The Educative Role of Sport for Socially Disengaged Young Black Men in London

By

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DECLARATION

I declare that:

    (a) all the work described in this project has been carried out by me - and all the results (including any survey findings etc.) given herein were first obtained by me - except where I may have given due acknowledgement to others;

    (b) all the prose in this report has be written by me in my own words, except where I may have given due acknowledgement to others and used quotation marks, and except also for occasional brief phrases of no special significance which may be taken from other people's work without such acknowledgement and use of quotation marks;

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I understand that if I have not complied with the above statements, I may be deemed to have failed the project assessment, and/or I may have some other penalty imposed upon me by the Board of Examiners.

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Name…………………………...

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my mother Theresa Hatchett, who has been my backbone throughout my postgraduate studies, and I thank her for giving me the strength to reach for the stars and chase my dreams. I would also like to dedicate this thesis to my beautiful son Kamaii Hatchett who consistently shared my dream for a better future and was my joyful moment when I was feeling down. Finally, I would like to dedicate this research to those who made it happen, to the coaches, volunteers and young men who share my belief that sport can help overcome mountains.

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A special thanks to the sporting organisations that provided me with participants for the study, and I acknowledge them for their time, interest and cooperation.

Thank you, Lord, for always believing in me. This thesis is only the beginning of my journey.

ABSTRACT

Young Black men in urban environments are at risk of marginalisation and social alienation from mainstream society; they are statistically more likely to have been excluded from school, to be involved in crime and be living in poverty (Cook & Hudson, 1993; Noguera, 2003; Regan & Hoeksma, 2010). Research suggests that in the chaotic swirl of poor housing conditions, family breakdown and exposure to substance abuse, mainstream education is failing to reach this demographic sufficiently, contributing to a situation where gun and knife crime homicides are significantly higher amongst this particular group (Cosn, 2001; Home Affairs Committee, 2007; Scott, 2007). The central objective of this study was to investigate the experiences of both youth and educators who actively engage in sports programmes to see if sport could be used as an alternative mode of inclusion for socially disengaged young Black men. This study focused on three sport-based intervention programmes, and attempted to develop a theoretically informed understanding of how and why disengagement occurs amongst young Black men, alongside analysing the mechanisms that enable sport-based intervention programmes to achieve success. A purposive sampling approach was used to identify appropriate organisations and suitable participants in London. A mixed methods technique was adopted and incorporated a combination of questionnaires (n=17); semi-structured interviews (n=12) and focus group discussions (n=5 per group, 3 groups). Six major themes emerged from the focus group discussions and interviews: (a) practical life issues; (b) educational concerns; (c) social bonding; (d) personal development; (e) attitudinal change, and (f) role of sport. Quantitative analysis from the questionnaire found that when asked about particular initiatives for youth, 96% of educators and leaders, which consisted of sports coaches, sport volunteers, youth mentors and programme directors, wanted to see more educational programmes that focused on changing prejudice and discrimination within the community. Questionnaire results also highlighted a reduction in deviant behaviour patterns during and post programme involvement, with educators and leaders indicating that narcotic drug usage amongst participants was down 39%. Overall, this study suggests that sport can be used to reduce labelling, empower at-risk and disengaged youth, improve social skills and create new, positive leadership opportunities and constructive group identity pathways. The present study also contributes to future sport-based intervention research and practices. It highlights that sports programmes do have the potential to provide an alternative means of education for socially disengaged young Black men in London. More specifically, the findings from this study provide preliminary research into the use of sport programmes in reducing anti-social behaviour patterns within programme contexts by explaining when and how sport can be utilised as a valuable, powerful vehicle for the prevention of crime and delinquency.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this study, the following terminology was used:

Anomie/Strain theory: In accordance with Merton (1938), Anomie/Strain theory helps to explain why certain demographic groups commit crime and deviant acts. In this study, Anomie relates to the differences between socially accepted goals and the constraints that are in place to achieve those goals, especially for members of minority groups (Agnew, 1992). Strain within this study relates to the motivation to engage in criminal activities and deviance, due to the social pressures that are created when individuals cannot meet their desired goals and the social strata created (Helfgott, 2008).

Antisocial behaviour: According to McWhirter, *et al.*, (2004), antisocial behaviour compasses certain activity types that conflict with the social norm. Within this study, antisocial behaviour refers to stealing, smoking, drinking, drug taking and selling, absenteeism from educational settings, imprisonment, risky sexual behaviour patterns, negative health outcomes, and multi-antisocial types (*any of the foregoing eight forms of behaviours combined*). The term is also used interchangeably with delinquency and problem behaviours.

