Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill

A psychobiographical study

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Photograph of Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill

Photo: (Universal History Archive/Getty Images, CIRCA 1800)
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ABSTRACT

Psychobiography is a qualitative approach to exploring and understanding the life story of an individual through the lens of psychological theory. The application of theory is typically conducted on the finished lives of well-known or enigmatic people. This study explores and describes the psychological development across the lifespan of Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill, by applying the Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler. Winston Churchill voted the greatest Briton of the twentieth century, was an author, painter, adventure, soldier, politician and Prime Minister that led the United Kingdom during World War Two. Extensive data has been examined in this work to ensure an accurate description of Winston Churchill’s life. Alexander’s model of identifying salient themes was used to analyse the data within a conceptual framework derived from the theory. Churchill’s difficult childhood motivated him to succeed, his passion for the nation of Britain and his dislike of the Nazi regime meant that Churchill was always abreast with current affairs, anticipating every possible scenario of attack. When the time came to fight the Nazi’s Churchill was ready to die for his country. The research findings highlight Churchill’s ability to rise above his childhood stigmas and surpass all expectations and so cementing his name into the history of a country he loved and a democratic world he hoped for. Alfred Adler’s Individual Psychology proposes that an individual’s potential weaknesses can be used as a means to strive and achieve greatness within their sphere of influence.

Chapter 1

Introduction and Problem Statement

1.1 Chapter Preview

This chapter provides a brief introduction to the research study and includes an outline of the psychobiographical approach to research. Alfred Adler’s (1929) theory of Individual Psychology is discussed with regards to the life of Winston Spencer Churchill. This is followed by an outline and description of the research problem. In conclusion, an overview of all the chapters comprising this treatise is given.

1.2 Research context

Psychobiographical research is regarded by some as a lesser form of research in comparison to other scientific methodologies (Yin, 1994). The lack of rigour and the difficulty in generalising findings to the general population (Yin, 1994) is a traditional prejudice that is held against psychobiographies. Runyan (1988b) adds several other reasons why psychobiographical research has and is being challenged; the opinion is held that such research is of no value to other forms of research, that social research is of more importance and that psychobiographies overemphasise the individual. Despite these concerns both Runyan (1988b) and Yin (1994) confirm that psychological theories used in research are best placed to explain the individual development of a human being.

It is the present researchers’ opinion that very little psychobiographical research has been conducted on the life of Winston Churchill. While there is an extensive amount of literature available on the life of the subject, this study will evaluate the life history of Churchill in the context of a psychological theory.
1.2.1 Overview of the Psychobiographical Approach

“Psychobiographical study entails a systematic and descriptively-rich study of renowned, enigmatic, exceptional, or even contentious individuals in socio-historical contexts within a psychological frame of reference” (Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2010, p. 495). Yin (2009) states that a single case study allows the researcher to retain the “holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events” (Yin, 2009, p. 4).

Psychobiographies have their fair share of criticism and an underlying debate that permeates throughout is the overemphasis of the individual in an isolated context (Runyan, 1988b). In addition, Elms (1994) states that it is easier to write a bad psychobiography than a good one as many researchers have done shoddy preparation and illustration of their work. Elms (1994) however contends that continuously looking at one life cannot be underestimated. This process can be used to “construct meaningful patterns, which give us a context in which thoughts and actions can be understood” (Josselson & Lieblich, 1993, p. 16).

Carlson (1988) proposes three factors for applying the psychobiographical approach to a psychological study. Firstly, he suggests that it is easier to trace human development following a psychobiographical approach than the best longitudinal study. Secondly, he states that the variety of life history data allows for a greater understanding of socio-historical contexts. Finally, he states that a greater deal of consensual validation can be achieved versus a clinical case study.

Several scholars, including Carlson (1988), McAdams (1988) and Runyan (1988a) have advocated the use of psychobiographies as a credible form of research. These advantages can be summed up in five prominent domains. Firstly, the uniqueness of the individual case within the whole. The researcher needs to study the patterns and processes of the individual’s
personality and these processes need to be looked at as a whole and not as individual elements (Runyan, 1982). Secondly, the social-historical context provides a framework for the individual’s cultural, socio-economic beliefs and values to be compared to and to be understood in (Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2010). Thirdly, studying the process and patterns of an individual’s life over time offers the researcher the opportunity to follow and discover themes across an individual’s life-span (Carlson, 1988). The fourth domain is the subjective reality of the individual which allows the researcher to develop a level of sympathy and empathy with the subject (Runyan, 1982). Finally, testing and development offers psychobiographers the opportunity to test and develop theories of human development that can be compared to current and previous literature on personality (Carlson, 1988). Psychobiography should not be viewed in a lesser light to its contemporaries as it offers and adds valuable insight into the body of knowledge within psychology.

1.2.2 Overview of the Theoretical Framework

In the past psychobiographies tended to only focus on psychoanalytic theories. Recently however there has been an inclusion of a wider range of theories (Elms, 1994). This allows a researcher to draw from various theories of personality and to delve into the resources from developmental, social, cognitive and abnormal psychology. This study will apply the theory of Individual Psychology developed by Alfred Adler (1927) to explore the life of Winston Churchill.

Adler’s theory stems from his own childhood experiences in which he was dogged with personal health issues. This resulted in him not being able to play sport or partake in other physical activities with children his own age, fostering feelings of inferiority (Meyer, Moore, & Viljoen, 1997). At the same time because of illnesses, Adler was pampered by his mother, only to be dethroned by a younger brother later on. Adding to an already difficult childhood,
one of Adler’s brothers died in a bed next to him (Corey, 2005). At school Adler overheard a teacher telling his father that he would have to be content with his son becoming a shoemaker. These experiences, combined with Adler’s fall out with Sigmund Freud, played a major part in Adler forming the theory of Individual Psychology (Meyer, Moore, & Viljoen, 1997). The core of Adler’s theory was the hypothesis that all human beings compensate for their organic inferiority (that which you are born with) through striving for mastery/superiority over their feelings of inferiority (Adler, 1927). Adler was a living example of his own theory as it seemed that Adler was doomed to his organic inferiority. However he went on to become a doctor of medicine and later moved into the area of psychiatry, thereby achieving mastery in the process.

Adler disagreed with Freud and held the view that humans are not driven by sexual urges but rather motivated by social relatedness; being self-determined and creative in choosing their own goals (Corey, 2005). Ultimately it is the individual’s perception of these factors that determines their goals and development (Adler, 1958). Adler held that an individual’s personality needed to be seen as a whole, that the individual was the sum of his individual parts (Corey, 2005, p. 96). According to Adler (1930) individuals are born, raised, educated and live within a social-cultural context and are free to move and act according to their own purposes. He proposed that the cornerstone of Individual Psychology is every conscious or unconscious thought, feeling and action, and that it is part of the greater whole (Adler, 1929).

Adler subscribed to a teleological perspective regarding behaviour, stating that individuals are pulled towards their goals. People will behave in such a way so that they may achieve their desired goal, irrespective of their success (Adler called this the ‘fictional goal’) (Adler, 1929). The fictional goal is an individual’s technique to negotiate the current situation and navigate perceived inferiorities (Meyer, Moore, & Viljoen, 1997). Adler’s (1930, 1958) theory of personality development is not a theory of stages but rather a theory that
emphasises the first five years of a child’s life and posits that it plays a significant role in the development of life goals. These goals, however, can be adjusted or even revised at any point during an individual’s life (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956).

In summary, according to Adler: “the individual’s essential quest is to overcome inferiorities and to strive for superiority and perfection” (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956, pp. 101-119). A deeper investigation into Adler’s theory reveals additional insights into optimal development. According to Adler “the peak of this striving is reached when the individual not only strives for perfection of the self (in an egocentric way), but places that striving at the service of society” (Meyer, Moore, & Viljoen, 1997, p. 146).

The life of Winston Churchill will be explored within Adler’s theoretical framework of Individual Psychology (the optimally developed person). Attention will be given to the integration of this theory with the life of Winston Churchill. Below is a brief biographical overview of Churchill’s life.

1.3 Biographical Overview

Sir Winston Leonard Spencer-Churchill was arguably one of the greatest politicians of the modern era. He survived 50 gunfights and allegedly drank 20,000 bottles of champagne during his lifetime. He won the public schools’ fencing cup and rode in the last cavalry charge of the British Army (Riebling, 2009). Riebling (2009) highlights that Churchill assisted in establishing British Petroleum, contributed to the invention of the combat tank and was instrumental in the formation of the states of Jordan and Iraq. He represented his country as Prime Minister with great distinction on two occasions in 1940, serving till 1945 and again from 1951 to 1955. His daring escape from a Boer prison camp in 1899 (Pelling, 1974) made him somewhat of a national hero and ushered him into the House of Commons, where his political career spanned some 60 years. Churchill enjoyed exceptional success in his political
life from the very beginning and held many important positions such as President of the Board of Trade, Home Secretary and First Lord of the Admiralty (Gopnik, 2010). Churchill was a prolific writer and historian, he wrote of his adventures as a British soldier in books such as ‘The Second World War’ and ‘A History of the English Speaking Peoples’ (Sullivan, 2010).

Winston Churchill was born on 30 November 1874 in Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire in the United Kingdom (Keegan, 1998). A descendant of the Spencer family, Winston Leonard Spencer-Churchill was born to a politician father Lord Randolph Churchill and mother Lady Randolph Churchill who was the daughter of an American millionaire (Sullivan, 2010). Winston Churchill had a brother John Strange Spencer who was five years younger (Pelling, 1974).

In contrast to his successes as an adult, Churchill was rather disruptive as a young boy and has been described as the quintessential sensation seeker. Arnett (1991, p. 610) quotes a cousin of Churchill: “we thought he was wonderful, because he was always leading us into danger.” A former classmate, Sir Gerald Wollaston, recalled that he "broke almost every rule made by masters or boys, was quite incorrigible, and had an unlimited vocabulary of 'backchat' which he produced with dauntless courage on every occasion of remonstrance" (Arnett, 1991, p. 611). This did not make him popular at Harrow and hence he was disliked by many of his peers. Churchill’s desire for danger, adventure and for dare-devilish behaviour was further evidenced by his decision to build a bomb for the purpose of blowing up a haunted house. The bomb was lowered into the cellar, when the explosion was not forthcoming he decided to look into the cellar only to experience a timely explosion (Arnett, 1991). Churchill’s early school career can be summed up as misunderstood and lonely. By the time he applied to the military academy at Sandhurst he had formed a great love for literature and expressed a keen interest in forging a career in the army (Pelling, 1974).
Churchill had great affection for Mary Anne Everest or ‘Old Woom’, a nanny who had been hired just after his birth. He loved her very much, so much so that Churchill returned from Cuba in 1895 to be with her on her death bed (Carson, 2010). This relationship was fostered due to the absence of his parents from his life. They were more concerned with the social life of aristocracy and the politics of the country so that Churchill never obtained the opportunity for affection (Carson, 2010).

Churchill married at the age of thirty four to the love of his life Clementine Hozier on 12 September 1908. Together they had five children Diana, Randolph, Sarah, Marigold and Mary (Pelling, 1974), the only surviving daughter.

Churchill entered the army as a cavalry officer at the age of twenty one. He quickly showed his passion for both soldiering and polo playing (perhaps more polo playing at that stage) (Keegan, 1998). Between 1895 and 1898 Churchill served in three campaigns: Spain's struggle in Cuba in 1895, the North-West Frontier campaign in India in 1897, and the Sudan campaign of 1898. In a letter to his mother Churchill wrote that he never felt the slightest nervousness and that he felt just as relaxed then as he did writing the letter now (Keegan, 1998). During the majority of his campaigns Churchill took on a dual role of soldier and war correspondent (Keegan, 1998).

His political career matched his military career and in 1900 at the age of twenty six Churchill won the Oldham seat at the general election. In 1905, Churchill was appointed Under-Secretary of State and in 1908, he was appointed as President of the Board of Trade (Pelling, 1974). In 1924 Churchill was appointed as the Chancellor of the Exchequer, his appointment was followed by a great deflation in the British economy. The Conservative Party lost the next general election in 1929. From then on, the Conservative Party started distancing itself from him; this was a time of political isolation which became known as his
‘Wilderness Years’ (Pearce, 2007). Churchill is famous for his sayings and Pearce (2007) tells the story of Churchill gloomily commenting over a casual conversation that we are all worms, but soon perked up and added that he thought he was a glow-worm. This was characteristic of Churchill, who was renowned for suffering with his ‘black dog’ (a term that he used in reference to suffering from depression).

In 1940 Churchill was invited to form an all-party government (Lippiatt, 1996). As Prime Minister, Churchill refused to any peace agreement with an evidently emerging Germany and geared up the British for a long war. Churchill’s value to the British people was not restricted to the role of a military leader; he was also a pillar of strength in the community. His voice would ring over the radio offering hope to all (Wakely & Carson, 2010), as C.P. Snow commented, “that voice was our hope, it was the voice of will and strength incarnate” (Snow, 1969, p. 123). In the film, A History of Britain, Churchill, on the 13th May 1940 states: “I have nothing to offer but blood, toil, tears and sweat, victory at all costs’ (Beavan & Hall, 2000). Though the World War II ended with a landslide victory for the British and allied countries, Churchill lost the 1945 election and became a leader of the opposition. In 1951, at the age of 76, Churchill was elected Prime Minister for a second term through a general election (Pelling, 1974).

Winston Churchill suffered his first major stroke in 1953, at the age 78, which left him in poor health. In the wake of his declining health and inability to govern, he resigned as Prime Minister in 1955 to be succeeded by Anthony Eden. After this Churchill retired from public life and mostly stayed at home. In 1963, Churchill received an Honorary Citizen of the United States from President John F. Kennedy (Pelling, 1974).

On 15 January 1965, Churchill suffered another major stroke which proved to be fatal and he died nine days later on 24 January 1965. After his death, his body lay in state for three
days and a state funeral was held at St. Paul’s Cathedral. The funeral service witnessed the largest Royal gathering of statesmen from across the world and he was mourned by millions of people. His body was buried at St. Martin’s Church, Woodstock, near his birth place at Blenheim Palace (Pelling, 1974).

1.4 Research Problem

The primary aim of this study is to explore, describe and to seamlessly provide a deep and thorough understanding of Churchill’s life using Adler’s (1929) theory of Individual Psychology. The intention of this research is not to generalise the findings onto the general population but rather to integrate, explain and comprehend the life of Churchill in terms of Adler’s theory.

1.5. An Overview of the Treatise

This treatise consists of seven chapters, the first being this introduction. Chapter Two discusses the psychobiographical framework, Chapter Three discusses Alfred Adler’s Individual Psychology. The life of Winston Spencer Churchill is discussed in Chapter Four. Chapter Five deals with the research methodology employed in the current study, and the findings of this study are discussed in Chapter Six. Chapter Seven concludes the study and presents the conclusions, contributions and limitations of the study. Additionally, it offers suggestions for future research in the field.

1.6. Conclusion

This study is a psychobiography of Winston Spencer Churchill. The study employs a qualitative psychobiographical research method, which aims to describe Churchill’s psychological development in relation to Alfred Adler’s theory of Individual Psychology. In the following chapter psychobiographies as a theoretical framework will be discussed.
Chapter 2

Psychobiography: A theoretical overview

2.1 Chapter Preview

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss a psychobiography as case study research. Initially this chapter will describe the research context of a psychobiography and explore its position within similar qualitative research methods. This will be followed by a brief overview of the relationship between psychology and biography and the value that psychobiographical research can offer. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the value of psychobiographical life history research.

2.2 Qualitative Research

2.2.1 Qualitative and Case Study Research

Qualitative research is interdisciplinary, multi-paradigmatic and multi-method in focus (Struwig & Stead, 2004) and may be seen as a set of repetitive and interpretive practices without being defined or with structure (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Smith (2003) believes there is a significant move towards a more qualitative approach and this is evidenced by the growing number of students and researchers conducting qualitative research. The trend is to explore the dynamic connection between individuals and their world via research (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) into the experience between the outer world and the inner world (Smith, 2003).

Qualitative approaches allow researchers to assess the distinctive and real-life processes of a case study (Miles & Huberman, 1994). A more traditional view explains the quantitative paradigm as a nomothetic approach which is used to highlight theoretical and cause-and-effect connections by quantifying phenomena for generalisation through descriptive and inferential statistics (Flick, 2006). Strauss and Corbin (1998) suggest that understanding
qualitative research can be confusing and describe qualitative research as a means of producing findings that are not arrived at by statistical procedures. For example, social researchers are facing new social contexts and perspectives that require new methodologies and inductive strategies (Willig, 2001). Similarly, studying the human psyche is qualitatively different to the content of the natural sciences, which is measured quantifiably (Polkinghorne, 1983).

Qualitative research is used both interpretively and holistically and attempts to give an explanation of a reality (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). It can be used to form categories to understand phenomena (Polkinghorne, 1991) or to investigate themes, motifs, distinctions and ideas (Rudestam & Newton, 2001). Qualitative researchers are concerned with the use of words to interpret data and assign value (Stake, 1995), thus creating an opportunity to encapsulate and explore the intricacies of human beings (Tutty, Rothery, & Grinnell, 1996). Sources for research include films, interviews, documents, focus groups and archival information (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) and essentially qualitative researchers study and investigate the meaning of a context through interpreting the source (Neuman, 2003) and not for the purpose of generalising the results to a population (Ashworth, 2003).

A qualitative approach to a psychobiography will (a) regard the socially constructed nature of reality and the obvious relationship that will form between the researcher and respondent; (b) accept that the context and the value-laden nature will equally influence the inquiry (Rudestam & Newton, 2001; Willig, 2001); (c) focus on process, rather than outcome (Babbie & Mouton, 2001); and (d) emphasize meaning (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). The researcher purposefully engages in understanding the data by highlighting the natural setting to facilitate a truthful insider perspective of social processes (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Parker (1999) describes the researcher as the main instrument in the research process and therefore integral to the conclusions that are made. The values and feelings of the
researcher cannot be consistently objective or free from any other personal views and therefore plays an important part in understanding that reality is not exclusive to the researcher (Struwig & Stead, 2004). Researcher reflexivity (see section 5.8) requires an awareness of the researcher’s contribution to the construction of meanings throughout the research process (Stroud, 2004).

The researcher’s aim is to capture the essence of a situation or of an individual and more often than not the technique of a case study approach is used to achieve this (Willig, 2001). A case study explores a bounded system (Stake, 1995) or a case over time through detailed, intensive and thorough data collection involving multiple sources of content rich information (Creswell, 1998). For the purpose of the present study, a case over time approach will be used; the case being Winston Churchill and the roles he played during his life.

Elms (1994) contends that continuously looking at one life cannot be underestimated. This process can be used to “construct meaningful patterns, which give us a context in which thoughts and actions can be understood” (Josselson & Lieblich, 1993, p. 16). Psychobiographies are therefore valuable in the generation, development and refinement of a theory to guide further empirical investigations (Lowman, 2001). Attempting to characterize or label a broader social context via a psychobiographical approach is limiting (Willig, 2001).

Elms (1994) states that a psychobiographical case study is still an authoritative historical and psychological tool whereby the analysis of integral data is investigated and an interpretation of a life narrative is uncovered. The next section briefly explores the links between life history, biographical and narrative research.

2.2.2 Life History Research

There are different ways of viewing psychobiographies and life history research is a particular format. Life history attempts to explain a complete and holistic version of an individual’s life in the person’s own words (Plummer, 1983). Runyan (1982a) divides life
history research into method and subject matter. Having an individual retell his life story can be seen as a method, having his life described as separate and sequential items from birth to death can be seen as subject matter (Runyan, 1982a). Subject matter offers the researcher an opportunity to investigate and analyse the data over the course of an individual’s life (Runyan, 1982a). This approach provides a context to an individual’s life, hence the affiliation with psychobiography (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Enigmatic, extravagant or even infamous individuals provide the researcher with themes, narratives and turning points that can paint a vivid picture of a life history (Crabtree & Miller, 1999).

A life history design implies (a) a cautious view of the subjective reality of an individual’s life; (b) focusing on processes and change by identifying the confusing and chaotic nature of reality; (c) a holistic representation of the biographical data taking into account the socio-cultural and historical context; and (d) the use of method as an added tool to elicit and understand the human element from documents or documentaries regarding the individual’s life (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Roberts, 2002). Life history aims to understand the different aspects of culture, the investigation of its grammar, and to unravel the norms so that the body of knowledge within the social sciences may be enriched by the individual’s lived experiences (Tierney, 2000).

Life history research can be described as a way of understanding an individual’s life through accurately noting and integrating the experiences of a social, cultural and historical context (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Babbie and Mouton (2001) holds that the essence of life history and other case study approaches offer the researcher the opportunity to generate new theories and to test old ones making it ideal for studying human nature.

### 2.2.3 Biographical research

Scholars throughout history have been engrossed in the lives of famous people and have used both biographical and psychological research methods in an attempt to understand
individuals (McAdams, 1988). A biography is a documented version of an individual’s life, is a tested research source (Smith, 2003), and emphasizes the views and experiences of the individual (Roberts, 2002). A biography can be seen as focusing on the whole life from birth to death aiming to discover primary themes and highlighting a central story (McAdams, 1994). However the researcher needs to be cautious and note that a biography has elements of ambiguity, complexity, uncertainty, value conflict and uniqueness within its story and therefore should be viewed tentatively and not as an authoritative craft or process (Smith, 2003).

Several interpretive methodologies are used by biographers and any number of them gives a good account of an individual’s life experiences within contemporary cultural and social settings (Roberts, 2002). This ultimately leads to the biographer delving deep into the life of an individual, becoming familiar with all aspects of their life (Roberts, 2002). The data is collected and comes from various source ranging from official and personal documents (Plummer, 1983) to oral and visual multimedia sources (Yin, 1994). Abstract, creative and intuitive thinking is needed in the comprehension and construction of biographies (Hart, 1998).

2.2.4 Narrative research

A narrative can be seen as a systematic account of a series of events, which takes the form of a story to convey and describe instead of explaining (Bromley, 1986). Sarbin (1986) states that a narrative is an ideal metaphor for understanding human interaction. Furthermore, Barthes (1977) holds that narratives permeate every age and are omnipresent in all societies and by its nature implies that the researcher needs to understand the respondent within their historical context.
McAdams (1994) contends that humans construct their own narratives which affect future actions and these narratives result in researchers paying more and more attention to an individual’s experiences and their meaning (Roberts, 2002). This process allows the researcher to intimately investigate and interpret the data collected (Josselson, 1995), focusing on the storied nature of lived experiences; the importance of multiple perspectives within the context bound, socially constructed nature of reality, the impact of the researcher on the research process and the temporal nature of human activity (Polkinghorne, 1995).

Roberts (2002) holds that individual narratives provide the researcher with an understanding of how their lives are composed either through metaphors, symbols or explanations. Thus psychobiographies are by their nature designated to uncover the story of an individual’s life (Elms, 1994) and link it with psychological theory (Runyan, 1982a).

2.3 Psychobiographical Research

2.3.1 Trends in the Development of Psychobiography

Postmodernism has highlighted the importance of individual meanings which has resulted in a revamped research approach to analysing storied data (Roberts, 2002; Stroud, 2004). Traditionally quantitative methods were prioritised (Runyan, 1982a) and therefore life histories were far less influential (Runyan, 1988a). Researchers tended to focus on objective accounts of human behaviour instead of including the subject’s humanity (Simonton, 2003).

