and child are jeopardised by divorce. Indeed, cricketers and fathers more generally struggle to accept being on the outside, estranged from their children, for example, Paul Smith notes,

'They were all that mattered; the only thing that made sense, but now they had been taken from me. The lack of contact with them was the hardest thing to take... My only contact with healthy society was closed to me. Of all the pain I've experienced, nothing else compared. (Smith, 2007, p.43.).

From this passage of text, it can be advocated being unable to see children, lessens/heightens? cricket players' sense of social integration. Furthermore, social integration is aggravated by touring, but also exasperated when home from touring, as players are still unable to see their children. Consequently, cricket players are left further isolated and unable to integrate themselves into the family group and issues arise building and maintaining social relationships with children.

Findings from this thesis support Owen (2003) who noted, for men and therefore, cricket players, divorce cannot be easily separated from their role as parents because it restricts both involvement and perception of social integration into family life. On this point, prevailing legal and social norms mean that divorce routinely distances men from children in a way it rarely does for women (Shiner et al., 2009). Therefore, as cricket players feeling of social integration is already affected by extensive touring schedules, Shiner et al., (2009) suggests, divorce may annul any sense of social integration. In doing so, excluding cricket players from their child resultantly reduces levels of social integration which are known to affect the suicide rate (Durkheim, 1966). A loss of such personal attachments from children compromises cricket players' sense of social participation, which creates the feeling there is nothing else to live for (Agerbo et al., 2011). In other words, this thesis propounds cricketers' social integration levels are reduced by a myriad of factors of which the primary causal factor appears to be extensive touring schedules, which reduce cricket players' levels of social integration not only from children, but also from wider society. Durkheim (1966) explains social groups who suffer from low levels of social integration, such as cricketers, become prone to egoistic suicide, which may explain the high suicide rate amongst cricket players. Accordingly, the high rate of suicide in cricket may be further exacerbated by the suggested high rate of divorce in cricket which legally severs the social bond between the wives, furthermore, potentially hindering the social bond with the children, as males are routinely distanced from children through divorce. Thus, in terms of social integration, cricket players' high rate of suicide appears to be caused by multiple factors

of which combine to explain why cricketers are almost twice as likely as the average male to commit suicide and more than any other sportsmen.

Retirement

Through data generated via documentary analysis of cricket players' auto/biographies, a recurrent theme emerged, that of retirement. The issue of retirement for cricket players stems from the uncertainty they face. Retirement for modern cricketers is now averaging around the mid-30's so players potentially spend a considerable time retired in comparison to other occupations (Frith, 2011). Herschelle Gibbs highlights such uncertainty,

I have no idea what I'm going to do when I finish cricket. Seriously. No plan whatsoever. I probably know more about what I don't want to do than what I want to do. It's not like I am the only one in this dilemma either. It's tough for professional sports people to find something they can tackle with the same degree of passion that they put into their sport (Gibbs & Smith, 2011, p.220).

Herchelle Gibbs was not alone in elucidating the issue of retirement, Matthew Hoggard notes, and 'what sort of job does cricket prepare you for? When I sketch out a CV, what sort skills can I take into the real world?' (Hoggard, 2010, p.325). Such uncertainty about the future was a recurrent theme in the analysis of auto/biographies, in particular, the financial ramifications that coincide from the loss of income in retirement. Concerns were primarily noted regarding the impact this would have upon player's role as provider for their families. For example, Marcus Trescothick suggested ' I was starting to think of the consequences...I'll probably lose my sponsored car... my contract...then what will

happen to us? And so the vicious cycle kicked in again (Trescothick & Hayter, 2008, p.205.) A more illustrative quote was found in the autobiography of Paul Smith in which he states, 'lost contracts stuck in like a knife, rendering it impossible to rebuild my life... cricket was all I knew; All I'd done since I was a boy' (Smith, 2007, p.27.).

The above highlights some of the issues cricket players can face when retiring from the game. Thus, the thesis will now seek to provide a sociological explanation of why retirement may impact on the rate of suicide in cricket.

Malcolm and Scott (2012) suggest, the suicide rate in cricket is explainable, in part, by retirement from cricket and a reduction in social regulation. In other words, players become so absorbed into playing cricket over a prolonged period of time, and so extensive is their schedule that it essentially regulates their lives. Furthermore, cricket is the only means by which they have made a living to provide for their families, Durkheim (1966) explains, social regulation serves to constrain human needs and desires, too much or too little can increase the suicide rate. In the case of cricket players, evidence indicated players suffer from too little social regulation when retiring from cricket. Matthew Hoggard demonstrates, 'with England you go from this incredible network of support around you, when you can't so much as fart without anybody knowing about it, to being absolutely on your own. (Hoggard, 2010, p. 307.). In the above, Matthew Hoggard alludes to the support network players can have when playing international cricket, such support networks can include coaches, psychologists, physiologists, nutritionists and so forth, who essentially control and regulate every aspect of their lives. Thus, when such regulation is removed, players may become susceptible to a form of suicide Durkheim (1966) termed anomic suicide. Ritzer (2008) explains, anomic suicide