At-risk: At-risk refers to a prescribed set of dynamics that could place a young person at risk of not acquiring the education, knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to become a successful adult (Herr, 1989; McWhirter *et al.*, 2004).

Black: In accordance with Glenn (2009), the term Black refers to people of a darker skin phenotype relative to other racial groups. However, within the modern era the racial or ethnic classification also refers to individuals with a variation of skin pigmentations from the darkest to the very lightest skin colours (McPherson & Shelby, 2004). Within this study young men who had African ancestry were included, therefore, African and Afro-Caribbean subjects' made up the sample population.

Crisis: In this study, the term crisis refers to the manifestation of the changing nature and extent of criminality that is affecting the Black community (Collier, 1998), and could include but is not limited to social problems such urban deprivation, social alienation, unemployment, a cycle of poverty, broken families and lack of educational achievements.

Culture: In accordance with this study, Bisin and Verdier (2005) infer that culture relates to the transmission of behaviour patterns, beliefs and human thought, which form the basis of certain principles and traditions.

Delinquency: This denotes a failure to abide by the law and accord with the accepted behaviour within a given society (Agnew, 2001). This could come under the umbrella of violence and criminality, substance misuse, high risk sexual behaviours, imprisonment, and other multi-antisocial types and illegal behaviours.

Educative: In this study, the term educative encompasses an educational movement for young people, in which the provision of an educative experience is provided through differing activities.

Emotional distress: In this study, emotional distress is defined as symptoms that produce negative emotions within individuals and could include but are not limited to depression, alienation, rejection, anxiety, stress and dissatisfaction.

Empowerment theory: According to Perkins and Zimmerman (1995), empowerment theory enables disengaged members of society to take control over their own destiny, by injecting varied opportunities for leadership opportunities and decision-making processes to take place so that they can become positive contributors to society.

Group behaviour: For this study, group behaviour refers to activities executed by a minimum of two persons within the in-group(s) (Robbins, 1998).

In-group behaviour: In this study, in-group defines the social group that an individual perceives that they belong to (Baron & Byrne, 2004).

Intervention: According to Murphy and Duncan (1997) and Nash (2006), intervention is a deliberate process of intervening by which change is introduced into people's thoughts, feelings and behaviours to improve their lives and change problems that they might have encountered. Within this study, intervention is used interchangeably with initiative.

Labelling and Self-fulfilling Prophecy theory: In accordance with Jewkes (2004) and Siegel and Welch (2005), labelling theory infers that society unjustly labels people or groups of individuals because of the behaviour of others belonging to that particular race or social group. As a consequence of labelling and stereotyping, a self-fulfilling prophecy is enacted and the indivdual(s) become what the label and statuses affixes them to be (Holborn & Haralambos, 2008). Within this study, the underlying principles of both labelling and self-fulfilling prophecy theory are crucial stepping stones in building deviant behaviour patterns amongst young Black men.

Moral panics: For the purpose of this study, moral panics refers to the overreaction by dominant institutions (*such as the media, government, education, police*) towards relatively powerless minority groups with regards to rule-breaking behaviours that causes sporadic episodes of worry about certain values and principles, which negatively impact mainstream society (Cohen, 2010; Cook & Hudson, 1993).

Out-group: For this study, out-group means all other groups than the one in which an individual perceives that they belong (Baron & Byrne, 2004).

Problem behaviour: For the purpose of this study, problem behaviour refers to violence, criminality, delinquency, substance misuse, early parenthood, risky sexual behaviours, negative health outcomes, imprisonment, poor academic achievements, and multi-problem behaviours (*any of the foregoing nine forms of behaviours combined*). The term is also used interchangeably with anti-social behaviour and delinquency.

Risk variables: In this study, risk variables related to the subjects' social environment and cultural influences, such as growing up poor and in single parent households; living in poor housing conditions; living in crime ridden neighbourhoods; possessing low educational aspirations and expectations; exposure to substance abuse from a young age; adoption of self-defeating behaviours (Amara *et al.*, 2004). Individually or combined such variables can endanger a person's development or adjustment and lead to negative future events (Ferrer-Wrede *et al.*, 2004).

Self-concept theory: Within this study, self-concept theory refers to the perception that young males within certain populations have of themselves, which has developed over time through both experiences and responses from the surrounding envirnoments and from other people's perceptions, which intiates reflecting and internalsiing processes to develop (Cohen, 1972 cited in Gelder & Thronton, 1997; Foucault, 1977; Smith & Cohen, 1993).