Historians tended to focus their attention on elevating the person rather than attempting to capture the feelings and faults of a human being (McAdams, 1994). McAdams (1994) argues that history is concerned with the description and interpretation of particular phenomena and events in the past without attempting an in-depth psychological study. This is evidenced by
the many stories written about men and women during the Victorian ages and the medieval hagiographies of Christian saints (McAdams, 1988).

In 1910 Freud published *Leonardo da Vinci and a memory of his childhood*. This was the first attempt at binding biographical and psychological approaches. Freud coined the phrase psychobiography (Scalapino, 1999) and suggested that psychobiographies attempted to study the way a psychic concern covered both a neurotic and a creative masterpiece. Despite the obvious weaknesses that were evident in Freud’s work (Elms, 1994), it redefined the way psychology and biographies were used as applied psychoanalysis (Runyan, 1988a). This gave birth to psychobiographies and some of the early subjects were William Shakespeare, Richard Wagner and Martin Luther (Runyan, 1988a).

The popularity of psychobiographies has ebbed and flowed through the decades with a declining interest during the World War II and the 1960s. The 1960s heralded a rise in creativity and fueled the rise in psychobiographies on writers, musicians, artists, politicians, religious leaders and many others (Fouchè, 1999). Roberts (2002) attributed this increase to a number of factors such as (a) growing interest in the life course; (b) a disillusionment with static approaches to data collection; (c) the increased concern with lived experience and how best to reveal and express it; and (d) the growing popularity of qualitative research in general.

This journey has led to a symbiotic alliance between psychology and biography even though it is a tenuous one (Elms, 1994). The psychobiographical approach is multidisciplinary, blending professions together such as psychoanalysis, psychiatry, political science, academic psychology, literature and the arts, psychohistory, anthropology and religion (Fouchè, 1999) and includes a vast selection of psychological theories (Simonton, 2003).
2.3.2 Psychobiography: Definitions and Descriptions

“Psychobiographical study entails a systematic and descriptively-rich study of renowned, enigmatic, exceptional, or even contentious individuals in socio-historical contexts within a psychological frame of reference” (Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2010, p. 495). Bromley (1986) describes a psychobiography as a study whereby psychological concepts, methods and discoveries are significant within a single case study and allows the researcher to retain the “holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events” (Yin, 2009, p. 4). The psychobiographer then applies current psychological concepts and theory to individuals who lived in earlier decades or eras (Anderson, 1981).

By identifying individual experiences and studying subjective and abstract accounts of lived stories the psychobiographer is able focus on prominent themes within the lived story (Roberts, 2002). This is done by working within a qualitative narrative case study framework which focuses on clarifying and understanding the data collected (Mcleod, 1994). Engaging in such a framework examines the growth of original thinking, creativity and productivity in enigmatic individuals (Howe, 1997).

A Criticism of psychobiographies is the overemphasis of the individual in an isolated context (Runyan, 1988b). In addition, Elms (1994) states that it is easier to write a bad psychobiography than a good one as many researchers have done shoddy preparation and illustration of their work.

Carlson (1988) proposes three factors for applying the psychobiographical approach to a psychological study. Firstly, he suggests that it is easier to trace human development following a psychobiographical approach than the best longitudinal study. Secondly, he states that the variety of life history data allows for a scrutinising of socio-historical contexts.
Thirdly, he states that a greater deal of consensual validation can be achieved versus a clinical case study.

In order to consolidate the meaning of what a psychobiography is the following section will provide a brief description of related concepts and allow the reader to compare it with other closely related and confusing terms.

2.3.3 Psychobiography and Related Concepts

2.3.3.1 Historical Psychology, Psychohistory and Historiography

Historical psychology is seen as a history of a psychological phenomenon or the history of thought about psychological development (Runyan, 1988a). Runyan (1988a) also highlights that there is great confusion about the scope and definition of psychohistory and this is due to a tenuous relationship between the two disciplines. History focuses on factual explanations of actions and experiences of human beings from the past and psychology is the scientific study of human behaviour and experiences (Runyan, 1988b). Psychohistory is a process whereby formal psychological theory is applied to history (Runyan, 1982a) in an attempt to interpret socio-political and cultural events (Berg, 1995). Historiography is an orderly collection and evaluation of data related to past experiences using various sources to collect information such as government documents, newspaper editorials, photographs and films in order to explore and reconstruct past information into meaningful review of historical accounts (Berg, 1995).

2.3.3.2 Psychobiography and Personality Assessment

Psychobiography largely focuses on lives already lived (Carlson, 1988), purposefully providing reasons for aspects of the individual’s life history which are difficult to ascertain through the use of logical, rational or simple psychological principles (Alexander, 1988).
Personality assessment serves to explore and give account of a life in progress (Fouchè, 1999) and focuses on what the person is like in the here and now and the factors that are acting upon that life. (Cohen & Swerdlik, 2005). Both methods study personality over time to understand their social context, however a psychobiography eliminates the problem of prediction and focuses on the understanding (Van Os, 2006).

2.3.3.3 Life Histories and Life Stories

Life histories attempt to use objective and subjective data to discern and interpret critical, formative and culminating events in an individual’s life (Bromley, 1986). Roberts (2002) describes life history as a holistic look at the narrative of an individual’s life focusing on important aspects. Life histories are a valuable approach to sourcing data on social events (Runyan, 1982a) through the collection of oral or written autobiographies from a similar group of individuals in a similar context (Fouchè, 1999). This is done in order to identify central themes that facilitate an understanding of the group (Bertaux, 1981).

Life stories allude to an assimilation of a told story via collection, interpretation and report writing (Roberts, 2002). It is a subjective account given by a narrator highlighting the particular socio-cultural context in relation to the individual’s life (Bromley, 1986). This subjective narrative of the individual’s history facilitates the construction of an imagined future by highlighting aspects of meaning and direction (Schultz, 2005). The story is an orderly and simple format that is utilised to formulate data emphasizing meaning rather than fact (Howard, 1991).

2.3.3.4 Autobiography, Biography and Psychobiography

Autobiography is the life narrative of an individual as told or written by the individual himself and this usually leads to an autobiography being biased and subjective (Bromley,
Psychobiography largely focuses on lives already lived (Carlson, 1988), purposefully providing reasons for aspects of the individuals life history which are difficult to ascertain through the use of logical, rational or simple psychological principles (Alexander, 1988).

Biography on the other hand refers to the the individual’s life story written by an external author (Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2005) who usually has very little psychological training and focuses their work within a literary framework. Often a biography can be written without the consultation of the individual concerned and therefore could be inaccurate (Fouchè, 1999).

2.3.3.5 Psychological Case Study and Single-Case Experiment

As one of the first types of research methods to be used, a psychological case study is utilised when the solution to a problem needs to be both understood and practical (Yin, 1994). The process is to scientifically reconstruct and interpret the experiences of an individual via available evidence (Yin, 1994). Bromley (1986) differentiates between a psychological case study by noting that a psychobiography focuses on the whole life while the former focuses on events, experiences and episodes.

A single-case experiment utilises closely monitored conditions to assist with the study of particular behaviours (Bromley, 1986). The purpose of such a study is to record and measure specific changes that occur in an individual’s life when interventions are applied (Gerds, 1989).

2.3.4 The Value of Psychobiographical Life History Research

Several scholars have advocated the use of psychobiographies as a credible form of research (Carlson 1988; McAdams 1988; Runyan 1988a). These advantages can be summed up in five prominent domains.
2.3.4.1 The Uniqueness of the Individual Case within the Whole

The researcher needs to study the patterns and processes of the individual’s personality and these processes need to be looked at as a whole and not as individual elements (Runyan, 1982). Elms (1994) views this process as morphogenic in nature, allowing the researcher to describe the individual holistically rather than in a fragmented and isolated manner.

2.3.4.2 The Social-Historical Context

Psychobiographical research provides a framework for the individual’s cultural, socio-economic beliefs and values to be compared to and to be understood in (Fouchè & van Niekerk, Academic psychobiography in South Africa: Past, present and future, 2010). Understanding the surrounding context the individual was living in allows the researcher to gain perspective into the relationship between the individual’s perceptions, experiences as well as historical and social contexts (Runyan, 1984). By using this approach to research it will offer the present researcher an opportunity to study the life of Winston Churchill in a more holistic manner.

2.3.4.3 Process and Patterns over Time

The study of an individual’s life over time offers the researcher the opportunity to follow and discover themes across an individual’s life-span (Carlson, 1988). Conducting research on finished lives allows the researcher to trace patterns over time (Carlson, 1988); this longitudinal approach provides an integrated and in-depth understanding of ‘personality in action’ (Fikse, 1988).

2.3.4.4 Subjective Reality

The psychobiographical approach provides the researcher with the opportunity to investigate the feelings, thoughts and inner experiences of the individual (Mouton, 1988).
This allows the researcher to develop a level of sympathy and empathy with the subject (Runyan, 1982). Watson (1976) believes that an individual’s life can be viewed as a subjective document aimed at highlighting a subjective reality. If done well the subjective reality forces a confrontation with other people’s subjectives perceptions of the subject (Goodson & Sikes, 2001).

### 2.3.4.5 Theory Testing and Development

Theory testing offers psychobiographers the opportunity to test and develop theories of human development that can be compared to current and previous literature on personality (Carlson, 1988). Carlson (1988) believes that this is an ideal laboratory to test theories of human development. Theory is important in shaping research as it (a) directs the selection of goals and design in data collection; (b) the conceptualisation and, (c) the way the data is used within the theoretical framework (Edwards, 1990) and therefore could act as a template for generalisation (Yin, 1994).

### 2.4 Conclusion

Psychobiography should not be viewed in a lesser light to its qualitative research contemporaries as it offers and adds valuable insight into the body of knowledge within psychology. This chapter has provided an outline of the relationship between biography, life history, narrative and single case study research and the advantages thereof. In the following chapter an outline of Adler’s (1927) theory of individuality will be discussed in an attempt to explain the complexity of human nature and personality.
Chapter 3

Alfred Adler’s Individual Psychology

3.1 Chapter Preview

In the past psychobiographies tended to only focus on psychoanalytic theories. Recently however there has been an inclusion of a wider range of theories (Elms, 1994). This allows a researcher to draw from various theories of personality and to delve into the resources from developmental, social, cognitive and abnormal psychology. This study will apply the theory of Individual Psychology developed by Alfred Adler (1927) to explore the life of Winston Churchill.

Adler’s (1930, 1958) theory of personality development is not a theory of stages but rather a theory that emphasises the first five years of a child’s life and emphasises the point that it plays a significant role in the development of life goals. These goals, however, can be adjusted or even revised at any point of an individual’s life (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). Initially the focus of the chapter will be the holistic view of the individual followed by the development of personality. The role of psychobiographies in relation to Adler’s theory will then be discussed.

3.2 The View of the Person

Adler’s theory stems from his own childhood experiences in which he was dogged with personal health issues. This resulted in him not being able to play sport or partake in other physical activities with children his own age, fostering feelings of inferiority (Meyer, Moore, & Viljoen, 1997). At the same time because of these illnesses, Adler was pampered by his mother, only to be dethroned by a younger brother later on. Adding to an already difficult childhood, one of Adler’s brothers died in a bed next to him (Corey, 2005). At school, Adler
overheard a teacher telling his father that he would have to be content with his son becoming a shoemaker. These experiences, combined with Adler’s fall out with Sigmund Freud played a significant role in Adler forming the theory of Individual Psychology (Meyer, Moore, & Viljoen, 1997).

Alfred Adler (1870 - 1937) placed great value on the distinctiveness and unity of personality, which led Adler to name his theory Individual Psychology. He derived the name from the Latin word: *individuum* – which means indivisible – to highlight the importance of holism (Mosak & Maniaci, 1989). Adler was interested in the individual as a functional whole whose personality comprised of parts and as such all the parts needed to be understood (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). Adler (1929) viewed every thought, feeling and action whether it be conscious or unconscious to be the building blocks of individual psychology.

Adler held the view that authentic behavioural theory to be insufficient in its attempts to explain human behaviour (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). Instead, his attempts to explain human behaviour were cognitive and included a conscious understanding of personality (the style of life). Adler (1929) viewed the unconscious as that which is unable to formulate clear concepts. The conscious and the unconscious are not viewed as adversaries but rather they are seen as symbiotic and part of the same reality being used by the individual to promote personal goals (Ansbacher, 1982).

Individual psychology holds that the individual places greater value on constructing their own lifestyle based on their subjective experiences of reality rather than relying on abilities provided by heredity and impressions provided by the environment (Adler, 1930). Thus, individuals determine their own path in life and attach their own meaning. Corey (2005) states that lifestyle includes the individual’s goal, self-concept, social feeling and attitude to the world. If the individual is viewed as a whole then the totality of his behaviour would
reflect the basic views, purpose and any incorrect beliefs of that individual’s life (Jones & Lyddon, 2003). The core of Adler’s theory was the hypothesis that all human beings compensate for their organic inferiority (that which you are born with) through striving for mastery/superiority over their feelings of inferiority (Adler, 1927). He viewed human behaviour as purposive, unified and serving as a catalyst to move away from a subjective sense of inferiority (Adler, 1930). Adler was a living example of his own theory. While it appeared as if Adler was a victim of his organic inferiority, he went on to become a doctor of medicine and later moved into the area of psychiatry, thereby achieving mastery in the process (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003).

Adler subscribed to a teleological perspective regarding behaviour, stating that individuals are pulled towards their goals. People will behave in such a way so that they may achieve their desired goal; irrespective of their success (Adler called this the ‘fictional goal’) (Adler, 1929). He proposed that children from an early age conceive a life goal or ideals of what it means to be safe, secure and own a sense of belonging (Dinkmeyer, Pew, & Dinkmeyer, 1979). The fictional goal is an individual’s technique to negotiate the current situation and navigate/overcome perceived inferiorities (Meyer, Moore, & Viljoen, 1997). Adler held the view that individuals were future orientated and this was a core dynamic in his theory. The future is the fictional goal; however, the fictional goal is not viewed as objective but rather as a subjective future experienced in the present (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). This subjective future is a future grounded in the present and is not concerned with future events or part of human planning but rather a present phenomenological field, called the future. The goal is an ever-present and is not necessarily present in consciousness.

The process of forming the goal is a fabrication, the individual’s own creation (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). The fictional goal is a guiding force in an individual’s life offering meaning and purpose. The individual will act upon it as if it were true regardless of its
plausibility. Without a fictional goal, the individual will have no meaning in his life (Adler, 1929). Due to fictional finalism being a subjective present reality in the individual, it determines the individual’s creative choice of what is reality (Corey, 2005). This suggests that individuals do not experience events as they actually exist but in relation to their fictional goal (Adler, 1930). Finally, Adler added a logical aspect to the fictional goal stating that fiction can be a working hypothesis as the individual is always moving and always becoming (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956).

An individual is a responsible and purposeful being and a product of his personal and social context, therefore Adler argued that it was crucial to understand the familial, social, and cultural contexts that offered meaning to the individual’s life (Adler, 1958). The meaning that individuals find is unique to them, their attitude towards success is unique and hence the goal they form is unique to their context (Mosak & Maniaci, 1989). Each goal is selected and based on choices made during the individual’s experiences of childhood and the context. This is done in relation to the individual’s knowledge of self, the world and others and in the process shapes the individuals attitude towards compensation (Adler, 1930). This self-knowledge or personal logic results in a dependable cognitive and attitudinal framework that directs the individual towards the goal (Mosak & Maniaci, 1989). Adler placed great emphasis on the longitudinal influence of core beliefs and convictions that are formed by a child regarding behaviour (Corey, 2005).

Behaviour regardless of whether it is functional or dysfunctional occurs within a social context and is in harmony with the self-determined fictional goal (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). This persistent pursuit is the core solution to life’s difficulties and manifests itself in the way the individual addresses the tasks of life (Adler, 1930). Initially Adler had three life tasks which were all social in nature and were grouped as occupational, social and sexual (Adler, 1930). Self-regulation or ‘getting along with oneself” as a manifestation of social
interest (Dreikurs & Mosak, 1967) and ‘finding meaning in life’ or spirituality were added later to expand the life tasks to five (Mosak & Dreikurs, 1967). These life tasks are fundamental to human living and dysfunction in any one of them is often an indicator of a psychological disorder (American Psychiatric Association, 2000). Therefore, Adler emphasises the importance of social interest as a cornerstone of mental health. Adler holds that an individual suffering from a mental disorder is rooted in a lack of social interest and has an excessive preoccupation with the self (Meyer, Moore, & Viljoen, 1997). Common traits of people who lack social interest include the tendency of the individual to think of their own problems plus their inability to engage with others (Meyer, Moore, & Viljoen, 1997). The healthy person is simply more adept at dealing with life’s problems than those who are mentally unwell. Adler viewed neurosis as:

The natural, logical development of an individual who is comparatively inactive, filled with a personal, egocentric striving for superiority and is therefore retarded in the development of his social interest (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956, p. 241).

Adler (1930) held firm the impact social interest played on human evolution and was of the opinion that if social interest was not present then humanity could be destroyed by its self-created difficulties.

Adler disagreed with Freud and held the view that humans are not driven by sexual urges but rather motivated by social relatedness; being self-determined and creative in choosing their own goals (Corey, 2005). Ultimately, it is the individual’s perception of these factors that determines their goals and development (Adler, 1958). Adler held that an individual’s personality needed to be seen as a whole, rather than as the sum of his individual parts (Corey, 2005, p. 96). According to Adler individuals are born, raised, educated and live within a social-cultural context and are free to move and act according to their own purposes.
He proposed that the cornerstone of Individual Psychology is every conscious or unconscious thought, feeling and action, which forms part of the greater whole (Adler, 1929).

In summary, the individual’s essential quest is to overcome inferiorities and to strive for superiority and perfection (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). A deeper investigation into Adler’s theory reveals additional insights into optimal development. According to Adler “the peak of this striving is reached when the individual not only strives for perfection of the self (in an egocentric way), but places that striving at the service of society” (Meyer, Moore, & Viljoen, 1997, p. 146).

The life of Winston Churchill will be explored within Adler’s theoretical framework of Individual Psychology (the optimally developed person). Attention will be given to the integration of this theory with the life of Winston Churchill. In chapter four is a brief biographical overview of Churchill’s life.

### 3.3 Structure of Personality

Adler did not base his theory on designated stages of development or structural concepts, but instead explained personality as a functional whole that the individual uses to navigate toward self-determined goals. The individual’s lifestyle and goals are two aspects of personality and cannot be expressed through an objective reality but rather through a subjective view that the individual has regarding life (Corey, 2005). This subjective view interacts with the social environment and influences the creative self and constitutional attributes of an individual (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003). Stemming from this the individual creates both a personalised and creative interaction that reveals a purposeful move towards their goal of superiority (Adler, 1929). The above-mentioned concepts will be discussed throughout the chapter. The aim is to explore the relationship between them in relation to personality as a unified entity.
3.4 Constitutional Attributes

Adler (1958) believed that through an individual’s creative self they are able to freely shape their own behaviour and create a personality. By the time a child reaches the age of 4 – 5 years, they have set their final fictional goal. This creative self is not influenced by heredity or environment although it provides a platform for the creative power (Feist & Feist, 2008). The final goal is the individual’s method of compensating for real or perceived organic weaknesses by creatively determining what the final goal may be (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003).

3.4.1 Inferiority and Compensation

Adler believed that individuals are born with physical deficiencies that activate feelings of inferiority, feelings that drive an individual to compensate for those feelings and strive for superiority or success (Feist & Feist, 2008). There is a continuous and compelling need to overcome inferiority feelings and at the same time, individuals are pulled by their desire for completion. These minus and plus situations exist simultaneously and cannot be separated because they are two dimensions of a single force (Feist & Feist, 2008).

The striving force is innate but is shaped by feelings of inferiority and the final goal of superiority. Without this innate drive towards perfection, children will never feel inferior and without inferiority, children will never set a goal for superiority and success (Feist & Feist, 2008). There are various ways in which an individual can compensate for organ deficiencies by firstly, trying to strengthen the weak organ beyond others, secondly, developing another organ to an extraordinary degree, or thirdly, they may adapt psychologically by developing supplementary skills (Boeree, 2006).

Later Adler developed his theory to include another dimension, psychological inferiorities (Boeree, 2006). This referred to how people internalise what others say about them and how
they end up believing their words and as a result tend to become what they say or compensate for the weakness and develop other areas (Griffith, 1984). In the same way individuals compensate for physical inferiorities, they compensate for psychological inferiorities. For example, people who believe they are stupid or weak may compensate differently, overcome, and excel at their perceived inferiority. They could also excel in another field while retaining their inferiority feelings or simply fail to develop their self-esteem (Boeree, 2006).

3.4.2 Complexes

Reflecting on his own life, Adler did not consider inferiority as a negative influence, but rather as a catalyst for striving for superiority (Corey, 2005). The reality though, some individual’s become so consumed by their feelings of inferiority that they end up thinking too much about it and subsequently develop an inferiority complex (Adler, 1929). This continuous discouragement is an incorrect reflection of the individual’s competence in the face of life tasks (Boeree, 2006). Hence, inferiority complexes stunt further development rather than aiding in striving for superiority (Dreikurs, 1967).

On the opposite scale, there is a superiority complex that is an alternative response to inferiority (Adler, 1930). A false belief is in place allowing an individual to think they are better than others. On the contrary, Adler believes that this is only an exaggerated state of inferiority that the individual cannot bear. Individuals manifest this exaggerated state in various ways, some find security through crime and prejudice while others use more covert means such as substance use. These individuals cease to be socially interested but are rather concerned with evading life’s difficulties rather than facing them (Adler, 1958).
3.5 Social Environment

Adler admired the writings of Jan Smuts, the South African philosopher and political leader. Smuts held the view that people are understood when one considers them more as unified wholes rather than a collection of bits and pieces. It is essential to understand them in the context of their environment, both physical and social (Boeree, 2006). This approach is called holism, and Adler in keeping with holism argued that anyone ‘striving for perfection’ could only do so by considering his or her social environment.

As social animals, we simply don't exist, much less thrive, without others, and even the most resolute people-hater forms that hatred in a social context! (Boeree, 2006, p. 7).

Adler argued that the use of an individual’s ability is far more important than the prospect of having numerous abilities. Some people are fortunate enough to be born with certain abilities and the environment gives them the opportunity to enhance those abilities, ultimately the individual is responsible for the use of those abilities (Feist & Feist, 2008). Adler also believed that people’s interpretations of experiences are more important than the experiences themselves and therefore interpret the experiences to suit their own purposes (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956).

3.6 Style of Life

Adler’s theory does not consist of traits or stages in describing an individual (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). Adler proposed that an individual has a ‘lifestyle’ or ‘style of life’ that is formed by one’s creative responses to individuals and environmental experiences. It refers to how individual’s live their lives, how they handle problems and interpersonal relations
The lifestyle is unconscious in that it reflects the individuals basic or core views about themselves that are not necessarily understood (Christopher & Bickhard, 1992).

By the age of four or five, individual’s start to crystallise their style of life and their actions begin to express their unified style of life. The final fictional goal may be singular, but the style of life need not be so restrictive or constrictive (Feist & Feist, 2008). Freud was reductionistic in his approach, attempting to reduce psychological concepts into simple physiological constructs such as the id, ego and super ego (Boeree, 2006). Adler held the opinion that context had far greater meaning to life and that people are not mere mechanical reactions to an environment. Similarly, Adler used a teleological approach in his theory, he considered the future to be crucial to his theory stating that current behaviour is shaped by the future goals the individual is constantly trying to attain. (Boeree, 2006).