occurs when the regulative effects of society are disrupted, Durkheim's (1966) examples often referred to the economy. In the case of cricket players, it appears they lose the regulative effects of touring and being instructed what to do, when to do it and how to do it. In other words, cricket creates a void for players whereby old social regulation need not apply (Ritzer, 2008). Morrison (2006) explains players therefore become open to currents of anomie which leads to feelings of rootlessness and normlessness. Furthermore, cricket players earn significant amounts of money during their careers, Paul Nixon (2012) elucidates, modern day cricketers can earn up to £400,000 a year. Thus, upon retirement it may be suggested players suffer from a form of acute economic anomie. Durkheim (1966) supposition was that acute economic anomie could occur during economic slumps and booms. Thompson (1982) explains old rules, in other words social regulations, relating means to ends were inapplicable, and individuals were freed from social restraint, creating disequilibrium and unhappiness and leading to an increase in suicide rates. To put the matter differently, when cricket players retire the old rules regarding being able to provide what they had previously for themselves and their families no longer applies. As such, acute economic anomie may occur where players worry about the future, as exemplified by Marcus Trescothick, Paul Smith and Graham Thorpe. Consequently, such a change in social regulation may cause and therefore explain an increase in the suicide rate in cricket.

However, evidence from this thesis advocates a caveat to the hypothesis of Malcolm and Scott (2012). Evidence advocates the impact of retirement on the suicide rate is dependent upon the social institution of marriage. In other words, whilst it is evident retirement is problematic as evidence indicates a loss of social regulation; this thesis

proposes such a void can be filled, in the presence of marriage and reintegration into the family group. For example, Phil Tufnell illustrates, how upon retirement 'I woke up late, looked across at Lisa (wife)... I thought what a brilliant day' (Tufnell & Hayter, 1999, p.238.). Furthermore, Andrew Flintoff notes upon his own retirement from cricket.

I will cherish the chance to be more of a family man. For years, Rachel and the kids have had to put up with me going on tours for weeks and months at a time... I am looking forwards to being a more at home dad than before (Flintoff, 2009, p. XIV.).

In the above discussion, evidence alludes to retirement bringing about a degree of reintegration into the family group and therefore, increasing levels of social integration, preventing an increase in suicide rates (Griffiths et al., 2008). Further examples are provided in the autobiography of Marcus Trescothick who recounts, 'Upon return (from announcing retirement from international cricket) I walked into the house and picked up my 18 month old daughter. I was home, I had my baby in my arms and I was happy' (Trescothick & Hayter, 2008, p.320.).

Therefore, when cricket players retire and the relationship with the family group has managed to survive the stresses of touring, it allows players to reintegrate into this group. Let us be clear, although cricket does appear to have a high divorce rate (Frith, 2011; Calcetta, 2010), in circumstances where marriage has survived it may protect cricketers from suicide. Frith (2011) notes, many players meet retirement with a sense of relief as it brings an end to all the years of mental and physical exertion and the monotony of travel and hotel life. In doing so, cricketers have the opportunity to as

Stack (2000) explains, reintegrate into the family group, which prevents an increase in the rate of suicide as a consequence of the subordination of egoistical tendencies to the family group. In other words, cricket players concentrate on developing relationships with their family, as in the case of Andrew Flintoff. In the presence of children, cricket players may further be protected by domestic integration, as players are able to develop social bonds with children who will begin to mature into significant others and thus, gain more meaningful and intimate social bonds which create a sense of integration into the family group (Girard, 1993). To put the matter differently, evidence from this thesis contends when retirement comes, retirement is linked to marriage and thus, the contingent nature of marriage for the protection from suicide. Overall, the effect of retirement on the suicide rate, this thesis contends, is reliant upon the marital situation of the players. Shiner et al., (2012) explains, when a marriage is going well the risk of suicide is decreased, conversely, when a relationship breaks down the risk of suicide will increase. Therefore, if a marriage is going well when players retire they will be protected by the marriage from suicide (Cutright et al., 2007; Hjelmend et al., 2013). However, if a player has retired and divorced then it may be suggested a loss of both regulation from cricket (Malcolm and Scott 2012) and integration from the marriage (Shiner et al., 2012) will increase the risk of suicide.