Social disengagement: For this study, social disengagement is defined as the pervasive withdrawal from society, due to the acceptance of their problematic environment and continued engagement in destructive anti-social behaviour patterns (Taylor, 1989).

Social learning theory: In accordance with Bandura (1986), social learning theory encompasses the ideology that individuals learn behaviours from social learning processes and significant others. For this particular study, reference is made to Sutherland's theory on differential associations with regards to the importance of intimate personal groups on the formation of pro-criminal behaviour patterns amongst at-risk youth populations (Golden, 2002; Sutherland, 1937).

Social support theory: Within this study, social support theory focuses on the development of positive relationships with significant others (*for example, teachers, non-at-risk youths, parents, positive role models*) in the prevention of problem behaviours amongst at-risk youths (Espelage & Swearer, 2003; Hupcey, 1998). The social support theory is a central element in creating an effective social inclusion agenda for high-risk and disengaged youth populations.

Sport-related (based) intervention: Within this study, sport-related intervention refers to any intervention type that uses sport as a tool of social intervention (*combating social issues*) and re-engagement, in terms of re-establishing and negotiating goals, and experiences that enable change to occur (Homes, 2007). It makes reference to sport-only interventions, as well as those which combine sport and other social intervention strategies.

Youth: The World Health Organisation (WHO) (1989) defines youth as persons between the ages of 15 to 24 years. Khan and Mishra (2008) describe this period as a transitional stage from childhood to adulthood. The young men within this study were within this age range, being aged 18 to 24.

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INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY

1.1 Statement of the problem

A 'crisis' of disengagement has been identified, both within academic literature (Blake & Darling, 1994; Noguera, 2003; Oliver, 2006; Rich & Grey, 2005; Williamson, 1997) and mainstream media (BBC, 2004a; 2007; Dorfman, 2001; Guardian, 2007), which seems to disproportionately affect the lives of young Black men. This crisis is considered to be widespread within the United Kingdom (UK), due to a variety of risk variables related to their social environment and cultural influences *(such as growing up poor and in single parent households; living in poor housing conditions; living in crime ridden neighbourhoods; possessing low educational aspirations and expectations; poor social and emotional skills; exposure to substance abuse from a young age; adoption of self-defeating behaviours)* which when combined are thought to have a multiplier effect on risk behaviours (Amara *et al.*, 2004; Noguera, 2003; Olatokunbo, 2005; Paglia and Room, 1999; United Nations, 2002). The crisis suggests that young Black men are at risk of social disengagement and have a severe 'loss of direction' (Noguera, 2003).

The riots that began in Tottenham on the 6th of August 2011 and spread through several London boroughs highlighted how serious the problem of gang culture and youth violence has become in the Capital (London), as outlined by Rusbridger and Rees (2011), and raised serious questions about the state of the nation. Moreover, it reinforced the urgent need for educators, external agencies and policy makers to deal with what underpins youth crime and violence within London (Cameron, 2011; HM Government, 2011; Rusbridger & Rees, 2011).

Viewed in the context of negative social patterns the term 'loss of direction' infers a state in which some young Black males within London have lost the aspiration to make positive life choices and avoid the perils associated with the culture of poverty and mindless criminality endeavours, as previously discussed. These young men have been referred to as: 'NEET' (Not in Education, Employment or Training), the 'underclass' or 'Status Zer0' youths (Gracey & Kelly, 2010; Stone, Cotton & Thomas, 2000; Williamson, 1997; Wilson, 2012). London crime statistics support this theory: 2008 crime figures showed that 79% of firearm homicides and shootings in London were committed by Afro Caribbean males (Centre for Crime and Justice Studies, 2008). The Equality and Human Rights Commission also indicated that

between 2008 to 2011 ethnic minorities were more likely to be both victims and alleged perpetrators of crime, with arrest levels from stop-and-searches risen from 51% to 64% between that period (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2012; Guardian, 2012). Black males were more like to be remanded in prison (refused bail) and to be represented disproportionately in the prison population than their White counterparts (Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2010; 2012; FitzGerald, 2006; Home Office, 2003).These statistics clearly indicate that reducing the prevalence of criminal activity and unrest amongst young Black men is an urgent agenda in London.