Psychologically unhealthy individuals often lead lives that are rather rigid and leave no room for flexibility; they are trapped and are unable to choose new ways of reacting to their environment. In contrast, psychologically healthy people behave in diverse and flexible ways with styles of life that are complex, enriched and changing. Even though they have one final goal, which remains constant, they are vicissitudinous in manner with which they relate to it. Thus, they experience the ability to change (Feist & Feist, 2008).

People with a healthy, socially useful style of life express their social interest through action. They actively struggle to solve what Adler regarded as the three major problems of life—neighbourly love, sexual love, and occupation—and they do so through cooperation, personal courage, and a willingness to make a contribution to the welfare of another. Adler (1956) believed that people with a socially useful style of life represent the highest form of humanity in the evolutionary process and are likely to populate the world of the future (Feist & Feist, 2008, p. 78).
3.6.1 Lifestyle Types

Adler (1927, 1929, 1958) held that neurosis was a result of insufficient social interest and argued that individuals develop unique holistic lifestyles that are reflected by the totality of their personality.

Each style is the “creation of the child himself, who uses his inheritance and impression of the environment as bricks to build his particular avenue for success – success according to his own interpretation” (Adler, 1982, p. 5).

Adler (1982) describes four heuristic characteristic types of lifestyle and grouped them according to the degree of social interest and the degree of movement towards success.

3.6.1.1 The Ruling Type

There is a tendency from childhood to be rather aggressive and dominant over others (Boeree, 2006). This selfish striving for power can result in individuals exhibiting antisocial and power-seeking behaviour to attain their goals (Adler, 1958). Because of this kind of behaviour, they tend to be dominant and ignore anything or anybody that gets in their way, displaying no social interest (Adler, 1958). The most eager of these turn out to be bullies and sadists; those that are somewhat less energetic hurt others by hurting themselves, and include alcoholics, drug addicts, and suicides (Boeree, 2006).

3.6.1.2 The Leaning Type

They are described as sensitive people who are very protective of themselves but at the same time can be viewed as dependent, relying on others to carry them through life's difficulties (Adler, 1982). When overwhelmed, they manifest behaviour that is thought of as neurotic, displaying symptoms such as phobias, obsessions and compulsions, general anxiety, hysteria, amnesias, and so on (Boeree, 2006).
3.6.1.3 The Avoiding Type

This type of person displays the lowest levels of energy and essentially avoids life as a means of coping. They manoeuvre themselves out of difficult situations in order to avoid the disappointment and as a result end up living in their own isolated world (Adler, 1982). Under severe stress, they tend to become psychotic, withdrawing into their own personal worlds (Boeree, 2006). They grasp at antisocial goals, are lazy and passive-aggressive (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003).

Adler (1982) considered the above three lifestyle types as useless. The individuals who utilise these types of lifestyles find it difficult to resolve the five life tasks of occupation, social, sex, self-regulation and spirituality as they lack the ability to cooperate and contribute to society (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956).

3.6.1.4 The Socially Useful Type

This type of person exhibits high levels of energy and have a high regard for social interest. These individuals have the means to cope with the life tasks within a well-defined social context and are optimistic about the future (Adler, 1958, 1982). Boeree (2006) states that without energy, an individual may find it difficult to attain social interest, as their ability to do things for others will be impaired by their lack of energy. Their positive development is often fostered in a family atmosphere of cooperation, trust and respect (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003). They actively interrogate their life for their solution to their problems in a way that contributes usefully to others (Adler, 1982).

3.6.2 Faulty Lifestyles

A faulty lifestyle or ‘personality’ as Adler sometimes viewed it was caused by three basic childhood situations. As mentioned before, the lifestyle of a child is set by the ages of four or
five and either organ inferiorities, pampering or neglect could contribute to a faulty lifestyle (Boeree, 2006). The prototypical lifestyle that has been created from personal and environment experiences is used later in life to interpret all other experiences.

Organ inferiorities, as well as early childhood diseases cause children to be overburdened. The result of the burden on their lives causes the child to focus on themselves only when someone else draws their attention off their inferiority (encouragement from loved ones) can they compensate with a superiority complex (Boeree, 2006).

Pampering viewed in its simplest form may sound wonderful, but the reality is that pampered children create a faulty lifestyle that fails in two ways: Firstly, the ability to attain something through effort is lost and in turn the individual discovers later in life that they are truly inferior. Secondly, by getting what they want the child learns assumptions that through commanding people he can get what he wants. Societies respond to pampered people in only one way: hatred (Boeree, 2006).

A neglected child learns what the pampered child learns, but the experiences of the neglected child are far more direct. Their inferiority becomes entrenched because they are told and shown every day that they are of no value. They trust no one and do not know love and the chances of developing it later are slim (Adler, 1958). Instead, they experience suspicion, isolation and malice creating a sense of being unvalued and inferior (Adler, 1930). The position of the neglected child includes not only orphans and the victims of abuse, but the children whose parents are never there, and the ones raised in a rigid, authoritarian manner (Boeree, 2006).
3.7 Creative Self

Adler believed that each person is given the choice and freedom to create his or her unique style of life. Ultimately, each individual holds themselves accountable for who they are and how they behave (Feist & Feist, 2008). The creative self is not seen as a construct upon which decisions are built but rather an innate individual ability to design their own life goals (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003). There are factors like heredity and environment, organ inferiorities and early childhood experiences that influence the individual. These elements cause a child to manage their life-plan and create a fictional goal to overcome any perceived organ inferiorities. This allows the child to exist in a realm of freedom through their creative power (Dreikurs, 1995).

Adler (1927, 1929, 1958) argued that neither heredity nor the environment is a determining factor, but the individual expresses their innate ability in the context of their unique creative power (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). This creative power allows individuals to be actors, who script their own actions, personalities and life stories in order to have their own meaningful life experiences (Watts & Shulman, 2003).

The building materials of personality are secondary. We are our own architect and can build either a useful or a useless style of life. We can choose to construct a gaudy façade or to expose the essence of the structure. We are not compelled to grow in the direction of social interest, inasmuch as we have no inner nature that forces us to be good. Conversely, we have no inherently evil nature from which we must escape. We are who we are because of the use we have made of our bricks and mortar (Feist & Feist, 2008, p. 79).
3.8 Birth Order

Adler (1929) regarded birth order as a salient factor to individual development. Birth order itself is less important than the perception the individual has of the position (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). Adler focused on five areas but considered various other combinations in his attempts explain birth order. The table below gives a brief explanation of each position (Stein, 2005).

Table 3.1

Adler’s Birth Order

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSITION</th>
<th>FAMILY SITUATION</th>
<th>CHILD’S CHARACTERISTICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ONLY</td>
<td>Birth is a miracle. Parents have no previous experience. Retains 100% attention from both parents. May become a rival of one parent. Can be over-protected and spoiled.</td>
<td>Likes being the centre of adult attention. Often has difficulty sharing with siblings and peers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OLDEST</td>
<td>Dethroned by next child. Has to learn to share. Parent expectations are usually very high. Often given responsibility and expected to set an example.</td>
<td>May become authoritarian or strict. Feels power is his right. Can become helpful if encouraged. May turn to father after birth of next child.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECOND</td>
<td>He has a pacemaker. There is always someone ahead.</td>
<td>Is more competitive, wants to overtake older child. May become a rebel or try to outdo everyone.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Competition can deteriorate into rivalry.

**MIDDLE**
- Is "sandwiched" in. May feel squeezed out of a position of privilege and significance.  
- May be even-tempered, "take it or leave it" attitude. May have trouble finding a place or become a fighter of injustice.

**YOUNGEST**
- Has many mothers and fathers.  
- Older children try to educate him.  
- Never dethroned.  
- Wants to be bigger than the others.  
- May have huge plans that never work out. Can stay the "baby."  
- Frequently spoiled.

**TWIN**
- One is usually stronger or more active. Parents may see one as the older.  
- Can have identity problems.  
- Stronger one may become the leader.

"**GHOST CHILD**"
- Child born after the death of the first child may have a "ghost" in front of him. Mother may become over-protective.  
- Child may exploit mother's over-concern for his well-being, or he may rebel, and protest the feeling of being compared to an idealized memory.

**ADOPTED CHILD**
- Parents may be so thankful to have a child that they spoil him. They may try to compensate for the loss of his biological parents.  
- Child may become very spoiled and demanding. Eventually, he may resent or idealize the biological parents.

**ONLY BOY**
- Usually with women all the time, if  
- May try to prove he is the man in
The child’s method of relating with others is set by the age of four or five, this together with his experiences and family of origin add to the child’s understanding of their lifestyle (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956; Watts & Shulman, 2003). The way a child views his position within the family is important because it determines how he will relate to adults later in life (Shulman & Mosak, 1977). Each child is different and their psychological makeup is different as are their home circumstances. The lifestyle that a child expresses are various attempts by the child to adapt to the situation they face (Adler, 1958).

3.9 Striving for Superiority

Adler (1927, 1929, 1930, 1958) viewed an individual’s innate ability or will for superiority as the stand out feature of being human. Early childhood experiences of inferiority, social context/environment and family experiences allow the individual to form a goal. The individual strives to achieve the goal by overcoming their inferiority through compensation (Adler, 1929, 1930). Manaster and Corsini (1982) argue that the solution to
life’s difficulties lie with striving for superiority, and this can be understood by how people attend to life’s tasks. Much of Adler’s theory is based on his life’s experience and, even more so, on his perception of his own childhood. The concept of striving for superiority seems to encapsulate Adler’s own attempts at striving for superiority emanating his own experiences of inferiority and weakness (Corey, 2005; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003). There are unique and different styles of striving that compensate for a perceived weakness for every individual and this Adler believed constituted individuality (Adler, 1929). The striving for superiority is a ceaseless enterprise and is built on what is important and meaningful to the individual. Adler proposed that striving for superiority be viewed in two ways firstly, as a means of striving for power and secondly, as social interest. The individual that is actively doing so is doing it for the development of society and not any personal endeavour (Adler, 1929).

3.10 Striving for Power

The reasons people use to strive for superiority is different for each individual. People create various disguises to manipulate and alter what people may think of them to achieve personal goals (Boeree, 2006). At times, they can achieve their goals with little or no concern for others, their motivation is exaggerated feelings of personal inferiority, or a possible inferiority complex (Boeree, 2006). For example, various individuals may seek superiority through achieving political power or fame. However, the manifestations of each individual’s goals are different, for one, working tirelessly may prove to relevant parties that he is the man for the job. While another may rely on influential contacts whilst a third may be critical to all opponents.

The creative self is resourceful and able to provide meaning to an individual’s life in relation to their fictional goal. The hope that is created or chosen for the striving is to gain
mastery over a perceived organic weakness (Corey, 2005). Therefore personality becomes the expression of the body and mind (Adler, 1958).

3.11 Social Interest

“The value of all human activity must be seen from the viewpoint of social interest” (Feist & Feist, 2008, p. 75). Social interest is a watered down meaning of Adler’s German term Gemeinschaftsgefühl that roughly translated means “social feeling” or “community feeling.” The intention behind the phrase is to convey the feeling of oneness with all humanity, implying a membership in the social community of all people. A person with well-developed Gemeinschaftsgefühl does not serve his own need for superiority but rather aims for the whole community to attain perfection.

Adler (1929) believed that through the child’s social interactions with stronger adults they develop feelings of inferiority because they are in an environment where the adult is more skilled than the infant is. These feelings of inferiority remain with the infant throughout life. Such experiences from the parents and the environment in general have a significant effect on the development of personality, however it cannot be regarded as the sole cause for whom or what people become (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003).

Ansbacher (1992) regards social interest as one of Adler’s most salient concepts. Social interest permeates and is intertwined with an individual’s awareness of being part of the human community; secondly, it assists with the sense of belonging in a social world and finally, it allows individual attitudes to form to deal with the social world. Adler viewed social interest as innate but agreed that it needed to be nurtured and developed consciously (Adler, 1958)

3.12 Optimal Development
The person that is seen to be optimally developed continues to be innovative creative and courageous in facing the challenges of life (Massey, 1986). They make sure their life displays high social interest and regardless of circumstances continue to strive for superiority in ways that benefit society and not just themselves (Corey, 2005). According to Adler (1929, 1930, 1958), a family environment that existed of co-operation and social contribution provided the essential platform for development. Individuals who disengage with social interest create behaviour that is out of touch with reality and as a result cause individuals to be limited in their inter- and intrapersonal functioning (Adler, 1964).

The optimal individual is willing and accommodating and his sense of being is in relation to common perceptions allowing him to be of value to society (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). Even the most malleable fictional finalism uses reality testing a screening measure for future thinking allowing the individual to gainfully strive for superiority through social interest (McAdams, 1994).

3.13 Conclusion

This chapter explored Adler’s individual psychology as a theoretical perspective to uncover the complex personality development of an enigmatic figure. Adler’s theory provides a means of viewing Churchill’s life through a theory that is both holistic and teleological in its construction. The lifestyle is viewed as the individual is striving to compensate for a perceived inferiority towards a goal of success that unifies all behaviour. In Chapter 6 individual psychology will be applied to Churchill’s life to promote a greater understanding of his personality development across his lifespan. The next chapter provides a comprehensive historical overview of the life of Winston Churchill.
Chapter 4

The Life of Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill

The mood of Britain is wisely and rightly averse from every form of shallow or premature exultation. This is no time for boasts or glowing prophecies, but there is this—a year ago our position looked forlorn, and well-nigh desperate, to all eyes but our own. Today we may say aloud before an awe-struck world, 'We are still masters of our fate. We still are captain of our souls.' (Churchill, 1941).

4.1 Chapter Preview

This chapter provides a historical overview of the life of Winston Spencer Leonard Churchill. This chapter represents Churchill’s life over a period of 90 years, from his birth (1874) to his death (1965). The vast amount of information regarding Churchill has allowed the researcher to triangulate with reasonable accuracy an historical account of his life. The present researcher believes that studying such an enigmatic individual is needed in providing a psychological understanding of an individual whose purpose in life was to allow a free world to exist. Churchill chose to rise above his childhood stigmas and surpass all expectations thereby cementing the name of Winston Churchill into the history of a country he loved and a democratic world he hoped for.

4.2 Significance of the Life History Context

Churchill has been the subject of many reports, studies and biographical documents. However, a literature review has illuminated the need for the life of Churchill to be scrutinised within a theoretical framework. Churchill is more than a politician and a comprehensive life narrative will reveal the complexities of his life. Gaining an understanding into the socio-historical and cultural context in which Churchill lived is crucial.
in uncovering his unique life narrative (Elms, 1994). Developmental theories and Personality
theories have indicated that there are various aspects to an individual such as family, religion
and interpersonal interactions (Caprara & Cervone, 2000). Similarly, the theory of individual
psychology (Adler, Chapter 3) highlights the importance of biological, psychological and
social forces in personality development. For these reasons, it is necessary to provide a
historical sketch of the life of Churchill.

The rest of this chapter provides a biographical and historical overview of four aspects of
Churchill’s identity: formative years, private life, political career and military career. Salient
information about these aspects, needed to understand better ‘who’ Churchill was, follows
below.

4.3 Salient Biographical and Historical overview of Churchill

4.3.1 Formative years (1874 – 1895).

4.3.1.1 Ancestry

A descendant of the Spencer family, Winston Leonard Spencer-Churchill was born to a
politician father Lord Randolph Churchill and mother Lady Randolph Churchill nee Jennie
Jerome who was the daughter of an American millionaire (Sullivan, 2010). By the mere fact
of being born a Churchill, Churchill assumed a prominent position in society. Churchill was a
direct descendent of John Churchill who was the first Duke of Malborough, Captain-General
of the forces in Queen Anne’s reign and the victor of the battles of Blenheim, Ramilles,
Oudenarde and Malplaquet. At one time the linage was so direct that he was heir apparent to
the dukedom (Pelling, 1974). Churchill’s father was a prominent member of parliament and
renowned for direct no nonsense speeches (Churchill, 1930).
Lord Randolph, born into British aristocracy, received his daily care and guidance from a nanny, typical of the era and synonymous with Victorian England. Children saw their parents once a day and by the age of eight were ready for boarding school (Lee & Lee, 2010). Jennie Jerome was educated in an exclusive private school with prominence given to arts and culture. In 1867, her parents separated amicably and Mrs Jerome and her daughters moved to Paris and became intimately acquainted with the court of Napoleon III (Lee & Lee, 2010).

Lord Randolph and Jennie Jerome met during Cowes Week (annual yacht race) in August 1873. A whirlwind romance commenced, by April 15, 1874, Lord and Lady Churchill were betrothed, and by May, Jennie was pregnant with Churchill. Reports are unclear as to what Jennie was doing prior to going into labour, but it was premature. Winston Leonard Spencer Churchill was born on the 30 November 1874 in Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire in the United Kingdom (Keegan, 1998).

4.3.1.2 Churchill as an infant

It cannot be said that raising children was not a priority for the Churchill’s, however, a young aristocratic couple needed to establish themselves among society and peers. This took time and money, and both were scarce as Lord and Lady Randolph relied on money from their parents to survive (Lee & Lee, 2010). With their future temporarily mapped, Randolph focused on his political career while Jennie and her nanny ‘Woom’ cared for Churchill.

Very little evidence exists on Churchill’s development as a baby, correspondence between Randolph and Jennie mainly refer to his growth and their affection for him. Churchill was a plump baby and affectionately referred to as “skinny” by his parents. In October 1875 in a letter to Jennie, Randolph enquires regarding Churchill’s health; “I still feel rather anxious about the baby. I hope you will be very careful of him in that draughty house” (Churchill, 1882 – 1965, Lord Randolph to Jennie, October 1875). By 1876, Randolph was looking for a
house in the country, which would be beneficial for the baby’s health. In a undated letter in Autumn 1876 Jennie writes to Randolph; “The baby is most flourishing, but he never will kiss me unless I say ‘For Papa’” (Churchill, 1882 – 1965, Jennie to Lord Randolph, Autumn 1876).

Mrs Everest (Woom) introduced Churchill to his first book ‘Reading Without Tears’ at the age of four and so began his education. A governess taught Churchill once a week and the idea of compulsory education irked him. Forcing Churchill to do sums dampened his spirits, added to this, his mother sided with the governess and this pained him. Even at the age of four Churchill found it difficult to adjust to the rule of discipline and his attitude and character resembled one of an overindulged and spoilt child, Jennie did get stricter with time (Lee & Lee, 2010).

4.3.1.3 Early school years

Churchill started his schooling career in Dublin as his parents briefly resided in Ireland. By the age of seven, the Churchill family had returned to England and Churchill was sent to St James’s preparatory where he was first introduced to Latin and other subjects, which he found very difficult. He questioned the need to learn languages and mathematics, as they proved unnecessary in everyday life. The irony was that Churchill was eager to learn, unfortunately, he could not choose his subjects (Churchill, 1930). This caused Churchill great distress at being forced to study something he did not like. The effect of this environment caused Churchill to struggle academically, resulting in a label of underachiever at school (Churchill, 1930). While at St James’s Churchill became ill forcing a move to a smaller and kindlier school in Brighton where he stayed until his acceptance into Harrow (Jones, 1966). Churchill himself notes that by the age of seven moving away from home to go to Harrow was a fearful experience. He questioned the need to leave behind the comfort of a nursery
where he had all that he needed including his vast collection of one thousand British toy soldiers (Churchill, 1930).

In contrast to his successes as an adult, Churchill was rather disruptive as a young boy, and the quintessential sensation seeker. Arnett (1991, p. 610) quotes a cousin of Churchill; “we thought he was wonderful, because he was always leading us into danger.” A former classmate, Sir Gerald Wollaston, recalled that he; "broke almost every rule made by masters or boys, was quite incorrigible, and had an unlimited vocabulary of 'backchat' which he produced with dauntless courage on every occasion of remonstrance" (Arnett, 1991, p. 611). This did not make him popular at Harrow and hence he was disliked by many of his peers. His housemaster viewed him as someone who was so regular in his irregularity (Oliver, 1987). Churchill’s desire for danger, adventure and for dare-devilish behaviour was further evidenced by his decision to build a bomb for blowing up a haunted house. The bomb was lowered into the cellar; when the explosion was not forthcoming he decided to look into the cellar only to experience an untimely explosion (Arnett, 1991).

Churchill had a brother John (Jack) Strange Spencer who was roughly six years younger (Pelling, 1974). There is little evidence describing their relationship in terms of time spent together. The age difference and boarding school made it difficult for them to share their childhood. Early accounts of letters between the brothers and their parents show that Churchill was very interested Jack’s welfare. Jennie and ‘Woom’ in reply would relay Jack’s sentiments (Lee & Lee, 2010). Typical of older brothers and Churchill’s character, he would take it upon himself to educate his younger brother. Sir Henry Drummond Wolff recorded a conversation where he asked Jack if he was a good boy, he replied that he was but that his brother was teaching him to be naughty (Wolff, 1908). However, bullish as Churchill may have seemed, he allowed Jack to join in and play with his enormous toy soldier collection. The only snag was Churchill limited Jack to the use of coloured troops with no artillery
through the Treaty for the Limitations of Armaments. While Churchill marshalled his army
his father paid him a visit and asked him if he would like to join the army, Churchill
immediately replied that he would and so his career was decided (Lee & Lee, 2010). At
Harrow, Churchill and Jack shared a room, Jack initially reports his excitement at this but in a
letter later in the year to his mother, he writes that Churchill had gone for a medical: “so I
shall expect a quiet day. (I am longing for it); I do not get much peace here” (Lee & Lee,
2010, p. 63).

Jones (1966), states that next to English, Churchill’s next best subject was chemistry as
demonstrated by his ability to build a bomb. However, Jones (1966) recalls a discussion with
Churchill in which he explains his hatred for mathematics and the fortune he had in passing
the examination.

There was a question in my third and last Examination about these Cosines and
Tangents in a highly square-rooted condition which must have been decisive on the
whole of my afterlife. It was a problem. But luckily I had seen its ugly face only a few
days before and recognized it at first sight . . . if this aged, weary-souled Civil Service
Commissioner had not asked this particular question . . . the whole of my life would
have been altered, and that I suppose would have altered a great many other lives…
(Jones, 1966, p. 37).

Churchill’s early school career can be summed up as misunderstood, lonely and
harbouring feelings of inadequacy for not being able to rise out of the lower school. Churchill notes that
public schooling was difficult for him, though he enjoyed and thought it to be a valuable
institution he would never want to go back to (Churchill, 1930; Jones, 1966).
4.3.1.4 Harrow: Military academy

By the time he applied to the military academy at Sandhurst he had formed a great love for literature and expressed a keen interest in forging a career in the army (Pelling, 1974). There was a significant delay to Churchill’s third and successful application into Sandhurst Military academy. While at an army crammer’s school, Churchill fell from a thirty-foot tree rupturing a kidney. During the same break, Churchill nearly drowned in Lake Lausanne but was able to save himself and a friend (Jones, 1966). However, these incidents did not deter or prevent Churchill from attending Sandhurst Military Academy.

Churchill had great affection for Mary Anne Everest or ‘Old Woom’, a nanny who had been hired just after his birth. He loved her very much, so much so that Churchill returned from Cuba in 1895 to be with her on her deathbed (Carson, 2010). This relationship was fostered due to the absence of his parents from his life. His parents were more concerned with the social life of aristocracy and the politics of the country, as a result, Churchill never obtained the opportunity for affection (Carson, 2010). Letters from Churchill to his mother often expressed his desire to see her and for his parents to visit him:

My Dear Mamma: I hope you are quit well when are you coming to Blenheim again. Jack and I both want you very much. Please do come soon. I rode Robroy to day round the Park and rode him all by myself in the school. With love and kisses (Churchill, 1882 – 1965, Correspondence with his mother, May 1882).