Conclusion

The central objective of this thesis was to explore why cricketers' are almost twice as likely as the average male to commit suicide and furthermore, have a suicide rate higher than players of any other sport (Frith, 2001). Thus, by utilising the work of Emile Durkheim, this thesis sought to provide a more adequate sociological explanation from that of David Frith, by exploring the social world in which cricket players are bound to.

Upon completion of thematic analysis findings from this thesis suggest, as Malcolm and Scott (2012) hypothesized, the suicide rate in cricket is partly attributable to reduced levels of social integration as a consequence of prolonged tours which acted to separate cricket players from their families. In doing so, separation from families impacted on suicide rates as it often resulted in a breakdown of the family environment. Thus, it is reasonable to propound based on the evidence, the potential high divorce rate amongst cricket players may explain the high suicide rate in cricket. On this matter, since the seminal work of Emile Durkheim (1966), it has been argued, divorce has a significant impact on the rate of suicide. In other words, if cricket does indeed have a high divorce rate, this may help provide a sociological explanation as to why cricket players are twice as likely to commit suicide compared to the average male. In this regard, divorce for males' results in far wider implications, as a result of legal and social norms women are often given custody of the children (Shiner et al., 2009). It was clear from players' testimonies that such a social norm had a significant impact upon cricketers'. Indeed, Frith (2001) noted numerous examples of cricket suicides related to isolation and reduced social integration from family, arising from divorce.

Moreover, evidence from this thesis appears to suggest cricket players are further separated from wider society. It was observed that hotels were often compared with prisons, thus, insinuating a sense of isolation from wider society. Invariably, such isolation left players susceptible to a form of suicide Durkheim (1966) termed, egoistic suicide, as players had limited interaction with family and wider societal groups. In this regard, a sociological explanation as to why cricket players' are twice as likely to commit suicide as the average male, is possibly attributable to an increase in the egoistic rate of suicide. To put the matter differently, cricket players are less integrated into both the family and wider society, and therefore suffer from low levels of social integration, resulting in an increase in rates of egoistic suicide. Furthermore, the root cause appears to be related to touring, Frith (2001) noted, cricket places unique strains on players' social relations, no other sports ask their participants to spend months on end away from their families.

The findings of this study suggest retirement also has a significant impact on the suicide rate, Malcolm and Scott (2012) propose retirement impacts on the suicide rate as it reduces cricket players' levels of social regulation. To explain, cricket significantly controls their lives in terms of when they train, what they eat and when they see their families and so forth. Thus, upon retirement a void is created whereby they have nobody to tell them what to do, creating a sense of anomie, resulting in an increase in rates of anomic suicide (Durkheim, 1966).

Upon this thesis analysis of cricket players' auto/biographies, it is argued, the conclusion offered by Malcolm and Scott (2012) appears to be simplistic. Rather, a supposition from this thesis hypothesises, retirements impact on the rate of suicide in

cricket is multi-faceted. Indeed, evidence indicates that the effect retirement has on the suicide rate in cricket, in comparison to the average male, is accountable to the sociological explanations of divorce, rather than retirement itself per se. In other words, evidence from auto/biographies elucidates that in instances where the family unit has survived the strains of prolonged cricket tours, retirement could be viewed as a positive aspect. However, when retirement occurs, and the cricketer has no spouse, or family relationship with children for example, the supposition of this study, is that in these circumstances retirement is detrimental as cricketers' may be unable to re-integrate into the family and thus, explaining the high rate of suicide in cricket through egoistic suicide (Durkheim, 1966)

Therefore, it seems reasonable to conclude, cricket may cause the high rate of suicide through prolonged and extensive tours. However, the sociological explanation as to why cricket has a higher suicide rate than other social groups is explainable by more traditional sociological explanations revolving around matrimonial disturbances (Frith, 2001).

Limitations of Thesis

Limitations of study derive from the number of auto/biographies analysed, with only nine used, it is impossible to apply these findings to the wider cricketing population. Issues arose with ascertaining the selected auto/biographies from internet suppliers.

Furthermore, 4 out of 9 auto/biographies were co-written, as mentioned in the research methods chapter of this thesis. As a consequence, co-writers may distort or adjust the original impression the cricketer may wish to have given. For example, co-writers may

exaggerate the impact divorce had upon a player, thus potentially distorting the evidence that has been presented in this thesis.

Future Research

Future researchers may wish to perform a more quantitative, statistical analysis of the suicide rate in cricket to compliment this qualitative study. In doing so, serving to further clarify the work of Frith (2001), as no in depth statistical analysis has never been performed (Harris, 2011). Furthermore, to do so should look to clarify the divorce rate in cricket, as the nature of this study was only able to allude to such a possibility. By performing a more quantitative study, it would serve to clarify the situation, but also confirm whether the sociological explanation provided in this thesis is appropriate in explaining the suggested rate of suicide in cricket.

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