In accordance with work by Ewing and Seefeldt (1996) and Hartmann (2003), it is estimated that annually an average of 20 to 35 million young people participate in organised sport. The 1990's saw an increase in the amount of sport-related programmes being developed in order to reach at-risk youth groups (Chaplin, Johnson & Stachura, 1996; Pitter & Andrews, 1997). Although it is hard to know the exact number of participants to be served by these programmes, more recent studies have shown a growing trend for the increased usage of sports intervention programmes (Colley, Boetzelen, Hoskins & Parveva, 2007; Hartmann, 2003; Hellison & Wright, 2003). These increases are due to the belief that participation in sport is associated with an array of social benefits (Department of Culture, Media and Sport, 2002, Tacon, 2007), and that it can be used as a solution to social issues related to areas of health, socialisation, harmony of citizens, social engagement and inclusion (Council of Europe, 2005; Eitzen, 2001; Kupermic, Alen & Arthur, 1996).

Although some research studies have questioned the ability of sports programmes to aid positive social outcomes amongst youth populations (such as a decline in youth violence and delinquency or substance misuse) (Caldwell & Baldwin, 2003; Gottfredson & Gottfredson, 1998; 2001), numerous projects and voluntary based organisations have endorsed sport as a useful tool to reduce multi-antisocial behaviours in inner-city areas (Elling, De Knop & Knoppers, 2001; Holborn & Haralambos, 2008; Hartmann 2003; Hellison & Wright, 2003), and combat youth disengagement through a combination of sports and classroom based educative activities in addition to one-to-one youth mentoring programme strategies (Cameron & MacDougall, 2000; Shiner *et al.*, 2004; Sutton, Uttting & Farrington, 2004). Indeed, some of the programmes have provided empirical evidence of improving programme participants' transferable skills (*such as self-leadership*) (Argent, 2005; Cote, Baker & Abernethy, 2003; Danish, 2002; Danish & Nellen, 1997), as well as self-esteem and moral values (Anshel, Muller & Owens, 1986; Gould & Carson, 2008; Hellison, 1995), thus actively espousing the educative potential of sport.

Recent sport-related intervention studies endorse the central idea that a type of sport activity or a combination of sport activities can effectively be used to access special populations who are hardly reached by more general forms of social interventions (Crabbe, 2000; Hartmann, 2002). Few studies, however, have provided empirical evidence on how sport based activities as a type of intervention strategy (for example, *access to young Black men in an urban location with midnight basketball*) could provide an educative framework for at-risk youth populations when combined with other strands of social intervention programmes (*such as one-to-one mentoring, youth offending workshops, NEET training, lone parent services*).

That urges researchers to look into the educative role of sport (*to build character, provide a moral education and to provide a means of social control*) and positive attributes of sport activities (*friendship formation, social cohesiveness and inclusion*) when synergistically combined with other types of multi-services at a programme level.

In summary, the pervasiveness of juvenile delinquency and discriminatory practices has become one of the serious public concerns within the UK, as well as other countries (Amara *et al.*, 2004; Cameron, 2011; HM Government, 2011; Paglia & Room, 1999; United Nations, 2002). It has also been outlined that sport-related social intervention programmes have increased over the last decade (Chaplin, Johnson & Stachura, 1996; Pitter & Andrews, 1997), and it has been argued that sport could be an effective tool in combating social issues, particularly when combined with other intervention strategies.

It is surprising, then, that very little empirical research exists with regard to the educative use of sport, specifically, as a means of developing transferable skills (*such as self-leadership*), character and social responsibility (Argent, 2005; Cote, Baker & Abernethy, 2003; Gould & Carson, 2008) or any other such qualities for young people. This makes researchers vulnerable when claiming the effectiveness of sport-related interventions. With this in mind, the objective of this research is to shine light upon this under-researched field, with a particular focus on young Black males within London in response to the prevalent issues that this demographic currently face.

This thesis looks to investigate the educative role of sport; specifically, as a means of developing transferable skills, character, discipline, moral values or any other such qualities for young men within the Black community.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

The purpose of the present study is to investigate the role of sport in educating and reaching out to at risk Black male youths in London and thus seek to understand whether 'sport builds character' principles can effectively be used to provide an alternative model for education for Black male youths in London who are disengaged, or at-risk of disengagement, from mainstream society. Significantly, it intends not only to identify the potential of sports participation to combat this ominous array of social and economic hardships that readily affects many of today's young Black males but also develop understanding of the underlying causes of this dilemma by drawing upon various theories including: self-concept theory (Smith & Cohen, 1993); labelling and self-fulfilling prophecy theory (Bersani, 1970; Haroreaves, Hester & Mellor, 1975); anomie/strain theory (Agnew, 2001, 2006; Brown, 1975; Marwah & Deflem, 2006; Merton, 1938), social learning theory (Bandura, 1986, 1977; Sutherland, 1937), social support theory (Hupcey, 1998; Williams, 2005), and empowerment theory (Roche & Tucker, 1997; Zimmerman, 1995).