I hope you are as well as I am. I am writing this letter to back up my last. I hope you will not disappoint me. I can think of nothing else but Jubilee. Uncertainty is at all-time perplexing. Write to me by return post please!!! I love you so much dear Mummy and I know you love me too much to disappoint me. Do write to tell me what you intend to do. I must come home, I feel I must. Write to Miss Thomson a letter after
this principle so (Churchill, 1882 – 1965, Correspondence with his mother, June 12, 1887).

### 4.3.2 Churchill’s private life

#### 4.3.2.1 Spouse.

A ‘ladies’ man’ Churchill was not, his impetuous and narcissistic nature combined with his gauche manner made him something of a misnomer (Pelling, 1974). Churchill demonstrates these characteristics in his first serious relationship with Pamela Plowden. While in India, Jennie wrote to Churchill and asked him to call on a young girl Pamela Plowden residing in Hyderabad. Churchill obliged and in his response to his mother, he commented that Pamela was the most beautiful woman he had ever seen (Lee & Lee, 2010). A friendship developed over the course of three years, and correspondence between them was a great source of encouragement for a young soldier.

Churchill was not one for small talk, his letters would go into detail regarding his views and experiences in the field and by February 21 1900, Churchill and Pamela were secretly engaged. He answered a letter from her with the title ‘My Pamela’, previous correspondence shows Miss Pamela. In her letter, she informs Churchill that her four-year-old brother had passed away. Churchill in reply was not as sympathetic as one would expect but rather true to his own nature. He encouraged her not to suffer for other people’s problems. In his opinion when a baby passed away it was the least of sad tidings and that, it is women who are affected the most by such events. He considered the loss of a soldier in battle as far more important (Lee & Lee, 2010). Churchill continued his letter by describing the horror of what was happening on the front. By June 1900 the relationship between Churchill and Pamela broke down, the reasons are unclear. Pamela waited three years for Churchill and their engagement was a secret, which meant that other young suitors were continually courting her.
Churchill’s focus on his political career or his army career are possible reasons for the breakup. Added to this, rumours surfaced that Churchill had treated Pamela badly, which were untrue. It is not clear why Pamela started the rumours but Churchill did not take kindly to them and challenged Pamela’s integrity. Though their relationship had ended, they remained good friends. After this incident Churchill courted but nothing came of them and he found politics to be far more exciting (Cowles, 1953). In the summer of 1904 (in the middle of an election battle), Churchill’s mother Jennie arranged for him to meet Clementine Hozier, ‘Clemmie’ at a ball given by Lord and Lady Crewe (Charmley, 1993; Cowles, 1953). Jennie recalled that Churchill simply stood and stared at Clemmie. He was afraid to ask her for a dance and watched as someone whisked her off. The loss of Pamela had severely dented his confidence and it would be four years before Churchill received another opportunity to converse with Clemmie (Lee & Lee, 2010).

This second and coincidental opportunity took place at a dinner party in March 1908 for which Churchill was characteristically late (throughout his life, from school to Prime Minister, Churchill struggled with punctuality) and found that the only open seat was next to Clemmie (Lee & Lee, 2010). Churchill plucked up the courage and initiated a conversation. Her charm and sophistication immediately won him over, she was knowledgeable about politics and this impressed him. Churchill found what he was looking for, a no-nonsense type of woman with her feet firmly on the ground (Lee & Lee, 2010). Victorian etiquette meant that they had to be chaperoned at all times and time together was scarce due to his political duties. Clemmie soon experienced Churchill’s unpunctuality, after spending a night at the Churchill’s ancestral home Clemmie presented herself on time for breakfast. However, Churchill was late and Clemmie nearly went home but was convinced to wait for Churchill. That afternoon Churchill declared his love for Clemmie and asked her to marry him. The tradition was to keep the engagement secret at first but Churchill could not contain himself
and ran across the lawn to tell the others (Lee & Lee, 2010). On 12 September 1908 after a brief engagement, Churchill married Clementine Ogilvy Hozier. Together they had five children Diana, Randolph, Sarah, Marigold and Mary the only surviving daughter (Pelling, 1974).

To his credit, Churchill chose Clemmie for character rather than the hope of inheriting wealth (Pelling, 1974). “My most brilliant achievement was my ability to be able to persuade my wife to marry me” (Kraus, 1944, p. 60). Their marriage is of fierce loyalty to each other, Clemmie with her protective mothering nature over an unruly child and Churchill, always attentive and devoted (Cowles, 1953). Finally, Churchill had obtained something of substance, his life prior was lived vicariously through institutions but none could fulfil him the way marriage did (Charmley, 1993). Marriage in the Victorian era was an integral part in the measure of a man’s life (especially a politician) and Churchill seemed to understand this and took his relationship with Clemmie seriously (Mansfield, 2012). Tiffs and arguments were normal in their marriage and Churchill could be inconsiderate, selfish and extravagant at times in his actions but rarely in his intention (Blake & Louis, 1993). His careless and impetuous nature resulted in behaviours and friendships that were not to his wife’s liking and brought on her wrath “like a jaguar from a tree” (Mansfield, 2012, para. 4). Her frugal nature meant that she was in a constant state of anxiety for the wellbeing of the family. However, for the benefit of Churchill she could remain calm, never letting situations spiral out of control. Her advice was always warm and well-timed caring and informed throughout their marriage (Blake & Louis, 1993; Charmley, 1993; Lee & Lee, 2010).

The juxtaposition of their personalities was obvious but their commitment to one another validated their relationship. Their success endured largely due to their: honesty about their
inadequacies, intimacy (maintained above all else) and the view that their marriage was a source of everlasting energy (Mansfield, 2012).

At times, I think I could conquer everything—and then again I know I am only a weak vain fool. But your love for me is the greatest glory and recognition that has or will ever befall me: and the attachment which I feel towards you is not capable of being altered by the sort of things that happen in this world. I only wish I were more worthy of you and more able to meet the inner needs of your soul (Soames, 2001, p. 81).

4.3.2.2 Adventurer versus sensation seeker.

This section of the biography focuses on lesser-known adventures, small anecdotes that add to the understanding of Churchill’s character. Churchill, arguably one of the greatest politicians of the modern era lived a life that many men envied. He survived 50 gunfights and allegedly drank 20,000 bottles of champagne during his lifetime. He won the public schools’ fencing cup and rode in the last cavalry charge of the British Army. Churchill assisted in establishing British Petroleum (BP) and the National Health Service, contributed to the invention of the combat tank, and was instrumental in the formation of the states of Jordan and Iraq (Gopnik, 2010; Riebling, 2009). His daring escape from a Boer prison camp in 1899 made him somewhat of a national hero and ushered him into the House of Commons, where his political career spanned some 60 years (Pelling, 1974).

The present researcher has attempted to captivate the courageous and somewhat reckless spirit of Churchill. Below are some examples of his inquisitive, cavalier and impulsive nature.
4.3.2.2.1 Inquisitive

Churchill’s curiosity often impaired his good judgement, as was the case during the Nazi air raids (blitz). Churchill was at his favourite spot on the roof of 10 Downing Street. This caused great anxiety for those who had to protect him. However, from the roof he witnessed first-hand the effects of the blitz (subsequently 10 Downing Street was bombed but Churchill was not there) (Sims, 1962). A similar example is recorded that the president of the United States of America, Mr Eisenhower, prevented the eager British Prime Minister from witnessing the D-Day attack from a warship. Churchill commented that the President had no jurisdiction in preventing him. Consent was about to be given when Churchill decided to retract, later it was revealed that he had received a message from the King informing him that if he felt it was his duty in vanguard then the King felt it was equally his duty and privilege to lead his troops into battle (Sims, 1962).

4.3.2.2 Cavalier

During the war (1943), Churchill was on a flight from Tunis to Algeria. Churchill asked the pilot to move over so that he could take control of the plane (at eight thousand feet). The pilot obliged but as a precaution activated the autopilot. “Turn it off,” ordered Churchill; “I want to fly it.” Suddenly the plane veered in the air causing the accompanying fighter planes to scramble for safety. Churchill now in his element steered the plane vertically, heading for ‘space’, high enough and with a boyish grin, he took a nosedive. Once he had enough, he returned to his guests, chuckling to himself (Sims, 1962).

4.3.2.3 Impulsive

The siege of Sidney Street came about when two gunmen barricaded themselves in a house. Upon hearing the news, Churchill (who was Home Secretary) rushed to the scene. A
battle had ensued, bullets were whizzing by and soon Churchill found himself in a precarious position. Realising that he could not take full command due to his position as Home secretary, he remained and assumed the role of an advisory. A plan had developed to storm the besieged house from several directions, here Churchill’s military knowledge proved to be significant. He suggested that local metalworkers be searched for steel or metal plates so that each member of the storming party would have a shield (Sims, 1962). With the siege resolved, Churchill returned to the Home Office, where his secretary sternly confronted him: "What have you been doing, Churchill?" Churchill intoxicated by the adventure forgot his usually well-disguised lisp: "Now Charleth, don't he croth; it wath such fun!" (Smith, 2009, para. 22). The House of Commons badgered Churchill during parliamentary sessions for his impulsive behaviour. Arthur Balfour, Prime Minister at the time said; "We are concerned to observe photographs in the illustrated newspapers of the Home Secretary in the danger-zone. I understand what the photographer was doing, but why the Home Secretary?" (Smith, 2009, para. 17).

Some adventures were much longer and Churchill was aware of this. Being a prolific writer and historian he used rhetoric as a means of conveying his adventures and justifying decisions to the British public, in books such as ‘My early life’, ‘Painting as a pastime’, ‘The second world war’ and ‘A history of the english speaking peoples’ (Sullivan, 2010). There were several times when Churchill was on the brink of bankruptcy where writing provided an income but it was not until he was seventy-six that he received the Nobel Prize for literature.

The boy with the lowly marks, a problem child at school, rewarded for taking on the challenge of writing:

Writing a book is an adventure. To begin with it is a toy and an amusement. Then it becomes a mistress, then it becomes a master, then it becomes a tyrant. The last phase
is that just as you are about to be reconciled to your servitude, you kill the monster and fling him to the public (Churchill, 1949a, p. 78).

4.3.2.3 Painter.

In 1915, Churchill lost his position in the admiralty but remained a member of the cabinet, the ‘Black Dog’ of depression had surfaced and Churchill in his fortieth year discovered ‘the muse of painting’:

In this position I knew everything and could do nothing. The change from intense executive activities of each day’s work at the Admiralty to the narrowly measured duties of a councillor left me gasping. Like a sea-beast fished up from the depths, or a diver too suddenly hoisted, my veins threatened to burst from all the pressure. I had great anxiety and no means of relieving it; I had vehement convictions and small power to give effect to them. I had to watch the unhappy casting-away of great opportunities, and the feeble execution of plans which I had launched and in which I heartily believed. I had long hours of utterly unwonted leisure in which to contemplate the frightful unfolding of the war. At a moment when every fibre of my being was inflamed to action, I was forced to remain a spectator of the tragedy, placed cruelly in the front seat. And then it was that the Muse of Painting came to my rescue-out of charity and out of chivalry, because after all she had nothing to do with me-and said, ‘Are these toys any good to you? They amuse some people’ (Churchill, 1948b, p. 16).

There are few moments in Churchill’s life where outside intervention proved to be the catalyst. Churchill, fearful of a white canvas, hesitated to attack and unleash his creativity. Lady Lavery an experienced artist noticed Churchill’s struggle and seized the moment to offer practical advice (Best, 2001). Churchill noted; “The spell was broken. The sickly
inhibitions rolled away. I seized the largest brush and fell on my victim with Berserk fury. I have never felt any awe of canvas since” (Churchill, 1948b, p. 17).

Churchill produced more than five hundred paintings during his life. He was able to exhibit paintings in Paris and London and used a pseudonym to hide his identity. He approached his new hobby with keen zest often taking time to learn from master painters. He was not interested in money or trying to enhance the Churchill name. Rather under a pseudonym, he wanted to test his ability, see what the critics thought and no criticism went unresolved, if he could correct the painting, he would (Gombrich, 1965).

Wilson Steer a distinguished British artist once commented on Churchill, stating that if Winston Churchill were to paint like he did, then he ought to give up politics and stick to painting. Contemporaries of Churchill agreed that had he applied his mind to painting the way he did politics then, he would have been a great master (Alberge, 2012; MacDonald, 1943). Churchill however, knew why painting was important to him. In his book ‘Painting as a Pastime’, he starts his story by expressing the following:

Many remedies are suggested for the avoidance of worry and mental overstrain by persons who, over prolonged periods, have to bear exceptional responsibilities and discharge duties upon a very large scale. Some advise exercise, and others repose…Change is the master key. A man can wear out a particular part of his mind by continually using it and tiring it, just the same way as he can wear out the elbows of his coat. There is, however, this difference between the living cells of a brain and inanimate articles: one cannot mend the frayed elbows of a coat by rubbing the sleeves or the shoulders; but the tired parts of the mind can be rested and strengthened, not merely by rest but by using other parts (Churchill, 1948, p. 7).
Churchill found a counter attack to the savage onslaught of the ‘Black Dog’. The respite provided by painting proved to be a masterstroke of luck. Gombirich (1965) argues that the discovery and commitment that Churchill demonstrated towards art allowed him to deal with his depression and coincidentally could have saved Britain and the Western world. In conclusion, to this aspect of Churchill’s identity, it is interesting to note the juxtaposition between Churchill and Adolf Hitler; both were painters and leading political leaders of the Second World War. An article in the Milwaukee Journal (1943) compares Churchill’s paintings with those of Hitler, the verdict was conclusive; Churchill was the gifted artist (Churchill did not settle for second).

4.3.3 Churchill’s military career

4.3.3.1 Churchill as a young officer (1895 - 1898).

Churchill entered the army as a cavalry officer at the age of twenty-one. He quickly showed his passion for both soldiering and polo playing (perhaps more polo playing at that stage) (Keegan, 1998). In a letter to his mother, Churchill wrote that he never felt the slightest nervousness and that he felt just as relaxed then as he did writing the letter now (Keegan, 1998). During the majority of his campaigns, Churchill took on a dual role of soldier and war correspondent (Keegan, 1998). Between 1895 and 1898, Churchill served in three campaigns, firstly in Spain's struggle in Cuba in 1895. Churchill’s motivation for going to Cuba stemmed from the aura and excitement of those that went before him. “How we wondered whether our chance would ever come – whether we too in our turn would have battles to fight over again and again in the agreeable atmosphere of the after-dinner mess table” (Churchill, 1930, p. 88). Churchill was never officially stationed in Cuba but rather through friend and favour, he requested that he be sent to assist the Spanish army. He was required to make his own way there and once there he requested to be stationed with a column on its way to Sancti Spiritus.
The only problem was that the column had left that morning already, Churchill was eager to ride and intercept the moving column. However, on the advice of the Spanish army he was instructed to avoid being captured by guerrillas and rather make use of a train and meet them at the next town (Churchill, 1930). Eventually Churchill connected with the moving column and tasted life as a frontline soldier. What Churchill expected and what he was to encounter added to his belief that there was no real war to be had and that in general peace reigned for most parts of the world.

Behold next morning a distinct sensation in the life of a young officer! It is still dark, but the sky is paling. We are in what a brilliant though little-known write has called ‘the dim mysterious temple of the dawn.’ We are on our horses, in uniform; our revolvers are loaded. In the dusk and half-light, long files of armed and laden men are shuffling off towards the enemy. He may be very near; perhaps he is waiting for us a mile away. We cannot tell; we know nothing of the qualities either of our friends or foes. We have nothing to do with their quarrels. Except in personal self-defence, we can take no part in their combats. But we feel it is a great moment in our lives – in fact, one of the best we have ever experienced. We think that something is going to happen; we hope devoutly that something will happen; yet at the same time we do not want to be hurt or killed. What is it then that we do want? It is that lure of youth – adventure, and adventure for adventure’s sake. You might call it tomfoolery. To travel thousands of miles with money one can ill afford, and get up at four o’clock in the morning in the hope of getting into a scrape in the company of perfect strangers, is certainly hardly rational proceeding. Yet we knew there were very few subalterns in the British Army who would not have given a month’s pay to sit in our saddles.

However nothing happened. (Churchill, 1930, p. 93).
The army encountered several small skirmishes along the way but nothing stopped the Spanish Army from setting up camp after an eight-mile walk and enjoying their daily siesta (Churchill, 1930). Churchill’s wish to encounter war and endure the battles till they became glorious memories was suspended and he was forced to come to terms with the reality at hand. After the column had one days rationing left they made their way to the sea where he departed for England.

Secondly, the Fourth Hussars received instructions to deploy to the North-West Frontier of India in 1897. The time spent in India was again not as fruitful as Churchill would have liked. Pelling (1974) reports that much time was spent playing polo, these events were used as significant networking opportunities between the army and Indian princes. However, Churchill found the atmosphere and the lifestyle to be rather boring and not to his liking. His opinion was that he could learn little from the experience, he had no letter of introduction into the influential circles of his current quest (Pelling, 1974). After three months in India, Churchill was eager to move where the action was.

Thirdly, Churchill took part in the Soudan (Sudan) campaign of 1898 and as luck would have it, he finally found what he was looking for. Churchill however, after several attempts was continuously being stymied by General Kitchener from joining the forces in the Soudan, stating that there were enough officers and that if a vacancy was to avail then he would call on Churchill. Churchill (1930) reflected a strange altering of opinion against him, where once he was seen as the eager young subaltern who was allowed the privilege of moving where the ‘action’ was. Now shadows were being cast,

Who the devil is this fellow? How has he managed to get to these different campaigns? Why should he write for the papers and serve as an officer at the same
time? Why should a subaltern praise or criticize his senior officers? Why should Generals show him favour? (Churchill, 1930, p. 177).

He was now being seen as a ‘Medal-hunter’ and ‘Self-advertiser’, this however did not deter him from making his wishes known.

Churchill was committed to fulfilling his dream of being involved in the front line of a war. In the meantime, Churchill’s vocation as a wartime correspondent had paid off. His letters were well received in London and as a result, it generated an income. His column in the newspaper was titled ‘unknown soldier’ and this provided him with an opportunity, which eventually proved to be the key to him joining the Soudan campaign (Churchill, 1930). Churchill took the unnamed newspaper articles and turned them into a book called The Malakand Field Force and added his name. This book became rather popular and as chance may have, it found its way to the table of the Prime Minster Lord Salisbury who was a contemporary of Lord Randolph Churchill (Churchill’s father). He enjoyed the book so much that he sought an audience with Churchill. A date and time was set and a very nervous Churchill set his first footsteps into the house where he was to reside many years later. The meeting lasted longer than Churchill had anticipated and the outcome was favourable with Lord Salisbury stating:

I myself have been able to form a truer picture of the kind of fighting that has been going on in these frontier valleys from your writings than from any other documents which it has been my duty to read (Churchill, 1930, p. 179).

The meeting ended with the Prime Minister stating if there was anything he could do to help then he need only ask. Churchill did ask and not long after that, he was in Cairo making his way down to the frontier.
Upon arrival in Egypt Churchill was cautious regarding the view of him that followed his movements in the army. Churchill strategized to remain out of difficulty and focus on finding and making his way onto the frontline and being involved in any way possible. Despite Churchill’s perception and concern that General Kitchener did not view him in a favourable light, it did not deter him from using any resource possible to gain access to that which he desired… a frontline battle. Churchill later discovered; Kitchener, on receiving the news of Churchill’s appointed to his army, simply shrugged his shoulders and proceeded to focus on important matters at hand (Churchill, 1930).

The time spent in Soudan was as close to frontline action that Churchill could get. Operating in the cavalry provided him with the best opportunity to apply himself as a scout, a messenger between brigades, a reconnaissance officer and an officer in charge of a troop. On the eve of the battle of Omdurman Churchill received orders to go and observe the enemy and to report the information to Kitchener himself. Churchill did as he was told, scouted the enemy’s forces and returned to the General who was marching with the infantry. This was to be the first meeting between the two and Churchill was anxious as to what his response was to be. Churchill found the General and relayed the information accordingly; the General quizzed him on one or two points and then dismissed Churchill. Relieved to find that their first encounter was cordial, Churchill re-joined his squadron (Churchill, 1930).

The next day Major Finn Churchill’s squadron leader provided him with the mission he was looking for. Churchill was ordered to reconnoitre a particular ridge while other patrols were ordered to do the same elsewhere. On this patrol out Churchill could see the enemy forces marching forward and witnessed the initial onslaught:
Down went their standards by dozens and their men by hundreds. Wide gaps and shapeless heaps appeared in their array. One saw them jumping and tumbling under the shrapnel bursts; but none turned back (Churchill, 1930, p. 200).

After this Churchill received orders to return as the cavalry were about to open fire.

After the first wave of enemy attacks were repulsed, the cavalry were sent out to assess the damage and to clear the way for the advancing army. Upon receiving orders, four squadrons were mounted and galloping towards the plain. Here Churchill was engaged in his first frontline cavalry charge. Churchill recounted how his attention focused on behaviour and not what was happening around him, as a result he found himself isolated. Having to keep his wits about him while controlling his horse and firing on the advancing enemy, he was relieved to find a gap and regroup with his troop. The details of what happened during this charge can be summed up by the following words from Churchill:

Within twenty minutes of the time when we had first wheeled into line and begun our charge, we were halted and breakfasting in the very watercourse that had so nearly proved our undoing. There one could see the futility of much vaunted ‘Arme Blanche’ (Churchill, 1930, p. 209).

At the end of this campaign, Churchill decided that it was time for him to leave the army. The books that he had written were generating an income that was better than what he was receiving from the army. This provided Churchill with the perfect opportunity to break away from his mother’s curatorship and finally be the independent man he wanted to be (Pelling, 1974). On returning to England, Churchill was immediately absorbed into the political world and approached by a conservative party member Mr Robert Ascroft to replace an aging member of the Oldham constituency. Churchill was to address an audience several weeks later under the auspices of Mr Ascroft and the conservatives, as it turned out Mr Ascroft
passed away before the meeting and as a result left the conservative constituency in disarray. The mere fact that Mr Ascroft had chosen Churchill and due to his political pedigree, was reason enough for his selection as the replacement to run for the Oldham constituency (Churchill, 1930). Churchill was narrowly defeated; however, his first attempt at entering parliament was an honourable attempt and only delayed the inevitable (Pelling, 1974).

4.3.3.2 Churchhill the hero (1899).

The situation in South Africa had deteriorated to the point where the Boers had declared independence. War was imminent and Churchill was approached by the Morning post to be a war correspondent, at the time he was the highest paid correspondent in Britain (Carter, 1965). This only added to the enthusiasm of going to South Africa and reporting on the war. On 14 October, Churchill set sail for the Cape. Carter (1965) comments that the six-month voyage to South Africa was to shape the future of Churchill and instil him as a national hero. Churchill’s eagerness was evident to those who met him for the first time. J.B. Atkins a war correspondent for the Manchester Guardian was on the same boat, he commented ‘on a most unusual man’ he met (Carter, 1965). His first impression was:

He had small respect for authority until he had examined it; he acquired no reverence for his seniors as such, and talked to them as though they were his own age, or younger…He stood alone and confident, and his natural power to be himself had yielded to no man (Atkins, 1947, p. 122).

Churchill made it to the front line of the battle namely Estcourt as Ladysmith had been encircled. Here they set up camp and reported on the developments of the war. Initially time was spent talking about politics and journalism, being an ex-soldier, Churchill loved to talk about strategy and tactics. Churchill held the view that the latter were both a matter of common sense and that any civilian of ‘first-rate ability’ could reach the correct solution and
any soldier could then put it into military terms (Carter, 1965). This attitude travelled with him into his future activities and although he had great respect for experts he never allowed the ‘Black Magic’ of specialist infallibility to dictate his decisions, he allowed his common sense to rule when prescribed (Carter, 1965).

At the camp Churchill reunited with Captain Haldane whom he had befriended in India. Captain Haldane received orders to lead an armoured train sixteen miles up a railway line as a supplement to the cavalry. The night before the operation (November 14) he invited Churchill to join him. Churchill thought the idea of sending an armoured train disguised as a civilian locomotive was in essence a bad idea. However, orders were orders and Churchill felt obliged:

> Out of comradeship, and because I thought it was my duty to gather as much information as I could for the Morning Post, also because I was eager for trouble, I accepted the invitation without demur (Carter, 1965, p. 54).

The next morning Churchill enquired of Atkins if he would like to join the expedition. Atkins declined citing his solicitation by the Manchester Guardian to report on events from the British side. If found on the wrong side it would incur extra expenses for his employer. Churchill’s response to this was; “That is perfectly true. I can see no fault in your reasoning. But I have a feeling, a sort of intuition, that if I go something will come of it. It’s illogical, I know” (Atkins, 1947, p. 127). Atkins did not see Churchill again until his escape from prison and was presented with his daring tale and afterwards noted; “Is this man accompanied by a daemon who tells him things” (Atkins, 1947, p. 128).

That morning the armoured train travelled approximately fourteen miles up the track, this allowed the Boers to strategically place themselves behind the train and wait for its return. Travelling back the train was ambushed, the track had been blown away causing parts of the
train to be derailed (Carter, 1965). In the ensuing battle, Captain Haldane decided to hold off on-coming attacks while Churchill figured out a way of retreat. Churchill placing his life in danger ran up and down the length of the train, eventually convincing the train driver to retake his place and steer the locomotive (Churchill, 1930). Unfortunately, only the locomotive was able to move along the tracks, Captain Haldane decided that the wounded go in the locomotive while the rest walked by its side for cover. However, the train eventually started to move too fast leaving the soldiers behind. Churchill decided to leave the train and venture back to assist Captain Haldane but before he was able to do so, the Boers captured Churchill and took him to Pretoria (Churchill, 1930).

Churchill implored his captors to release him citing his vocation as war correspondent. To his dismay, they informed him that, due to his participation in the armoured train incident he had relinquished any such rights. Churchill resigned himself to this fact and focused his attention on escaping (Churchill, 1930). On the evening of the December 11 Churchill broke out of the Boer prison, some of his colleagues were meant follow but after waiting for some time with no indication of their plans Churchill decide to make his way out of Pretoria (Churchill, 1930). By chance, he found a railway line and decided to follow it. He was looking to make his way to Delagoa Bay and from there sail to Durban. With the help of some British nationals who help hide Churchill in a mine for three days, he was eventually stowed on a train to Delagoa Bay. On arriving at Delagoa Bay, Churchill made his way to the British consulate. From there he sailed to Durban and was welcomed as a hero (Carter, 1965). Although Churchill became a household name due to his exploits, controversy surrounded him as it was claimed that he had broken his parole with the Boers and left Captain Haldane and Sergeant Brockie behind to make his escape possible (Charmley, 1993). Churchill also wrote some scathing articles where he stated that man for man the Boer was a better soldier and that approximately a quarter of a million men were needed to win the war. Many did not
appreciate this and some of his colleagues wrote asking if he would ‘stop making an ass’ of himself (Carter, 1965). Churchill had to contend with denying these allegations for many years to come but he always maintained that he had acted in ‘good faith’ (Charmley, 1993).

4.3.4 Churchill’s political career

His political career matched his military career and in 1900 at the age of twenty-six Churchill won the Oldham seat at the general election. In 1905, Churchill was appointed Under-Secretary of State, 1908, when he was appointed as President of the Board of Trade (Pelling, 1974). Churchill was appointed as Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1924, which was followed by a great deflation in the economy of Britain. The Conservative Party lost the next general election in 1929. From then on, the Conservative Party started distancing itself from him; this was a time of political isolation, which became known as his ‘Wilderness Years’ (Pearce, 2007). Churchill is famous for his sayings and Pearce (2007) tells the story of Churchill gloomily commenting over a casual conversation that we are all worms, but soon perked up and added that he thought he was a glow-worm. This was characteristic of Churchill, who was renowned for suffering with his ‘black dog’.

In 1940, Churchill was invited to form an all-party government (Lippiatt, 1996). As Prime Minister, Churchill refused to any peace agreement with an evidently emerging Germany and geared up the British for a long war. Though the Second World War ended with a landslide victory for the British and allied countries, Churchill lost the 1945 election and became a leader of the opposition. In 1951, at the age of 76, Churchill was elected Prime Minister for a second term through a general election (Pelling, 1974).

Churchill suffered his first major stroke in 1953, at age 78, which left him in poor health. In the wake of his declining health and inability to govern, he resigned as Prime Minister in 1955 to be succeeded by Anthony Eden. After this, Churchill retired from public life and
mostly stayed at home. In 1963, Churchill received an Honorary Citizen of the United States from President John F. Kennedy (Pelling, 1974).

On 15 January 1965, Churchill suffered another major stroke that proved to be fatal and he died nine days later on 24 January 1965. After his death, his body lay in state for three days and a state funeral was held at St. Paul’s Cathedral. The funeral service witnessed the largest Royal gathering of political leaders from across the world and thousands of people mourned him. He was buried at St. Martin’s Church, near Woodstock, overlooking Blenheim Palace, his birthplace (Pelling, 1974).

4.3.4.1 Error in judgement: The Dardanelles and Gallipoli disaster

Russia pleaded with Britain for help as the Turks had allied themselves with Germany. This meant that a war on the eastern front prevented Russia from receiving supplies. Initially Churchill was hesitant at risking so many men on a peripheral enemy when the foe was Germany (Gilbert, 1994). However, Churchill became excited at the idea of a naval attack on the straights. The War Cabinet agreed that invading the Dardanelles (a straight near Turkey) would provide the relief needed (Pelling, 1974). Churchill took it upon himself to manage the operation and lead the administration of the operation.

The invasion was a cataclysmic failure. Unaware of the mines, the British and French forces sailed into the straights. As a result, six Allied battleships exploded and sank after striking the mines and two were disabled. Turkish howitzers positioned along the Dardanelles shoreline destroyed a ninth Allied battleship. After this costly failure and defeat to a ‘peripheral enemy’, the Allied army retreated (Lewis, 2009). The troop landings on the Gallipoli peninsula proved to be similarly as disastrous. Pinned down on the shoreline by the Turks the Allied troops suffered severely as the enemy slaughtered them with machine gun fire. Roughly, 252,000 Allied troops, more than half of those who took part, were killed or
injured before the survivors were evacuated in January 1916. The loss of so many lives for neither gain nor glory had a profound effect on the public mind. The names Churchill, Dardanelles and Gallipoli became synonymous with the savagery and waste of war (Lewis, 2009).

The disappointment of the Dardanelles campaign dealt a severe blow to Churchill as a man and his reputation as a politician and soldier and ultimately, it precipitated his political downfall (Lewis, 2009). Biographer Martin Gilbert recorded Clemmie during an interview saying:

The Dardanelles haunted him for the rest of his life. He always believed in it. When he left the Admiralty, he thought he was finished. He didn’t believe he would ever be asked back into government. I thought he’d never get over the Dardanelles. I thought he’d die of grief (Gilbert, 1994, p. 64).

The Conservatives disliked Churchill immensely for deserting their party and joining the Liberals in 1904 (Charmley, 1993). Subsequently they made their disdain toward him apparent and the Dardanelles campaign provided the perfect stick with which to beat Churchill and in 1915, the Conservatives made the most of it to drive him out of parliament (Lewis, 2009). In the summer of 1915, Asquith (Prime Minister) decided for the sake of national unity to form a coalition government. The Conservatives agreed to this on one condition, that Churchill be removed from the Admiralty (Pelling, 1974). This predicament placed created a dichotomy for Asquith. The need for Conservative support over-ruled his loyalty to Churchill and so he demoted Churchill to the post of Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. Although the position enabled Churchill to remain in the government, with a seat on the war Council, he became severely depressed (Lewis, 2011).
4.3.4.2 Churchill as a prime minister during world war two

By 1930, Churchill found himself isolated from politics, he had lost his seat in Dundee and none of the political parties wanted to associate with him. This period became known as the ‘Wilderness years’, a period where he experienced symptoms of depression (Pelling, 1974). In this time he wrote many books and discovered the ‘muse of painting’, which provided much relief. During this period Churchill remained vocal about the Nazi threat, in 1933, he addressed parliament warning them about the formation of the Luftwaffe. In 1934 he warned that forty thousand Londoners would be lost in the first week of air attacks from the German Luftwaffe (Chen, 2004).

Public opinion started to force the hand of the government. The Sunday Pictorial conducted polls and results indicated that 97% of 2400 responses felt he needed to be appointed to the cabinet. Three hundred and seventy-five leading professors from every British university petitioned Churchill's appointment to the cabinet (Chen, 2004). Despite the public outcry, it was only after the German invasion of Poland in September 1939 that Churchill was appointed First Lord of the Admiralty, a post he held in World War One. The appointment of Churchill to the War Cabinet was what Britain needed, a War-Minister. The news travelled across the channel swiftly and when Hermann Göring head of the Luftwaffe and at one stage successor to Hitler, heard of Churchill’s appointment, he knew that the complexion of the war was about to change. He reportedly dropped into a chair heavily when he heard the news, and said "Churchill in the Cabinet. That means war is really on. Now we shall have war with England" (Manchester, 1983, p. 592). Churchill quickly orientated himself to his role and realised that he was a target for German spies. He never left the Admiralty without a pistol and a suicide pill in his pen. Well aware that capture by the Germans would be catastrophic (Chen, 2004).
Neville Chamberlain’s policy of appeasement meant that it would be a matter of time until the Germany forces attacked Britain. The public had lost confidence in his leadership and on May 10 1940, Neville Chamberlain resigned as Prime Minster. Within moments of the resignation, the King charged Winston Spencer Churchill with the responsibility of forming a new government. Churchill immediately set about his business and by 21:30 that night, the war cabinet took shape, by the following day the war cabinet was finalised (Pelling, 1974).

Phrases such as ‘right person for the job’, ‘right place right time’ or ‘born for this moment’ substantiate the nomination of Winston Churchill to the post of Prime Minister. It seemed that the Second World War provided Churchill with the perfect platform to demonstrate his skills. His role as Prime Minister did not constitute playing a strategic political game. Rather, it necessitated a decisive leader relentless in the pursuit of democracy:

> During these last crowded days of the political crisis my pulse had not quickened at any moment. I took it all as it came. But I cannot conceal from the reader of this truthful account that as I went to bed at about 3 am. I was conscious of a profound sense of relief. At last I had the authority to give directions over the whole scene. I felt as if I were walking with destiny, and that all my past life had been but a preparation for this hour and for this trial. Ten years in the political wilderness had freed me from ordinary party antagonisms. My warnings over the last six years had been so numerous, so detailed, and were now so terribly vindicated, that no one could gainsay me. I could not be reproached either for making the war or with want of preparation for it. I thought I knew a good deal about it all, and I was sure I should not fail. Therefore, although impatient for the morning, I slept soundly and had no need for cheering dreams. facts are better than dreams (Churchill, 1948a, p. 601).
Churchill swiftly transformed the government; the war cabinet was in place by 11 May 1940, on Monday the 13 May the House of Commons met where Churchill declared the policy of the new government (Pelling, 1974).

You ask, What is our policy? I will say: it is to wage war, by sea, land and air, with all our might and with all the strength that God can give us: to wage war against a monstrous tyranny, never surpassed in the dark, lamentable catalogue of human crime. That is our policy. You ask, what is our aim? I can answer in one word: Victory - victory at all cost, victory in spite of all terror, victory, however long and hard and the road may be; for without victory there is no survival (Pelling, 1974, p. 442).

Churchill, aware that disunity among political leaders could lead to division in parliament and the nation, was proactive in guarding the tenuous unity of a coalition government. For Churchill this was a priority and he went to great lengths to ensure that no witch-hunt was organised against his cabinet. The New York Times published an article stating:

This is the kind of leadership a free people deserve. It is one of Mr Churchill’s supreme gifts to democracy that he has put furtiveness and concealment aside in dealing with his countrymen. He has refused to treat his people like children, and they are responding gloriously with all they have and all they are (Pelling, 1974).

His awareness extended far beyond the House of Commons visiting possible invasion sites along Britain, assisting with the establishment of defences and willing to engage with the public along his travels. On one occasion at a dock yard in North-East England Churchill buoyed by the response of the crowd shouted; “Are we downhearted?” and the crowd responded “No” (Pelling, 1974).
Churchill was marshalling the country and they were responding; pre-war plans were in place for dealing with the ‘Blitz’ (air raids); the underground sheltered the citizens and spotters would sound sirens when German aircrafts were approaching. One disadvantage that the ‘Blitz’ created for the enemy was the sense that the people of Britain soon became accustomed to the raids and discovered how to protect themselves. After one such raid, Churchill became emotional at the sight of the damage, General Sir Hastings Ismay wrote;

‘Good old Winnie’, they cried. ‘We thought you’d come and see us. We can take it. Give it ‘em back.’ Churchill broke down, and as I was struggling to get him through the crowd, I heard an old woman say, ‘You see, he really cares. He’s crying’ (Wilt, 1990, p. 9).

Churchill knew that the public needed a voice they could trust. His attitude towards them was such, if he could not support them by his physical presence, then his spirit and voice would, using the media, offering hope to all (Wakely & Carson, 2010), as C.P. Snow commented, ‘that voice was our hope, it was the voice of will and strength incarnate’ (Snow, 1969, p. 123).

As the war continued, the character traits of Churchill mentioned above formed the backbone of his leadership. The British people responded and rallied behind him, similarly, he was able to unite the allied forces (Pelling, 1974). Many facts and events could further illuminate Churchill’s character, however, none more salient.

4.4 Conclusion

The present researcher has attempted to demonstrate that Winston Churchill was an extraordinary, unique and complex man that served his country with honour and distinction. At the same time, the present researcher has attempted to highlight salient characteristics of
Winston Churchill’s identity in an attempt to understand him. It is remarkable to note that Churchill viewed himself no greater than he viewed any other and he was aware that he was a man with many flaws. In the following chapter, the present researcher will attempt to understand and explain the life of Winston Spencer Churchill through Alfred Adler’s (1929) theory of Individual Psychology.
Chapter 5

Research Design and Methodology

5.1 Chapter Preview

Qualitative research aims to provide the researcher with data that helps to explain the relationship between people, objects and situations in order to elicit meaning (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). In this chapter the research design and the psychobiographical subject are presented and the research objectives and method are described. The data collection, extraction and analysis procedures are discussed and finally a brief overview of the strategy of reflexivity in qualitative research is explored.

5.2 Research Design

This study will be conducted within the qualitative research approach. It is a single case research design which represents the critical testing of a theory (Yin, 1994). Josselson and Lieblich (1993) propose that the relationship between story and life can be characterised by the phenomenological concept of ‘Fundierung’ where the meaning of an individual’s life will be articulated and modified in the stories that are written. This concept will be used in conjunction with the psychobiographical approach in this single case study, looking holistically at the life of Winston Churchill.

Qualitative psychobiographical research can also be viewed as exploratory descriptive and descriptive-dialogic in nature. The exploratory descriptive approach allows the researcher to vividly illustrate and describe Churchill’s personality development throughout his life which in turn provides the researcher with a critical understanding of the individual within his socio-historical context (Neuman W. L., 2003). The descriptive-dialogic design refers to the
describing of a phenomena and accurate testing of the content of specific theories (Edwards, 1990) such as Adler’s (1929) theory of individuality used in the present study.

5.3 Sampling

Winston Churchill is the individual who will be studied in this psychobiographical study. The sampling technique is purposive as Churchill was specifically selected for his political contributions to his country and the global community. Through purposive sampling the researcher will use his judgement to identify the desired traits and to maintain the integrity of the data (Strydom & Delport, 2005). Neuman (2003) states that purposive sampling is useful when combined with several other aspects of case study research where (a) the case is specific and unique, (b) the designated sample is difficult to reach or it is of such nature that it stands out from other populations, or (c) the specific aim is not to superimpose the results onto the general population but rather to gain an in-depth knowledge of an individual. The aim of the present study is to illuminate the life of Winston Churchill using Adler’s (1929) theory of Individual Psychology.

5.4 Research Objectives

Winston Churchill was a larger than life figure who not only served his country but the global community. Therefore, the primary objective of this study is to examine Churchill’s life in order to explore and describe his personality development over his entire lifespan. The researcher will use the theory of Individuality proposed by Adler (1927) to investigate the various stages of his personality development.

The research objective is reflective of the exploratory-descriptive nature of this study allowing the researcher to gain a detailed and accurate description of an individual case. This
provides a critical understanding of the individual within his specific socio-historical context (Edwards, 1990).

5.5 Research Method

The psychobiographical research method can be described as qualitative-morphogenic in nature (Elms, Uncovering Lives: The uneasy alliance of biography and psychology, 1994). This method refers to the holistic understanding of the individual instead of viewing it segment by segment (Elms, Uncovering Lives: The uneasy alliance of biography and psychology, 1994). This approach is complemented by a single-case design emphasizing the individuality of a person through the holistic, qualitative description and interpretation of a single, time-bound, socio-historical entity (Runyan W. M., In defence of the case study method, 1982b).

The qualitative methodology of psychobiographical research presents a number of difficulties for the researcher (Fouche, 1999). These challenges are discussed later in this chapter as preliminary considerations that the researcher has identified, recognised and attempted to overcome in this psychobiographical study of Winston Churchill.

5.6 Data Collection

Data will be collected from several information bases; the primary sources will be personal works produced by Winston Churchill and official autobiographies produced by his son. Other ancillary sources such as materials produced by contemporaries or journalists will be consulted. Yin (1994) highlights three crucial principles that need to be used when a researcher is collecting data; the researcher is encouraged to use multiple sources of evidence and to create a case study data base. If the researcher can maintain the chain of evidence for the research it will allow the study to endure the scrutiny of peer review. The present
researcher will make sufficient citations in order to follow and corroborate the data. The researcher will also reference where or when data was collected (Yin, 2009). Following these procedures will increase the reliability and validity of a study.

5.7 Data Extraction and Analysis

The handling of evidence needs to be done fairly, with compelling analytic conclusions to rule out any other alternative interpretations. At the same time there are some general analytical strategies which assist an investigator in choosing a technique (Yin, 1994). Yin (1994) proposes two general strategies in dealing with data analysis; firstly the researcher can rely on theoretical propositions. Secondly, the researcher can develop a case description whereby the researcher develops a descriptive framework for organising the case study.

5.7.1 Relying on Theoretical Propositions

These are the propositions upon which the single case study design was presumably based, propositions which have shaped the study and which reflect the research questions that were there initially. The data will be analysed according to the psychobiographical model of Irving Alexander (1988). His method highlights the identification of ‘core identifying units’ which can be viewed as ‘themes’ or ‘schemes’. There are two ways of evaluating the data within this model, firstly, allowing the data to reveal itself. To achieve this, the researcher applies specifically designed rules to sort the raw data. By using Alexander’s (1988) nine salient guidelines the researcher can divide data into categories and then decide which one warrant more research. These principals will be discussed further in section 5.7.1.1. Secondly asking the data questions based on the research question. Pertinent and salient features of the data that help to better understand the individual will be extracted in a systematic categorisation of information into ‘stages’ of personality development. Once categorised the information will
be conceptualised and operationalized within the chosen theoretical framework and matrix, this will discussed further in section 5.7.2.

**5.7.1.1 Alexander’s Guidelines for Identifying Important Units of Data**

Stroud (2004) and McAdams (1988) state that in an effort to avoid being consumed by vast amounts of information, the researcher should organise and analyse the information in a systematic way. The present researcher will utilise Alexander’s nine salient guidelines for identifying important units of data. They are primacy, frequency, uniqueness, negation, emphasis, omission, error, isolation and incompletion (Stroud, The life of Mother Teresa: A Psychobiographical study, 2004). Once themes have emerged then they will be used in conjunction with the matrix to reflect on the collected material in a consistent and systematic fashion (Fouche, 1999). Below are examples of how the researcher has applied these guidelines to the data base of the present study.

**Primacy**

This refers to the information which presents itself first and as being the most important (Elms, Uncovering Lives: The uneasy alliance of biography and psychology, 1994). The concept of first is often viewed as a foundation upon which a structure is built. In psychology the very first minutes of therapeutic communication is pivotal in unravelling the data presented (Fouchê & van Niekerk, Psychobiography: An interdisciplinary approach between psychology and biography in the narrative reconstruction of personal lives, 2005). In the context of Churchill two important themes reveal themselves as primal in the life of Churchill. There was no escaping it, politics was a family affair as his father Lord Randolph Spencer Churchill was a Member of Parliament. Secondly, Churchill’s love for the military which surfaced at Harrow school:
Churchill found other things to enjoy at the school – for instance, drill and shooting in the rifle Corps, and the ‘sham fights’ or tactical excursions which the Corps undertook against other schools. He had long possessed a small army of toy soldiers – as many as a thousand by the time he was seven – and he had spent much of his spare time marshalling this army for battle and engaging in tactical manoeuvres. Pelling (1974, p. 32 - 33).

_Frequency_

Frequency refers to that information which occurs repetitively to the point where it becomes important (Alexander, 1988). Monotony may decrease the value or importance of data but ignoring the possibility that it may be of importance should be avoided (Elms, Uncovering Lives: The uneasy alliance of biography and psychology, 1994). Focusing on the obsessions of the individual is a practical way of identifying themes in an individual’s life (Schultz, 2005). The literature on Churchill’s life revealed that he was a man who was passionate about the military. As mentioned above from an early age Churchill showed great interest in military strategies. Upon graduating from Sandhurst, Churchill was placed twentieth out of 130 cadets. This was a great improvement from his initial entry into the school (Pelling, 1974). From there Churchill joined the fourth Hussars Calvary initiating a career that would span fifty years. In his career Churchill’s posts in office were largely linked to a military role, being a war correspondent, the minister of munitions and the First Lord of the Admiralty (Carson, 2010; Pelling, 1974; Keegan, 1998).

_Emphasis_

Emphasis refers to the data which is either overemphasised or underemphasised. It is useful for the researcher to note information which is receiving excessive attention versus that which is receiving minimal attention or even information that is misplaced (Alexander,
1988). Investigating contrasting information of an individual will provide a valuable perspective to the research upon the life of Churchill as most authors tend to focus on his political and military career but few have ventured into exploring and reporting on Churchill’s psychological state. Churchill himself refers to his suffering with the ‘Black dog’ of depression (Nemeroff, 2001).

Uniqueness

This refers to data which is salient but isolated or peculiar (Elms, Uncovering Lives: The uneasy alliance of biography and psychology, 1994). Alexander (1988) explains that in order to identify uniqueness the researcher needs to maintain a baseline of normalcy within chosen material whereby the data is being compared to. A moment of uniqueness that stands out in Churchill’s life is his daring escape from a ‘Boer’ prison camp in South Africa (Pelling, 1974). After his escape from prison Churchill hitched a ride on a slow moving train to Mozambique. He disembarked and was fortunate to meet an Englishman who hid Churchill in a mine shaft for three days while authorities were looking for him (Pelling, 1974).

Negation

Negation refers to that which is denied or turned into its opposite (Alexander, 1988). In studying Winston Churchill the researcher needs to investigate the perception Churchill had of himself as well as understanding who he was not. Negation statements are usually a front to deeper and more meaningful truths that the individual would or would not want others to believe (Elms, Uncovering Lives: The uneasy alliance of biography and psychology, 1994). The data will essentially be remonstrating against facts that cannot be disregarded (Schultz, 2005). The present researcher could find no evidence of negation in the literature reviewed.

Omission
Omission refers to data that is missing but usually expected to be included in content (Schultz, 2005). Elms (1994) referred to this as the ‘Sherlock Holmes’ rule whereby the identification of a clue was highlighted by questioning what was missing. There are many books written by Churchill, some document his early life and his adventures around the world. However, Churchill never allowed a full biographical or even engaged in a full autobiographical text. This has made it difficult to verify data against Churchill’s opinion. Randolph Churchill, Churchill’s eldest son wanted to write book on the life of his father but Churchill persuaded him not to and to wait till he had passed away.

My dear Randolph, I have reflected carefully on what you said. I think that your biography of Derby [Lord Derby, by Randolph Churchill, Cassell: London 1959] is a remarkable work, and I should be happy that you should write my official biography when the time comes. But I must ask you to defer this until after my death. I would not like to release my papers piecemeal, and I think that you should wait for the time being and then get all your material from my own Archives and from the Trust. In any case, I do not want anything to be published until at least five years after my death.


Error or Distortion

This refers to or is an occurrence of mistakes often related to time, place or person (Schultz, 2005). Psychoanalysts may perceive this to be unconscious acting out and that such discrepancies need to be investigated (Elms, Uncovering Lives: The uneasy alliance of biography and psychology, 1994).

On November 25th 1914, Churchill asked the British War Council to spearhead a naval campaign into Turkey in order to move German troops and supplies away from the Eastern and Western fronts. Churchill felt that the British navy should enter the
heavily fortified and dangerously mined Dardanelles strait and make their way toward Constantinople. The War Council was uneasy about the idea and ranking British admirals wanted to take more time to plan out the attack, but Churchill was persistent. He pressured Admiral Carden, a seasoned captain in the region, to draw up an attack plan which he then submitted to the War Council.

Churchill took the War Council’s indirect, half-hearted, and ultimately confusing non-committal reply as a resounding ‘yes’ and quickly ordered Admiral Carden and his small fleet into the strait. While the first attack was successful Admiral Carden and his men weren’t ready for an unexpectedly organized Turkish force and the strait’s huge collection of floating mines. Eventually, Admiral Carden fell ill and General Sir Ian Hamilton was appointed to lead a 70,000 strong military force into the region. After numerous failed campaigns, General Hamilton and the British navy were pulled out of the Dardanelles region by the War Council. The Dardanelles skirmishes led to over 200,000 British allied casualties. The Turkish forces lost nearly as many men, but the numbers are undocumented. After the campaign Churchill was booted from the Admiralty and fell into a depression (Briggs, 2010).

Isolation

Isolation refers to data that stands alone and is incoherent with the individual’s life (Alexander, 1988). Information that ‘does not fit’ or questions the motives of data presented by the individual is valuable in providing knowledge (Elms, Uncovering Lives: The uneasy alliance of biography and psychology, 1994). Such information can serve as a catalyst to uncovering new and deeper meanings of salient themes (Schultz, 2005). The present researcher found most of the data on Churchill to be similar and coherent. Leonard (2008) reviewed newspaper documents regarding World War II from the 1920’s and 1930’s and
believed Churchill to be a warmonger and an anti-Semitic who could have prevented the Second World War.

_Incompletion_

This refers to that which still needs to be finished or followed through till the end. Incompletion can be expressed as the introduction of a topic but was terminated without being seen through (Alexander, 1988). There is a sense that an incomplete topic may leave an impression that the researcher is missing an essential aspect of an individual’s understanding (Fouchè & van Niekerk, Psychobiography: An interdisciplinary approach between psychology and biography in the narrative reconstruction of personal lives, 2005). After the second world war Churchill lost the elections and was replaced by Clement Atlee. Churchill did not respond well to the result and needed a holiday on Lake Como, Italy with his daughter to restore his mood (Pelling, 1974). Churchill remained in politics and was actively involved in highlighting the action of Russia. In 1951 Churchill decided to run for Prime Minister again and was re-elected, this time round Churchill had to contend with policies that were national minded instead of international. Churchill’s government was tasked with rescuing the economy (Pelling, 1974). One year in to his term Churchill fell ill and was unable to continue in his capacity as Prime Minster. In the context of who Churchill was it would have been interesting to see how he would have led the United Kingdom in this difficult time.

The above nine guidelines of salience guided the present researcher to systematically and consistently reflect on collected material and data by asking the material questions related to the theories and the research objectives. In addition, by following these guidelines for the extraction of salient data, the researcher attempted to provide a reliable approach in order to improve the study’s ‘trustworthiness’.

5.7.1.2 Questioning the data
While investigating and evaluating the data the researcher spent time asking the data questions according to the theoretical approach. This was done in order to fulfil and meet the objectives of this study by highlighting the salient themes. The following questions were asked:

- What body or section of the data will allow for the exploration and description of personality development as reflected in the life of Winston Churchill?

For this question to be answered, a comprehensive explanation and understanding of the constructs of Adler’s (1929) theory of individuality must be explored. This was done by doing a comprehensive literature review in chapter 3 in which the contents of his theory was discussed.

- To what extent does the data obtained regarding human development as reflected in the life of Winston Churchill compare with Adler’s theory of personality development?

To answer this question the connection between the theory and the data assembled on the individual be facilitated. Firstly, the level at which Adler’s core constructs are evidenced in Churchill’s life must be determined through a careful analysis of the category-specific organised data. Secondly, the researcher needs to identify which of the findings can be generalised to the applied theory by comparing the case data to the suggested theory in a process of informal testing. The process is seen as important as it may generate hypotheses about the theory which could lead to further development of the theoretical framework.

5.7.2 A Conceptual Framework and Matrix

Organised and concise information is essential in constructing a conceptual framework (Miles & Huberman, 1994) and this was done in the present study via a matrix. This process needs to be a systematic and appropriate collection of data that can be accessed safely (Miles
& Huberman, 1994). By reducing the data into a specific framework the researcher was able to conceptualise and formulate hypotheses about the meanings. Table 5.1 provides a context of Churchill’s life and this data along with Adler’s (1929), theory of Individual Psychology will form part of a conceptual matrix in which the life of Winston Churchill was compared. Below is the conceptual matrix of Adler’s theory (1929) that will be used in the present study (Cheze, 2009).

In table 5.1 the vertical columns represent the personality theory applied in the study and the horizontal rows represent the major historical periods over Churchill’s lifespan. Once pertinent and salient data was revealed, it was noted and described within this systematic framework.

Table 5.1 Matrix of Personality Development of Winston Churchill

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individual Personality Development</th>
<th>Structure of Personality</th>
<th>Development of a Lifestyle</th>
<th>Motivational Dynamics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Constituional Attributes</td>
<td>Social Environment</td>
<td>Development of Individual’s Creative Contribution</td>
<td>Compensation as Striving for Superiority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative Self</td>
<td>Lifestyle</td>
<td>Creative Self &amp; Constitutional Factors</td>
<td>Creative Self &amp; Social Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guided by Fictional Goal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Social Interest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The top row of the columns in the matrix represents Adler’s (1929) individual psychology. While the data was collated and analysed and salient biographical information highlighted in relation to Adlerian theory, the researcher focused on incidents or moments that had pivotal consequences on Churchill as an individual. The salient constructs of developmental and motivational dynamics as well as the guiding fictional goal were used to expand on Churchill’s lifestyle allowing the researcher to gain developmental insight. Each of these constructs has been discussed in Chapter 6.
Most biographies on Churchill did not follow a set chronological pattern but his life is well documented due his role in local, national and international politics. This can be seen in the numerous materials available from media, text and various other public records from the socio-historical context. The consistency of the chronological timeline enhances the reliability of the data analysis process (Fouchè J. P., 1999) allowing for coherent interpretations and meanings to be made (Yin, 1994).

The researcher understands that there are various ways to collect and conceptualise data. This matrix serves as a means to integrate Churchill’s socio-historical context and compare it to Adlerian theory. During the investigation attention was also given to additional facets of Churchill’s life such as family, education, religion, community and life experiences that may have influenced his personality development.

5.8 Reflexivity

Reflexivity or reflective analysis requires the researcher to consider his own meanings and perspectives so that he may understand the impact it may have on him and the research when engaging the data (Willig, 2001). Some researchers view reflexivity highly and regard it as a paramount feature of qualitative research (Smith J. A., 2003). If the researcher is unable to identify and be aware of their personal world view or fathom the complex relational nature of biographical research in terms of the differences in socio-historical contexts, then the validity of the research can be questioned (Tindall, 1999; Willig, 2001). Another perspective is to understand that a researcher needs to be aware of their contribution to the construction of meaning throughout the research process (Willig, 2001). Added to that the researcher also needs to accept that he will be unable to remain completely objective (Tindall, 1999).

The present researcher’s attempt to maintain reflexivity was to use a journal when needed to reflect on data within and throughout the research (Tindall, 1999). The researcher also
made use of his supervisor as a method of testing and reflecting on recurrent themes that appeared to be compromising the objectivity of the data.

5.9 Preliminary Methodological Considerations

The understanding of preliminary methodological considerations is crucial to psychobiographical research as well as strategies that are needed to overcome them. There are inherent difficulties in such research and therefore need to be addressed. These considerations include researcher bias, reductionism, cross-cultural studies, validity and reliability criticisms, elitism and easy genre, inflated expectations and infinite amount of biographical data. The means by which these considerations were applied to Winston Churchill’s life will be addressed below.

5.9.1 Researcher Bias

Immersing oneself into an in-depth psychobiographical study of an individual’s life often leads the researcher to form subjective opinions resulting in countertransference-like reactions (Anderson, The methodology of psychological biography, 1981). All preceding efforts and conditions will be made redundant if the researcher seeks only to use the case study to substantiate a preconceived position (Yin, 1994). Literature indicates that the researcher is not always aware of the emotional bias and the reactions that are taking place subconsciously. Subsequently researchers are encouraged to counteract the unintended bias by developing a sense of empathy with the subject, preventing the researcher from being critical (Anderson, The methodology of psychological biography, 1981). Furthermore, it is recommended that the researcher keep a journal of his feelings during the process of exploring and writing. This will enable the researcher or another to review the study for possible explanations as to how or why the researcher chose to write in a particular manner.
Since Winston Churchill has passed away and is not available for this study, auto critique is not possible; however the researcher consulted with his supervisor on a regular basis to ensure insight into the relationship the researcher has with the subject. A journal was used by the researcher to log any reactions to the themes that emerge from the study.

5.9.2 Reductionism

Runyan (1988a) explains that it is simply too simplistic to claim that a psychobiographical study that excludes an individual’s social, historical and cultural context of existence, will be able to defend itself from reductionistic critique. However, it is equally reductionistic to claim that an understanding of individual persons and their psychological processes has nothing to contribute to an analysis of the history of groups” (Runyan, 1988a). The researcher must always strive to produce research that is credible. With this in mind reductionism can be reduced through the use of multiple sources in data collection (Runyan, 1988a) and avoiding the excessive use of psychological jargon and analysis (Runyan, 1988b). The researcher used an extensive resource list from various sources and make sure the chain of evidence is maintained by referencing all relevant data.

5.9.3 Cross-Cultural Studies

Psychobiographical studies are considered to be a form of cross-cultural research; this view is held because of the differences in culture created over time (Anderson, The methodology of psychological biography, 1981). Hence concepts used in psychobiographies today may not have had the same meaning in the individual’s context (Anderson, The methodology of psychological biography, 1981). In trying to remedy this, the researcher needs to be aware that the individual lived in a different era and should be culturally sensitive and empathetic (Anderson, The methodology of psychological biography, 1981). The present researcher is aware that he lived in a different socio-historical context to Winston Churchill.
The researcher has attempted to reduce cultural bias by reading literature regarding the socio-historical context of the period.

**5.9.4 Validity and Reliability Criticisms**

Generalising the findings of a psychobiography is very difficult due to the lack of controls within the case study and this is a widely held criticism. According to Yin (1994), the quality of a case study can be measured by four tests common to all social science methods; construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability.

1. **Construct validity**: Firstly, the researcher needs to establish correct operational measures for the variables that are being studied (Yin, 1994). Secondly, the researcher is required to select and clearly conceptualise the specific constructs or variables that are to be studied. Thirdly, this should be done in a comprehensible manner and in relation to the original objectives of the study. This procedure increases the researcher’s ability and clarifies which indicators and constructs the researcher wants to operationalize during the data collection.

2. **Internal validity**: Yin (1994), suggests three tactics in addressing internal validity. Firstly, pattern matching is used to compare empirical based patterns with a predicted one (or several predicted patterns). Secondly the researcher can utilise explanation building where the goal is not to conclude a study but rather develop a hypothesis generating process (Yin, 1994). Finally, time-series analysis, the more intricate and precise the pattern constructed the greater the internal validity (Yin, 1994).

3. **External validity**: Findings of the single case study should not be generalised to the general population or to other case studies but rather the findings should be generalised to the relevant theory (Yin, 1994).
4. **Reliability**: The researcher needs to be consistent in how they collect their data, identifying with the concept of stability reliability (Neuman W. L., 2006). By following a consistent and simple coding system the auditability of the themes within the data is enhanced thereby increasing the reliability of the study (Rudestam & Newton, 1992).

5.9.5 **Elitism and Easy Genre**

Runyan (1988b), states that psychobiographies are only elitist to those that interpret the information in such away. One only needs to look at the variety of studies that are being conducted on poor, rich, healthy, social elites and on some with substance use problems confirming that all social classes are accessible for research. Many research studies have been conducted to debunk certain people’s misuse of power, would this then be seen as elitist? Facing the question of a psychobiography being an easy genre is untrue as a thorough psychobiography requires vast amounts of preparation and consultation with an extensive range of sources forcing the researcher to develop deep understanding of the individuals socio-historical context (Runyan, 1988b).

5.9.6 **Inflated Expectations**

Researchers need to understand that psychobiographical studies are not new definitive rewrites of history but rather a current and alternative way of looking at a person’s life through a particular theory (Anderson, The methodology of psychological biography, 1981). The researcher is aware of this and does not claim to be providing a complete and extensive psychological insight into the life of Churchill. Rather the current research study attempts to provide alternative explanations which could be uncertain but yet try to supplement existing schools of thought (Meissner, 2003).

5.9.7 **Infinite Amounts of Biographical Data**
McAdams (1994) believes that psychobiographers are inundated with vast amounts of information and data. Dividing the information into two parts is an easier way to deal with the large quantity. Firstly, the researcher can use the information to identify theoretical propositions and constructs while the second group of information is used to compare and test the theoretical propositions against the first body of data (Anderson, The methodology of psychological biography, 1981). Alexander (1988) advocates two primary methods of dealing with data. One method is sorting the data into nine salient categories and the other is to ask the data a question. These two methods are explained earlier in this chapter.

5.10 Methodological Considerations Applied

The aforementioned methodological issues and difficulties were carefully considered in the present study. The researcher has attempted to deal with each issue carefully and applied himself to reduce the difficulties already discussed.

5.10.1 Researcher Bias

In an attempt to reduce the researcher’s bias towards an individual, the researcher explored his feelings towards Winston Churchill throughout the study. These were noted and journalised throughout the study for reflexive analysis. Furthermore, the researcher regularly engaged with his supervisor about his thoughts and feelings towards the individual thus upholding the balance between empathy, subjectivity and objectivity.

5.10.2 Reductionism

In order to avoid producing a reductionist perspective on the life of Churchill, the researcher was aware that a careless approach to understanding the context of the individual can distort psychobiographical interpretations (Elms, Uncovering Lives: The uneasy alliance of biography and psychology, 1994). A thorough literature study was conducted, as well as
the application of Adler’s (1929) theory of individuality. Furthermore, an extensive exploration of the socio-historical context of Winston Churchill was also undertaken. With the inclusion of multiple sources of material the possibility of doing a reductionistic study of Churchill was lessened.

5.10.3 Cross-Cultural Differences

The present researcher shared no similar cultural characteristics to Winston Churchill. Churchill lived in a different global economic, socio-political and cultural era to the researcher. The researcher recognised the need to reduce cultural bias and attempted to do so by developing his empathy for the socio-historical context of Winston Churchill. This was done by reading literature regarding the historical, political and cultural context of Churchill’s life. The socio-historical and cultural context of Winston Churchill is discussed in Chapter 4.

The researcher also understands that applying psychological concepts and theories to individuals from different eras is challenging. Although Adler’s (1929) theory of individuality was identified in the first half of the twentieth century, his theory makes allowances for the importance of an individual’s choices and development.

5.10.4 Validity and Reliability Criticisms

A criticism of case study research is low construct validity. The present researcher attempted to manage this problem by providing a clear and succinct conceptualisation of the theoretical framework. The primary aim of this study was to explore, describe and to seamlessly provide a deep and thorough understanding of Churchill’s life using Adler’s (1929) theory of Individual Psychology. In conducting this study internal validity was not a major focus because it is more pertinent to causal or explanatory case studies. Similarly,
external validity was also not a concern as it is not the aim of this study to impose generalised findings to a larger group.

The researcher aimed to form a sound base of credibility for this research so that making general deductions would be possible, allowing the generalisation of Churchill’s personality development back to Adler’s (1929) theory of Individuality. This was accomplished by firstly, spending an exhaustive amount of time with literature on Winston Churchill. Secondly, making use of data triangulation whereby the data was cross referenced to prevent distortions of interpretations as well as discussions with the researcher’s supervisor.

The researcher made use of reflexive analysis throughout the study by journaling his thoughts, feelings and frustrations. The journaling served a secondary function by allowing the researcher to remain constantly aware of how he as a research mechanism influenced how the data was being treated.

5.10.5 Elitism and Easy Genre

The researcher understands that Churchill was born into a elitist family, however this is no reason to view him in an elitist context. On the contrary, Churchill was a man who was passionate about his country and the people in it. He lived and fought for people on all fronts leading them through some of the darkest days in their modern history. Churchill was not chosen because of the stature of his family but rather for his actions as a man. As a result of who Churchill was makes him a ‘well written man’ and therefore there is a vast amount of literature available regarding his life

5.10.6 Inflated Expectations
The researcher understands that a single case study on Churchill was primarily conducted from a psychological perspective. Thus this study cannot claim to have uncovered the full scope and complexities of Churchill’s life.

5.10.7 Infinite Amounts of Biographical Data

The researcher accessed primary data sources of which there was enough to easily access. This made it possible that data could be cross checked, back referenced and accessed readily. Existing biographies and memoirs were included in this study as this proved valuable in establishing a longitudinal understanding of Churchill’s life.

5.11 Psychobiographical Ethics

The onus rests on the psychobiographer to deal with any incumbent and inherent ethical issues that could negatively impose on the study. Elms (1994) contends that the first ethical dilemma in choosing a suitable subject is to decide whether the subject will be living or deceased. This is followed by whether the researcher should only use material that is archived or only material which the family deem to be pertinent. Finally, the manner in which the material is presented also needs to be considered.

The American Psychiatric Association issued guidelines in 1976 that are still used by psychobiographers today. The guidelines are as follows; (1) Psychobiographies should ideally be done on a person that is deceased and that the researcher should have little or no ties to surviving family (in case of embarrassment due to the findings). (2) Psychobiographies may only be conducted on persons who have freely consented to being studied, interviewed and written up for publication (Elms, Uncovering Lives: The uneasy alliance of biography and psychology, 1994).
The American Psychiatric Association’s guidelines make no mention of confidentiality in psychobiographical studies. Elms (1994) states that every psychobiography needs to be justified ethically to some degree. Hence the intimate information and data that the researcher handles must be treated and documented with respect.

5.12 Conclusion

The research design and methodology were explained in this chapter in relation to the life of Winston Churchill. The present researcher prioritised the ‘questioning’ of the data, identifying salience and the use of a conceptual framework to categorise the data. In the second part of this chapter the methodological considerations were discussed as well as their limitations. These limitations were addressed and strategies were provided as to how the researcher dealt with the limitations. The results of this study are discussed in the chapters that follow.
Chapter 6

Findings and discussion

6.1 Chapter Preview

In this chapter the present researcher will attempt to integrate Alfred Adler’s theory of Individual Psychology (Chapter 3) with the life of Winston Spencer Churchill (Chapter 4). A brief overview of how the person is viewed according to Adler precedes the structure of personality and the rest of the chapter. The researchers aim is to provide the reader with salient integrated concepts regarding Adler and Churchill. Attention is given to Churchill’s identity and character but not limited to it and the chapter is structured according to the conceptual matrix described in Chapter 3. This chapter does not seek to establish causation but rather to explore and describe Churchill’s life in the context of Adler’s theory.

6.2 The view of the person

The present researcher has attempted to integrate a brief overview of Winston Churchill with Adler’s view of the person. This holistic view is in line with Adler’s (1929) theory which aims to understand individuals holistically and as such this section serves as an introduction to this chapter.

Adler’s theory stems from his own childhood experiences in which he was dogged with personal health issues. This resulted in him not being able to play sport or partake in other physical activities with children his own age, fostering feelings of inferiority (Meyer, Moore, & Viljoen, 1997). At the same time because of these illnesses, Adler was pampered by his mother, only to be dethroned by a younger brother later on. Adding to an already difficult childhood, one of Adler’s brothers died in a bed next to him (Corey, 2005). At school, Adler overheard a teacher telling his father that he would have to be content with his son becoming
a shoemaker. These experiences, combined with Adler fall out with Sigmund Freud played a significant role in Adler forming the theory of Individual Psychology (Meyer, Moore, & Viljoen, 1997).

The present researcher finds it interesting that there are unique themes that are similar to both Adler and Churchill. Both describe a childhood dogged with organ inferiorities and as a result both suffered from the consequences of their organ inferiorities. Adler was unable to play sport due to his illness (Meyer, Moore, & Viljoen, 1997) and Churchill’s parents were forced to relocate due to his poor health, resulting in his exclusion from a prestigious school.

Similarly, Adler was pampered by his mother due to his illness and Churchill was handed over to ‘Woomy’ his nanny who cared for him like no other and created a bond between them that lasted to her death bed (Carson, 2010). Both Adler and Churchill were criticised by their teachers for their ineptitude in academics and both exceeded the expectations of their tutors. Adler became a doctor specialising in psychiatry (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003) and Churchill became Prime Minster of Great Britain (Pelling, 1974).

Adler (1930) held that individuals determine their own path in life and attach their own meaning based on their subjective experiences of reality rather than relying on abilities provided by heredity and impressions provided by the environment. They compensate for their organic inferiority through striving for mastery/superiority over these feelings (Adler, 1927) and view human behaviour as purposive, unified and serving as a catalyst to move away from a subjective sense of inferiority (Adler, 1930).

Churchill made a point of not relying on his royal heritage which provided him with a privileged foundation. Rather, he was interested in his own understanding of events, for example, he was unable to comprehend the need for Latin and deemed it unnecessary to learn (Churchill, 1930). This resulted in him being regarded as a lesser student for not mastering
the subject. This did not deter Churchill from becoming a great rhetoric and master of the English language (Sullivan, 2010). Similarly, later in his life Churchill advocated for the working class which was in stark contrast to the opinions held by the noblemen and they felt betrayed by his actions. This demonstrated that the aristocracy could not deter Churchill from considering the plight of the working class (Charmley, 1993).

Adler subscribed to a teleological perspective regarding behaviour, stating that individuals are pulled towards their goals. People will behave in such a way so that they may achieve their desired goal; irrespective of their success, Adler called this the ‘fictional goal’ (Adler, 1929). He proposed that children from an early age conceive a life goal or ideals of what it means to be safe, secure and own a sense of belonging (Dinkmeyer, Pew, & Dinkmeyer, 1979).

Once Churchill had broken the shackles of academia that bound him and realised that he was able to learn and benefit from education that he enjoyed. He developed a sense of coherence regarding his future, he wanted to lead, and there was a right way to do it (Churchill, 1948). Since the age of seven Churchill commanded and directed his and Jack’s vast collection of toy soldiers taking leadership seriously. Soon after this Churchill’s behaviour was reinforced when both he and his father agreed on him joining the army (Lee & Lee, 2010). Since that day no matter what, Churchill strove to achieve his goal of leading.

An individual is a responsible and purposeful being and a product of his personal and social context, therefore Adler argued that it was crucial to understand the familial, social, and cultural contexts that offered meaning to the individual’s life (Adler, 1958). The meaning that individuals find is unique to them, their attitude towards success is unique and hence the goal they form is unique to their context (Mosak & Maniaci, 1989).
The present researcher has taken the above mentioned points into account and explored aspects of Winston Churchill’s identity in three contexts, namely, his personal life, military life and political life. In addition, an appendix is included that lists salient events in the life of Winston Churchill and the world.

Adler’s view of behaviour, whether it is functional or dysfunctional, is that it occurs within a social context and is in harmony with the self-determined fictional goal (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). This persistent pursuit is the core solution to life’s difficulties and manifests itself in the way the individual addresses the tasks of life (Adler, 1930). Adler identified five life tasks which were occupational, social, sexual, self-regulation and spirituality (Adler, 1930; Mosak & Dreikurs, 1967). These life tasks are fundamental to human living and dysfunction in any one of them is often an indicator of a psychological disorder (American Psychiatric Association, 2000).

It is the present researcher’s opinion that Churchill strove to solve each life task. His primary focus was to serve his desire to lead. However, through self-regulation, social interest and his desire to serve a higher cause for the edification and then the survival of the British Empire, he was able to realise and live in harmony with each life task. The present researcher notes that many problems surfaced and not all of Churchill’s life is a success, however, his persistent pursuit in solving each task till the end of his life is evident. The five life tasks will not be discussed individually but rather be embedded within this research and can be clearly understood within the three life contexts provided by the current researcher.

In summary, the essential quest for individuals according to Individual Psychology is the drive to overcome inferiorities and to strive for superiority and perfection (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). According to Adler “the peak of this striving is reached when the
individual not only strives for perfection of the self in an egocentric way, but places that striving at the service of society” (Meyer, Moore, & Viljoen, 1997, p. 146).

Churchill himself recounts numerous occasions where the fate of the world hinged on a few anecdotal moments, for example, if he did not recognise the math sum from his revision exercises then he would not have passed a crucial exam and as a result he would never have been allowed to follow the path he eventually took (Jones, 1966). Churchill may look at his own life and see many crucial crossroads, however, Adler’s theory highlights the determination that Winston Churchill displayed in achieving his Fictional Goal.

6.3 Structure of personality

Adler (1929) viewed personality as a holistic and unified entity. He argued that through a subjective understanding of the individual’s lifestyle in relation to the social environment, the influences of the creative self and the constitutional attributes one could best understand personality.

6.3.1 Constitutional Attributes

Adler (1958) believed that through an individual’s creative self they are able to freely shape their own behaviour and create a personality. By the time a child reaches the age of four – five years, they have set their final fictional goal. The final goal is the individual’s method of compensating for real or perceived organic weaknesses by creatively determining what the final goal may be (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003).

Churchill was a sickly little boy and his family’s relocation to a warmer climate was due to his organ inferiority. His inferiority feelings needed soothing and he found solace in the form of his nanny and security in his favourite place, his play room (Churchill, 1930). Environmental contexts such as these shaped Churchill’s view of himself and by the age of
seven it was apparent how Churchill had creatively formed his fictional goal as a means of compensating for his organ inferiorities. The fictional goal is discussed throughout this chapter. However, to facilitate discussion the present researcher has identified Churchill’s desire to lead at all cost as the fictional goal.

6.3.2 Inferiority and Compensation

Adler believed that individuals are born with physical deficiencies that activate feelings of inferiority, feelings that drive an individual to compensate for those feelings and strive for superiority or success (Feist & Feist, 2008). Later Adler developed his theory to include another dimension, psychological inferiorities (Boeree, 2006). This referred to how people internalise what others say about them and how they end up believing their words and as a result tend to become what they say or compensate for the weakness and develop other areas (Griffith, 1984).

As a child Churchill had problems with his chest which resulted in his family having to alter their upper-class, privileged lifestyle to accommodate his organ inferiority. Churchill soon discovered that there was more than one consequence to his organ inferiority. He was unable to attend the same prestigious school as his father and family before him, breaking the family tradition (Jones, 1966). In addition, Churchill would have internalised his parent’s actions of handing him over to a carer as a fault on his part, creating the perception of a psychological inferiority complex. Finally, Churchill himself reports the disillusionment he experienced when his mother first employed a governess when Churchill was only four (Lee & Lee, 2010). The relocation, being cared for by a nanny and his feelings of abandonment by his mother would have reminded Churchill that his organ inferiority was the cause for the current family predicament.
Adler believed that minus and plus situations as mentioned above existed simultaneously and could not be separated because they are two dimensions of a single force (Feist & Feist, 2008). Without this innate drive towards perfection, children will never feel inferior and without inferiority, children will never set a goal for superiority and success (Feist & Feist, 2008).

There are various ways in which Churchill compensated for his organ deficiencies. Firstly, by trying to strengthen the weak organ beyond others, secondly, developing another organ to an extraordinary degree, or thirdly, adapting psychologically by developing supplementary skills (Boeree, 2006). As boy he was perceived as weak and weak boys had no place in a family with such a strong military tradition. He needed to prove that he was strong, so Churchill supplemented his organ inferiority, instead of being the soldier he could be the commander of an army of toy soldiers.

6.3.3 Complexes

Some individual’s become so consumed by their feelings of inferiority that they end up thinking too much about it and subsequently develop an inferiority complex (Adler, 1929). The inferiority complexes therefore further stunts development rather than aiding in striving for superiority (Dreikurs, 1967). On the opposite scale, there is a superiority complex that is an alternative response to inferiority (Adler, 1930). A false belief is in place allowing an individual to think they are better than others. Individuals manifest this exaggerated state in various ways, some find security through crime and prejudice while others use more covert means such as substance use. These individuals cease to be socially interested but are rather concerned with evading life’s difficulties rather than facing them (Adler, 1958).

Churchill was able to avoid creating any major complexes for himself. Due to his social interest and his desire to rid himself of his perceived inferiority complexes he confronted his
inferiorities. At school he was labelled academically challenged, however he made sure he passed all his exams and made a point of finding subjects he enjoyed (Lee & Lee, 2010). This attitude of knowing and of improving his circumstances prevailed throughout his life and resulted in him successfully attending to each life task. Churchill’s success in various stages of his life never developed into a superiority complex, this is evidenced by many anecdotal stories but none more so than a ‘Tory man’ breaking the ranks and joining the labour party and then becoming instrumental in the improvement of the British health system for the poor (Gopnik, 2010).

6.3.4 Social Environment

Adler (1930) held the view that people are understood when one considers them more as unified wholes rather than a collection of bits and pieces. It is essential to understand them in the context of their environment, both physical and social (Boeree, 2006). Adler argued that the use of an individual’s ability is far more important than the prospect of having numerous abilities. Some people are fortunate enough to be born with certain abilities and the environment gives them the opportunity to enhance those abilities, ultimately the individual is responsible for the use of those abilities (Feist & Feist, 2008). Adler also believed that people’s interpretations of experiences are more important than the experiences themselves and therefore interpret the experiences to suit their own purposes (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956).

The present researcher contends that Winston Churchill was raised and lived in three distinct social environments. Namely, his family and ancestral environment, socio-political environment and a military environment governed by a policy of exploration.

Churchill was a descendant of the Duke of Marlborough and at one stage heir apparent to the Dukedom (Pelling, 1974). This is important to note as the Churchill family were steeped
in military and royal history and every blue-blooded aristocrat faced the pressure of living up to the expectations of their family name. A young noble man like Churchill would have observed the lifestyle that his parents were living and assimilated their parents lifestyle with his own world view and this would undoubtedly have shaped his perception and exacerbated his elitist disposition. Churchill’s blue blood may have come from his paternal side; however, his maternal family would have been regarded in a similar light as they were very wealthy Americans (Sullivan, 2010). For Lady Randolph, the pressures of maintaining her lifestyle in the United Kingdom remained with her even though she was far removed and several hundred miles away from her native country.

The family environment in which Churchill was raised was indicative of the aristocratic culture. Lords and Ladies needed to keep up appearances and this warranted time away from their children. Children were therefore given over to nannies for care and when old enough were sent to boarding school. As a result Churchill found himself in an environment where his family was engulfed by their social life, political standing, their love for travelling and the vicious circle attached to ever present efforts to maintain their lifestyle (Lee & Lee, 2010).

The United Kingdom was in a unique position, it was a country that was governed by two political systems namely a monarchy and a democracy (Churchill, 1930). The present researcher’s focus is to create a context of understanding of the environment that Winston Churchill found himself in and is of the opinion that it would be unnecessary to explain the dynamics of the two political systems. The present researcher contends that Britain had gone through a period of exploration as a nation and had established many colonies across the world and the industrial revolution had increased the general earning income per person per capita and as a result created a substantial working class. The colonies needed to be serviced and protected and this was aptly aided by the industrial revolution which essentially aided in Britain’s efficiency to maintain its territories (Churchill, 1930).
The present researcher found it difficult to conceptualise the military environment in which Winston Churchill existed. Churchill was born during what was considered peaceful times. There were military campaigns but they only existed to serve the empire in its endeavour’s to be wealthy and maintain the status quo of the British Empire. It was in these campaigns that Churchill received military tutorship, where he honed his skills as a leader and a tactician (Churchill, 1930). The global community had shrunk and a nation’s allies were not only their neighbours but any nation with the means of aiding. This meant the reality of a ‘real’ world war was plausible, soon this reality was established and Churchill played a significant role in the defeat of the enemy. By the time World War Two arrived, Churchill reputation as a master military leader and tactician was long-established and Britain called on him to lead. During Churchill’s career there were very few moments when Britain was not in a battle, fighting a war, or preparing the military for the next one and much of his career and political life was centred on this (Lee & Lee, 2010).

6.3.5 Style of Life

Adler proposed that an individual has a ‘lifestyle’ or ‘style of life’ that is formed by one’s creative responses to individuals and environmental experiences. It refers to how individual’s live their lives, how they handle problems and interpersonal relations (Boeree, 2006). The lifestyle is unconscious in that it reflects the individuals basic or core views about themselves that are not necessarily understood (Christopher & Bickhard, 1992).

By the age of four or five, individual’s start to crystallise their style of life and their actions begin to express their unified style of life. The final fictional goal may be singular, but the style of life need not be so restrictive or constrictive (Feist & Feist, 2008). Adler held the opinion that context had far greater meaning to life and that people are not mere mechanical reactions to an environment. Similarly, Adler used a teleological approach in his
theory, he considered the future to be crucial to his theory stating that current behaviour is shaped by the future goals the individual is constantly trying to attain (Boeree, 2006).

It is hard not to consider the influence of family on Churchill’s style of life. His father was a prominent politician known for his no nonsense speeches and a descendant of the great Duke of Marlborough who was famous for victories in several key battles in English history (Pelling, 1974). His mother a well to-do heiress from America with a penchant for extravagant living was fascinated with European royalty (Sullivan, 2010). As aristocrats, lavish parties were regularly held to entertain and maintain political standing as most politicians were of noble descent. This undoubtedly influenced Churchill’s style of life, surrounded by his parent’s unrestrained and profligate lifestyle. His parent’s distant lifestyle left a void in Churchill’s own life and as a result he turned to ‘Old Woom’ for affection. Churchill would for the rest of his life strive to please his mother and father.

Churchill was known for his propensity to resist tuition from experts, however, knowledge was power, and he petitioned the need for subjects that were of no use. His quick wit matured early in his life and Churchill was regularly in trouble for speaking out of turn. His sensation seeking behaviour, evident in his bomb building school days became a vivid and integral part of his lifestyle. From jumping off a bridge to escape a game of tag, to volunteering to go to Cuba simply to experience war, illustrated Churchill’s desire for adventure, Churchill wanted to be where the action was (Churchill, 1930). Soon Churchill discovered that leading would entitle him to choose what he could experience or at least create far greater possibilities for sensation. Churchill’s peers were often left with the sequelae of his decisions and projects, a failure only meant an opportunity for growth and one needed to keep up with him. He would direct a conversation and if you could not hold your own then you were left behind.
It is the researcher’s opinion that Winston Churchill can be viewed as one of the last leaders from the Victorian era, a man who lived for the sake of the British Empire and the Queen. Much of Churchill’s cavalier, sensation seeking lifestyle matched that of the empire’s attitude of exploring and conquering. However, by the time Churchill was re-elected as Prime Minister, the complex of the British nation had been altered by both World Wars and the working-middle class of Britain was established (Pelling, 1974).

**6.3.5.1 Lifestyle Types**

Each style is the “creation of the child himself, who uses his inheritance and impression of the environment as bricks to build his particular avenue for success – success according to his own interpretation” (Adler, 1982, p. 5).

A faulty lifestyle or ‘personality’ as Adler sometimes viewed it was caused by three basic childhood situations. As mentioned before, the lifestyle of a child is set by the ages of four or five and either organ inferiorities, pampering or neglect could contribute to a faulty lifestyle (Boeree, 2006). The present researcher explored the possibility of Churchill exhibiting a faulty lifestyle. Examples from his life were scrutinised against the three situations mentioned above.

Churchill’s chest problems’, his organ inferiority, was not interpreted as a burden to him rather it was the motivation to achieve superiority. Despite the inconvenience to him and his family it did not cause Churchill to fixate on his organ inferiority. Similarly, it is possible to consider that Churchill was neglected by his parents due to their lifestyle, however, instead of internalising the apparent rejection Churchill was able to rationalise his parent’s interactions and he remained loyal to them gaining their trust and relying on their love. Finally, Churchill was not pampered even though he had ‘Old Woom’ to care for him. She did not allow Churchill to be spoilt, her focus and attention was to raise a well-balanced child.
Even though Churchill displayed some traits or leanings toward a faulty lifestyle it is clear that he was able avoid the pitfalls. His ability to integrate and utilise a socially useful lifestyle was the hallmark of a man destined to serve his country. In the same vein, to suggest that Churchill displayed a one dimensional socially useful lifestyle is incongruent with a man who needed to lead a country. The present researcher believes that part of Churchill’s lifestyle contained traits of a ruling type of lifestyle. Churchill’s childhood is riddled with anecdotal accounts of his need to lead and not to be led. However, due to his prominent and well developed social interest, the ruling type lifestyle was repressed and replaced with a socially useful lifestyle type.

This type of person exhibits high levels of energy and develops a high regard for social interest. These individuals have the means to cope with the life tasks within a well-defined social context and are optimistic about the future (Adler, 1958, 1982). Boeree (2006) states that without energy, an individual may find it difficult to attain social interest, as their ability to do things for others will be impaired by their lack of energy. They actively interrogate their life for their solution to their problems in a way that contributes usefully to others (Adler, 1982).

6.4 Creative Self

The creative self is not seen as a construct upon which decisions are built but rather an innate individual ability to design one’s own life goals (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003). There are factors like heredity and environment, organ inferiorities and early childhood experiences that influence the individual. These elements cause a child to manage their life-plan and create a fictional goal to overcome any perceived organ inferiorities. This allows the child to exist in a realm of freedom through their creative power (Dreikurs, 1995).
As a child Churchill might have unconsciously and consciously considered his life to have many limitations and may have been a threat to his view of freedom. In an attempt to achieve his fictional goal and for the management of his life plan he needed to overcome these limitations. The heredity pressure of political and military success, the socio-economic pressures of an aristocratic environment, the need to excel and not be limited by his organ inferiorities and a child-parent relationship that can be best described as distant and aloof could have forced Churchill to adopt any of the faulty lifestyles. However, Churchill’s creative self was able to mitigate the impact of his apparent limitations and allowed him to design a life style that was socially useful.

The present researcher is of the opinion that Churchill’s fictional goal ‘the desire to lead’ guided the creative self. By the age of seven Churchill knew he wanted to go to the military, this decision allowed him the space to fantasise about leading an army like his uncle the Duke of Marlborough. This resolved the issue of succeeding academically as it became a means to get into the army. Academics proved to be more of a limitation than initially perceived by Churchill. He was viewed as lazy and inept at excelling at the prescribed curriculum. Churchill himself stated that he was not interested in what was being taught as there was no value in learning something which could not be used in ‘real life’ (Churchill, 1930). This would have had a great bearing on his parents as Churchill’s performance at school was a reflection on them. Lord and Lady Randolph’s reputation at stately functions and political gatherings could easily be marred by their son’s behaviour. Churchill’s creative self resolved this issue too, the decision to go to military academy meant that Churchill’s subject choice changed and this resulted in better marks as he was enjoying what he was learning. This resulted in his parents being able to uphold their reputation within their socio-economic environment.
Being accepted into the Sandhurst Military Academy meant that Churchill’s organ inferiorities was no longer a limitation, the academy would not accept students who were not physically fit (Churchill, 1930). Finally, the cost of going to the military academy was excessive compared to other means of education and on completion of the course the only use for the qualification initially was a career in the military. This forced Churchill’s parents to pay more attention to him, it required them to monitor his progress and regularly engage with him regarding his personal development to ensure their investment in their son was not wasted. It is the present researcher’s opinion that Churchill’s fictional goal, his socially useful lifestyle type and his creative self allowed him to create a freedom that Churchill could succeed in.

6.5 Birth Order

Adler (1929) regarded birth order as a salient factor to individual development. Birth order itself is less important than the perception the individual has of the position (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). The only child’s birth is viewed as a miracle. The parents have no previous experience and as a result the child retains two hundred percent of the attention from both parents. Other factors that may influence the relationship are the child becoming a rival of one parent and being over-protected and spoiled by another. The only child likes being the centre of adult attention and often has difficulty sharing with siblings and peers (Stein, 2005).

The oldest child is dethroned by the second child and has to learn how to share. Parental expectations are usually very high and often the eldest child is given responsibility and expected to set an example. The eldest child may become authoritarian or strict and feel that power is his right, however, this may become helpful if encouraged and nurtured appropriately. After the birth of the second child the eldest may turn to the father (Stein, 2005).
The child’s method of relating with others is set by the age of four or five, this together with his experiences and family of origin add to the child’s understanding of their lifestyle (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956; Watts & Shulman, 2003). The way a child views his position within the family is important because it determines how he will relate to adults later in life (Shulman & Mosak, 1977). Each child is different and their psychological makeup is different as are their home circumstances. The lifestyle that a child expresses is an attempt by the child to adapt to the situation they face (Adler, 1958).

The present researcher understands that Churchill’s position was the eldest child and that according to Adler’s theory there are characteristics associated with this birth position. However, the present researcher feels that assessing Churchill solely on the eldest position would be an incomplete conceptualisation of Winston Churchill’s ‘birth orders’, namely only child and eldest child. Adler (1929) holds that a child’s development and method of relating is formed by the ages of five and six, this developmental period provides crucial insight into the understanding of Churchill, as the gap between him and his brother was five years. Therefore, the present researcher feels it is beneficial to consider the birth position of an only child in conjunction with the position of eldest child. The merger of the positions serves to discern the impact of Churchill’s childhood development and manner of relating as an ‘only child’ in relation to the position as the eldest child.

The perception from Churchill and his experiences of his parents and ‘Old Woom’ would have been that of exclusivity. Letters between Churchill’s parents illuminate their fascination, concern and love with their new born son, adoring him and giving him the nickname of ‘skinny’ early on as a sign of their affection. These characteristics and behaviours endorse the notion that ‘firstborns’ are viewed as miracle babies. The present researcher hypothesises that Churchill would have internalised such behaviour as confirmation of his prominence. In addition the appointment of ‘Old Woom’ would have been internalised as a ‘gift’ enhancing
his grandiosity of the only child position. This behaviour was sustained till the age of five. During this time Churchill was faced with the reality that due to his parent’s socio-economic context, the person really caring for him was ‘Old Woom’ thus causing Churchill to be overprotective of her, placing the same value on his relationship with her as with his parents. This is played out later in Churchill’s life where he made sure that he was at her death bed.

When Jack was born, Churchill would have been faced with the reality that he no longer retained the exclusivity of his parent’s and ‘Old Woom’s’ attention, rather he now had to share with his younger brother. The present researcher proposes that Churchill dealt with the challenges of the eldest position adequately. This was primarily solved via his method of relating which was constructed and established over the five years of being an only child. This construction happened within multiple contexts and sub contexts from Churchill and his parent’s view. One particular context was the high expectations projected from his parents, which persisted largely due to the pressures of their socio-economic standing. Churchill, by that time had found his play room and toy soldiers to be a source of comfort.

The result of Churchill finding his own way and being comfortable with his own company gradually benefited him allowing him to integrate into the family. His parents were gradually finding it easier to include him into their social and vocational lives. In contrast to Adler’s (1929) view that a child partners with one parent above the other, Churchill’s world was progressively expanding and the distant relationship initially experienced with both his parents was steadily diminishing. At the age of five the biggest threat to Churchill was his relationship with ‘Old Woom’. In that context Churchill would face the immediate threat of being dethroned by the birth of Churchill’s brother.

The present researcher believes that Churchill being an only child during his developmental years assisted him in the development of his identity. By the time Churchill
was a man he was comfortable being on his own, for example, using his painting as a means of fighting the ‘Black Dog of Depression’ or long solitary moments in the Boer prison. Yet he was able to share in the relationship with his wife and children he knew what it meant to be an older brother to a nation.

6.6 Striving for Superiority

Adler (1927, 1929, 1930, 1958) viewed an individual’s innate ability or will for superiority as the stand out feature of being human. Early childhood experiences of inferiority, social context/environment and family experiences allow the individual to form a goal. The individual strives to achieve the goal by overcoming their inferiority through compensation (Adler, 1929, 1930). Manaster and Corsini (1982) argue that the solution to life’s difficulties lie with striving for superiority, and this can be understood by how people attend to life’s tasks. Much of Adler’s theory is based on his life’s experience and, even more so, on his perception of his own childhood. The concept of striving for superiority seems to encapsulate Adler’s own attempts at striving for superiority emanating from his own experiences of inferiority and weakness (Corey, 2005; Meyer & Viljoen, 2003). There are unique and different styles of striving that compensate for a perceived weakness for every individual and this Adler believed constituted individuality (Adler, 1929). The striving for superiority is a ceaseless enterprise and is built on what is important and meaningful to the individual. Adler proposed that striving for superiority be viewed in two ways, firstly, as a means of striving for power and secondly, as social interest. The individual that is actively doing so is doing it for the development of society and not any personal endeavour (Adler, 1929).

Striving for superiority was an unconscious priority for Churchill. As an infant his parents were concerned about his health. This later became an issue and as a result his parents had to
relocate. Themes of having to go above and beyond what was expected to achieve seemed to haunt Churchill. Churchill’s first memory of a tutor was one of shock and horror. Firstly, he felt abandoned by his mother for placing him in the tutors care and secondly, he was faced with the reality that there may be moments and situations where his grandiose self-esteem would be challenged by academics (Churchill, 1930). However, Churchill found solace in alternate interests, he joined the military academy as a way of proving that he had mastered his organ inferiority and his preoccupation with painting was his way of mastering his depression (Churchill, 1948). The present researcher hypothesises that Churchill’s ability to compensate stems partly from the researcher’s view that being an only child for the first five years of his life enabled Churchill to learn how to face the anxieties of his inferiority complexes.

6.7 Striving for Power

The reasons people use to strive for superiority is different for each individual. People create various disguises to manipulate and alter what people may think of them to achieve personal goals (Boeree, 2006). At times, they can achieve their goals with little or no concern for others, their motivation is exaggerated feelings of personal inferiority, or a possible inferiority complex (Boeree, 2006). For example, various individuals may seek superiority through achieving political power or fame but how individuals achieve superiority is different. One individual may work tirelessly to prove to relevant parties that he is the man for the job. Another may rely on influential contacts or nepotism to garner favour, whilst a third may be critical and abrasive to all opponents.

The creative self is resourceful and able to provide meaning to an individual’s life in relation to their fictional goal. The hope that is created or chosen for the striving is to gain
mastery over a perceived organic weakness (Corey, 2005). Therefore, personality becomes
the expression of the body and mind (Adler, 1958).

The present researcher proposes that Churchill’s striving for power was in line with his
fictional goal of ‘the need to lead’. He certainly used his creative self to allow himself the
perceived freedom to achieve his fictional goal. The researcher hypothesises that Churchill’s
need to strive for power was aligned to his feelings of inferiority more so than his need to
achieve superiority. The present researcher understands that it may be a fine line between the
two constructs.

As a child Churchill did not respond well to educators dictating to him what he should
learn and how he should learn. Whether it was his first tutor at home, his school teachers or
even the officer at the holiday ‘crammer’ school, Churchill did not like someone else holding
power over him. In turn, Churchill became a renowned academic and literary scholar
(Churchill, 1930). For Churchill, achieving superiority over his academic inferiority was the
pay-off and resulted in a perceived gaining of power over his tutors.

As a young man Churchill and his father were at odds over his placement in the army,
Churchill wanted to go to the cavalry and his father suggested infantry. Churchill chose the
cavalry regardless of the financial implications to his family. This did not rest well with his
father, but this was Churchill demonstrating his striving for power in their relationship
(Churchill, 1930). The present researcher feels that if Churchill did adhere to his father’s
request it would have gone against everything Churchill had internalised as a child. As an
only child initially and then eldest child he had learnt to compensate for his feelings of
inferiority and this had resulted in positive coping strategies. These positive coping strategies
had not disappointed him because they had been shaped in his developmental years and were
concretised by the time he was five or six. Now at the age of eighteen Churchill would have
found it very difficult to resist his natural tendency gain superiority through his striving for power. Churchill needed to lead and he needed his father to follow.

Prior to World War Two Churchill was in what was regarded as his wilderness years. Interactions and events in this period are vivid representations of Churchill’s fictional goal and his striving for power (Lee & Lee, 2010). Out of power and isolated from government, he turned to painting to compensate for his depressive feelings. However, what remained was his desire to stay in touch with global political policies and movements. In this period, Churchill went to great lengths to obtain access to classified information regarding Germany. From this vantage point Churchill warned the western world of the eminent danger that Germany posed. Articles were published in the media and he travelled giving speeches on the subject (Chen, 2004). It was this desire not to let his wilderness years and his depression dampen his striving for power and his need for superiority over the situation. This was guided by his fictional goal ‘the need to lead’. Churchill always felt that he could do the job better than anyone and when the time arrived, the nation of Britain came calling for his ‘expertise’ on the subject of Germany.

6.8 Social Interest

“The value of all human activity must be seen from the viewpoint of social interest” (Feist & Feist, 2008, p. 75). Adler (1929) believed that through the child’s social interactions with stronger adults they develop feelings of inferiority because they are in an environment where the adult is more skilled than the infant is. These feelings of inferiority remain with the infant throughout life. Such experiences from the parents and the environment in general have a significant effect on the development of personality; however, it cannot be regarded as the sole cause for whom or what people become (Meyer & Viljoen, 2003).
Ansneider (1992) regards social interest as one of Adler’s most salient concepts. Social interest permeates and is intertwined with an individual’s awareness of being part of the human community; secondly, it assists with the sense of belonging in a social world and finally, it allows individual attitudes to form to deal with the social world. Adler viewed social interest as innate but agreed that it needed to be nurtured and developed consciously (Adler, 1958).

In stark contrast to the political disposition of the nobility, Churchill was far more socially orientated as evidenced by his decision early on in his political career to cross the floor and join the labour party (Pelling, 1974). To understand social interest within the context of Winston Churchill’s life the present researcher has decided to contextualise this construct by highlighting salient themes in Churchill adult life and then relating them to childhood experiences.

As a staunch believer in democracy, Churchill valued free speech and the debates that followed. However, aligned to this attitude Churchill grasped the concept that a nation without a leader that cares is doomed to fail (Churchill, 1948). This understanding may not have been there in the beginning of his life, but as Adler (1958) contends, social interest is matured and developed over time.

Churchill’s social interest was possibly ignited by his experience of what it felt like to live with people under the rule of a foreign government. As a child Churchill’s father championed for Irish independence, but ultimately, they were denied. This experience of a nation not allowed to experience their own freedom may have been exacerbated by Churchill’s father who was unable to realise his dream of Irish independence before he passed away. Many have observed how Churchill, when he became a politician, internalised his father’s dream and took up the cross of the Irish Home Rule policy (Pelling, 1974).
During the raids of World War Two, Churchill would visit sites that were badly damaged and often he was moved to tears by what he saw. His commitment and socially orientated behaviour towards the British people regarding their plight moved them as a nation. This served to spur the people, their leader and the nation’s desire not to surrender to the enemy (Wilt, 1990). Where could such a strong inclination have developed?

Possibly the answer could be derived from Churchill’s experience of being captured in the Boer War. Churchill having already escaped decided to go back and help his compatriots that were trapped (Churchill, 1930). However, behaviour like that would not occur as an isolated event. Character display of such a nature would stem from a strong social interest that was innate and developed during Churchill’s formative years. As mentioned before, Churchill’s father had nurtured the seeds of social interest and although Randolph may be regarded as a typical aristocrat, his behaviour, and actions betrayed him and his care for the working class. Churchill would have picked up on this. Similarly, ‘Old Woom’ was a stabilising influence in his life and Churchill would have heard countless stories of the working class. ‘Old Woom’ would regularly take the children with her to her own family for holidays and here Churchill would have had contact with ordinary people.

6.9 Optimal Development

It is the present researcher’s opinion that the life of Winston Churchill can be considered as a life that was optimally developed according to Adler’s theory of Individual Psychology. A person that is seen to be optimally developed continues to be innovative, creative and courageous in facing the challenges of life (Massey, 1986). They make sure their life displays high social interest and regardless of circumstances continue to strive for superiority in ways that benefit society and not just themselves (Corey, 2005). According to Adler (1929, 1930,
In summary, the above sections have illustrated how Churchill’s life holistically has contributed to form what is known as optimal development according to Adler.

6.10 Conclusion

In this chapter the life of Winston Churchill, as described in Chapter 4 was integrated with the Individual Psychology theory of Alfred Adler, as described in Chapter 3. This chapter explored Adler’s individual psychology as a theoretical perspective to uncover the complex personality development of Winston Churchill. In the following chapter, chapter seven, the present researcher will discuss the conclusions, limitations and recommendations of this psychobiographical study.
Chapter 7

Conclusions, limitations and Recommendations

7.1 Chapter Preview

This chapter describes the conclusions drawn from this research by revisiting the purpose of the study. The limitations and value of the study are discussed with regards to the theory, the subject, as well as the psychobiographical approach. Finally, recommendations for future research are made.

7.2 Revisiting the Purpose of the Study

The primary aim of this study is to explore, describe and to seamlessly provide a deep and thorough understanding of Winston Churchill’s life using Adler’s (1929) theory of Individual Psychology. The intention of this research is not to generalise the findings onto the general population but rather to integrate, explain and comprehend the life of Winston Churchill in terms of Adler’s theory.

7.3 The Life of Winston Churchill in Relation to Individual Psychology

Below is a brief summary of the present researcher’s findings regarding the life of Winston Spencer Churchill in relation to the conceptual framework of Alfred Adler’s Individual Psychology.

According to Adler (1929) to understand an individual their life must be viewed holistically. Hence the present researcher included select moments from Churchill’s ancestry in an attempt to understand who he was. Being raised in a political and military minded aristocratic family would undoubtedly have shaped the way Churchill was raised. In addition,
he was partially raised by ‘Old Woom’ and his parents which meant that he received more than one world view from significant role models.

Churchill’s poor health as a child alerted him to the role his organ inferiority played in hindering the family’s lifestyle. Churchill himself faced the reality of not succeeding in a family that was used to succeeding. He was a descendant of the Great Duke of Marlborough and therefore needed to uphold the family name. As a child Churchill soon found a creative outlet, his toy soldier collection meant that he could fantasise about leading and directing an army. He would be in charge and no one could question his decisions. This demonstration was an early sign of Churchill’s fictional goal that was forming, namely, ‘the need to lead’.

From an early age, Churchill’s below average performance at academia highlighted his organ inferiority. Churchill was viewed as someone who did not want to learn and did not listen to those that gave orders. During this period, Churchill’s striving for power and superiority are evidenced by his determination to alter his prescribed academic outcome by going to a military academy. As a child Churchill could direct the armies in his room and his acceptance into military school provided him the chance to live out that fantasy. Churchill had learnt how to creatively compensate for early childhood inferiorities; this partial success provided Churchill with the motivation to master his current circumstances.

The present researcher has suggested that due to Churchill being an only child for the first five years, his way of relating was already established before he had to deal with the challenges faced by the eldest birth order position. All this led to Churchill developing a healthy lifestyle of relating to his environment.

His parents were far more socially minded than their peers and this led Churchill to follow in his father’s political footsteps. Lord Randolph’s social view simply enhanced Churchill’s already socially minded disposition. Churchill’s attitude and behaviour during the blitz
highlighted his socially minded disposition. Churchill would make regular trips during the war to stricken areas to provide moral and practical support to those that were in need.

Churchill’s striving for power came to the fore and remained with him for the rest of his life. The different campaigns around the world and his eagerness to impress his superiors soon drew criticism from peers and elders alike who wondered if Churchill was seeking sensation rather than prudence.

By the time he was in his thirties Churchill had lived a busy life and had not settled down or rested much. His cavalier lifestyle and need for excitement was matched by the introduction of the soft, quiet, prudent, but strong personality of Clementine Hozier. It was noted that Churchill’s love for Clementine often subdued many rash and impulsive moments in his life. One of Churchill’s greatest abilities was to compensate for any inferiority in his life; this ability was amplified by the creative lifestyle choices he made in order to compensate for his inferiorities. One of his most memorable discoveries was the pleasure that painting brought him. Churchill viewed painting as an adventure and used it as a metaphor for life. The struggle of learning new techniques and mastering old ones proved to be an adventure of solace from the daily fight with depression. After applying his mind to this new found skill he was invigorated to unconsciously achieve his fictional goal of leading. It seemed that everything Churchill did was in preparation for the opportunity to lead.

7.4. The Value of the Study

The value of the study is discussed by referring to the theoretical model of psychological development, the psychobiographical case study research approach, as well as the subject under study, Winston Churchill.
7.4.1. The Theoretical Model of Individual Psychology

Adler (1929) proposed that the cornerstone of Individual Psychology is every conscious or unconscious thought, feeling, action, and that the individual’s essential quest is to overcome inferiorities and strive for superiority and perfection (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1956). Adler subscribed to a teleological perspective regarding behaviour, stating that individuals are pulled towards their goals. People will behave in such a way so that they may achieve their desired goal; irrespective of their success. This allows the individual to take control of their lives rather than relying on the predisposition of drives. When the above constructs are combined, the theory of individual psychology can be understood as the holistic psychology of an individual.

The distinctiveness of Individual Psychology is evidenced through the theories ability to be understandable and therefore has made the subject of human nature accessible. Adler’s theory illustrates how one can lead a prosperous life and at the same time avoid destructive tendencies, such as pessimism, hate, envy and hostility, thus avoiding the development of an inferiority complex by developing a healthy, meaningful lifestyle (Orgler, 1963).

7.4.2. The Psychobiographical Case Study Method

The value of the present psychobiographical research approach is firstly that the study emphasizes a different dimension to the life of Winston Churchill that has not previously been portrayed. Several scholars including Carlson (1988), McAdams (1988) and Runyan (1988a) have advocated the use of psychobiographies as a credible form of research. These advantages can be summed up in five prominent domains. Firstly, the uniqueness of Winston Churchill’s life within the whole was researched by the present researcher to identify patterns and processes of his personality and these processes were examined as a whole and not as separate elements (Runyan, 1982a). Secondly, the social-historical context provided a
framework for Churchill’s cultural, socio-economic beliefs and values to be compared to and to be understood in (Fouchè & van Niekerk, 2010). Thirdly, studying the process and patterns of Churchill’s life over time offered the researcher the opportunity to follow and discover themes across his life-span (Carlson, 1988). The fourth domain is the subjective reality of Winston Churchill which allowed the researcher to develop a level of sympathy and empathy with the subject (Runyan, 1982a). Finally, testing and development allowed the present researcher the opportunity to test Adler’s theory of human development in relation to current and previous literature on personality (Carlson, 1988).

The above mentioned points validates the value of Psychobiographical research and therefore should not be viewed in a lesser light to its contemporaries as it offers and adds valuable insight into the body of knowledge within psychology.

7.4.3. The Psychobiographical Subject

Though many of Churchill’s contemporaries may disagree, the consensus amongst modern scholars is that Churchill was a man born at the right time for the right reason. The present researcher believes that studying such an enigmatic individual is needed in order to provide a psychological understanding of an individual whose purpose in life was to allow a free world to exist. Churchill chose to rise above his childhood stigmas and surpass all expectations and so cementing his name into the history of a country he loved and a democratic world he hoped for. Churchill may not have been as refined as his aristocratic heritage desired and he was rather obnoxious, loud and single minded in his approach to any and every task he appropriated. He may have been a sensation seeker but few can challenge his desire to serve the nation of Great Britain.

Adler’s (1929) theory of Individual Psychology offers an opportunity to better understand the dynamics that led Churchill to make the choices he did and in so doing create
understanding for his actions. Even though the results of this study are not designed to be generalized to the larger population, the effects of Churchill’s creative striving for superiority over several inferiorities can and should be highlighted.

7.5. Limitations of the Study

This section discusses the limitations of this research study. This is done with reference to Adler’s (1929) theory of Individual Psychology, the psychobiographical case study research method, as well as the life of Winston Churchill.

7.5.1. The Theoretical Model of Individual Psychology

Peer review of the theory questions the scientific validity of Alfred Adler’s individual psychology as his theory proves difficult to quantify. Current methods that assess validity are far more empirical, suggesting that constructs within a theory must be quantifiable and able to be manipulated. Hence current methods rely on physical or behavioural variables. However, Adler’s constructs were far more teleological (Adler, 1929) proving problematic to quantify constructs such as striving for perfection, compensation, feelings of inferiority or social interest. Adler’s teleological route proposes that people are determined by their principles, goals and values removing the deterministic nature from life, suggesting that a person is free to creatively choose his or her own personality or lifestyle (Boeree, 2006).

During the research study, the present researcher was cognisant of the biased nature applied in formulating a tentative fictional goal. Adler (1929) himself suggested that it can only be traced and rarely can it be obtained through persistent self-discovery. Hence, any alternative interpretation of Churchill’s fictional goal could have resulted in a myriad of personality development interpretations. This potential limitation, however, does not reduce the complexity and integrity applied to this study.
Boeree (2006) considers some of the details of Adler’s theory as too anecdotal. The construct may hold some validity in particular cases, but does not necessarily have the generality Adler seeks. For example, a first child doesn’t necessarily feel dethroned, nor does a second child necessarily feel competitive. Considering the points above it would seem that Adler’s theory serves a more middle class society where life tasks, striving for superiority and compensating for organ inferiorities are plausible. Added to this, Adler’s theory is now roughly fifty years old and current western societal views are far more individualistic. The present researcher is not attempting to discredit the theory but rather suggests that the theory evolve with the passage of time.

7.5.2. The Psychobiographical Case Study Method

Psychobiographical methodology receives fierce criticism due to the difficulties and constraints encountered such as researcher bias, reductionism, cross-cultural differences, validity, reliability, elitism and inflated expectations that have already been discussed in Chapter Five (see section 5.10). In the same chapter the methodological considerations which were applied to this study were discussed. However, there are certain limitations to the study and these will be discussed below.

The external validity of this study can be considered low due to assertions and conclusions from Winston Churchill’s life should not be generalized to a larger population group. The aim of this study was to view Churchill’s life from an analytical generalizability and not a statistical generalizability position, allowing the present researcher to compare the findings with the theory of Individual Psychology of Adler (1929).

The internal validity of this study can be considered as low due to the present researcher’s attempt to explore and describe the psychological development of Winston Churchill rather than an explanation of cause and effect. However, in an attempt to provide empirical data to
increase internal validity within this study the present researcher applied a number of preventive measures. These included getting to know the psychobiographical data, doing thorough psychobiographical research to test for distortions in the material, as well as using numerous sources of biographical data (Fouché, 1999; Stroud, 2004).

The present researcher’s findings are tentatively presented within the context and conceptual framework of Adler’s (1929) theory of Individual Psychology. There are numerous similes and conclusions and alternative insights into human development. The findings and conclusions provided should be viewed within the appropriate context and the reader should apply good judgement to prevent grandiose inferences.

Finally, a psychobiographical study is lengthy, comprehensive and time consuming (Stroud, 2004). The qualitative nature of a psychobiography is amplified by the storied or narrative dimension resulting in the presentation and discussion of the findings being time consuming, complicated in the use of documentation and, at times, repetitive.

7.5.3. The Psychobiographical Subject

Biographies on the life of Winston Churchill are numerous and most sources attempt to provide a full and authentic account of his life. In addition, many individuals who worked with or who came into contact with Winston Churchill have reflected on their encounters. Political biographies, anecdotal parodies and various other genres have been produced to explore and explain everything from his childhood to Prime Minister, from the young soldier to painter and from the rebellious young boy to the loving husband and father. Information regarding Winston Churchill was readily available, however the present researcher found it difficult locating all original texts. The present researcher relied heavily on early works by Winston himself (1930, 1941, 1948, 1949b), Pelling (1974) and Lee and Lee (2010) as sources of information. The quality and objectivity of most of the sources were reliable;
however, every author had a specific reason for their version of Winston Churchill’s life. A central theme across most sources agree that Winston Churchill’s life was the best preparation for the circumstances he found himself in and that the British nation as a whole regard him as the most important person of the twentieth century.

7.6. Recommendations for Future Research

A plethora of information exists on Winston Churchill and many of the diverse perspectives have been covered by researchers. However, the current study proposes to be one of the limited perspectives covered as no other psychobiography on Churchill has been uncovered by the present researcher. Therefore the present researcher is of the opinion that a study on Churchill that combines the different genres of his life narrative should be undertaken to enhance the understanding of this enigmatic man. In addition Churchill could be studied through alternative psychological theories to provide a more holistic view of his life.

The present researcher proposes that even within the current theoretical framework, alternative and future research is possible. For example, future researchers could re-formulate Winston Churchill’s fictional goal and different findings and conclusions could be garnered regarding his personality development. This will allow researchers to re-contextualise the life of Churchill in an attempt to further explain constructs such as the role depression played in guarding his grandiosity or the possible damage created in his single minded approach to achieving superiority.

7.7. Conclusion

In summary, this chapter concluded with a discussion of the value and limitations of this study with regards to the theoretical framework of Individual Psychology, the
psychobiographical case study method, and the psychobiographical subject himself. The purpose of the study was re-examined to determine whether the initial aim of the present researcher was achieved. Based on the initial aim, the present researcher has concluded that the study has achieved what it set out to accomplish and that this study offers a comprehensive, objective, psychosocial, and historically accurate account of the life of Winston Spencer Churchill in relation to Alfred Adler’s theory of Individual Psychology (1929).
### Appendix A

**Temporal view of Winston Churchill’s life**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Formative years</th>
<th>Private life</th>
<th>Political career</th>
<th>Military career</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1874</td>
<td>Churchill is born</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1888</td>
<td>Starts School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1893</td>
<td>Military Academy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>Graduates</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Private life</th>
<th>Political career</th>
<th>Military career</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>Father dies</td>
<td>Leaves for Cuba</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Woom dies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td></td>
<td>Posted in India</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td></td>
<td>Malakand Field force</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cavalry in Sudan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td></td>
<td>Journalist during Boer War, Captured and escapes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td></td>
<td>Elected Conservative MP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td></td>
<td>Joins Liberals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td></td>
<td>Appointed Under Secretary of State</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>Marries Clementine Hozier</td>
<td>President of the Board of Trade</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>Diana was born</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td></td>
<td>Home Secretary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>Randolph was born</td>
<td>First Lord of the Admiralty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>Sarah was born</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td></td>
<td>Resigns from the Cabinet</td>
<td>Re-joins the army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td></td>
<td>Later resumes political career</td>
<td>Fights in France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td></td>
<td>Minister for Munitions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>Marigold was born</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Details</td>
<td></td>
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<td>------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>Marigold &amp; Mother dies</td>
<td>Secretary of State</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>Marigold &amp; Mother dies</td>
<td>Colonial Secretary</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>Mary was born</td>
<td>Churchill loses his seat as MP</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>Churchill's &quot;Wilderness years&quot;</td>
<td>Chancellor of the Exchequer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>Out of office and largely out of favour</td>
<td>He warns persistently of war with Germany</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>First Lord of the Admiralty</td>
<td>Second World War begins</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>Prime Minister</td>
<td>Leads country during the Blitz</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>Declares war on Japan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1942</td>
<td>Churchill approves the policy of saturation bombing of German cities</td>
<td>Japan win victory after victory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>The Russians regain Stalingrad</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1945</td>
<td>Churchill defeated in the election.</td>
<td>Victory in Europe, Japan surrenders</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>&quot;Iron Curtain&quot; speech in Missouri</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>Minor stroke</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>Prime Minister again</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>Nobel Prize for Literature</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Severe stroke</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>Resigns as Prime Minister</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>Minor stroke</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>Honorary Citizen of the United States, Diana commits suicide</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>Leaves the House of Commons</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>Churchill Leonard Spencer Churchill dies in London (age 90)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References


Wilt, A. F. (1990). War from the top: German and British military decision making during world war II. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