Moreover, the study aims to clarify the use of sport programmes that aspire to educate and reach out to young Black males in order to understand the mechanisms that enable these programmes to achieve success by re-engaging them back into mainstream society. It also aims to contribute to future sport-based intervention research and practices.

The study aims to uncover the following;

1.2.1 Aims

- *To examine the utility of sport-related intervention programmes in terms of their educative properties for socially disengaged young Black men in London.*

- *To develop a theoretically informed understanding of how and why young Black men in London have become socially disengaged from mainstream society.*

- *Analyse the mechanisms that enable sport-related intervention programmes to achieve success*

1.2.2 Objectives

- *Identify appropriate and representative sport-related intervention programmes and to be involved in the present research.*

- *Produce and administer a questionnaire to determine the attitudes, values and opinions of the educators' on areas of critical concern in the Black youth culture, and analyse the results.*

- *Produce a set of interview questions and focus group discussion topics to gain greater understanding on the experiences of young Black men, anti-social initiation and the effectiveness of the sport-related intervention programmes in terms of their educative potential, and analyse the results.*

1.3 Research Questions

In order to satisfy the aims and objectives of this study, the research endeavours to answer the following research questions:

- *What are the experiences of Black male youths who actively engage in educative sports programmes?*

- *How effective are programmes that use sport as a means of education for Black male youth?*

• *What mechanisms enable programmes and educators that use sport as a means of education for Black male youths to achieve success?*

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

The following chapter will present the thematic findings from the review of literaturature relevant to the current study, and will cover essential topics that are of relevance to this area of research. The first section provides an historical overview of race and racism. The second section examines key factors, which help to understand the root causes that have led to social disengament amongst many young Black men in London (Aldridge & Medina, 2008; Blake & Darling, 1994; Noguera, 2003; Williamson, 1997; Wilson, 2012). In-depth focus on the theories associated with social intervention programmes are reviewed within the third section of the literature review, which provides greater explainations with regards to the nature of youth violence and disengagement avenues for young Black men. Lastly, the educative potential of sport in the context of sport-related programmes are reviewed, which is the focus of the present study.

2.2 An Historical Overview of 'Race' and Racism

An historical overview of race and racism within the context of this study will now be presented. This section of the literature review provides a breakdown of historical events that have affected the Black community and disengagement trends amongst many young Black men within modern society (Franklin & Boyd-Franklin, 2000; Gilroy, 2002; Halcrow, 2003; Harrison, 2013).

2.2.1 The origin of race and racism

According to Delany (1991) and Owesu (2000) the origin of races and racism is of very great interest to social science and an area that has not been satisfactorily treated. In the debate of 'race' it is important to highlight that there is only one human race and make reference to the fact that human biology makes no distinction between different 'races' (Harrision, 2013).

Within this context, it is racism that makes this division, and attempts to mark off mankind into distinctive sub-specific groups on the basis of physical differences on a more or less geographical basis (Bibby, 1959; Bradley, 2010; Harrision, 2013; King & Stansfield, 2006).

Therefore the word 'race' can be seen as a cultural and historical category based on power and capitalist gains, which draws upon differences not only of skin colour and physical variances, but the use of such differences in terms of their signification within social and political hierarchies (Bonilla-Silva, 2001; Harrison, 2013; Ramon, 2000; Shanklin, 1994). This is not to deny that people vary in many ways, including different colours and physical features, but to highlight that these differences do not carry any vigour unless mankind makes them meaningful. In looking at this major fallacy, it becomes clear that there is no reason why skin colour is more significant than the colour of a person's eyes or hair colour; therefore in accordance with work by both Bonilla-Silva (2001) and Harrison (2013), it is racism that breaks up the unity, focusing more on capitalist development rather than the natural dynamics of biology.

Gilroy (2002, p.36) adds to this notion and describes the emptiness of racial signifiers:

> *"Accepting that skin 'colour', however meaningless we know it to be, has strictly limited basis in biology, opens up the possibility of engaging with theories of signification which can highlight the elasticity and the emptiness of racial signifiers as well as the ideological work which has to be done in order to turn them into signifiers in the first place. This perspective underscores the definition of 'race' as an open political category, for it is struggle that determines which definition of 'race' will prevail and the conditions under which they will endure or wither away".*

In looking at this aspect further, Gilroy (2002) points to the fact that differences do exist, whether they are made significant or not, and makes reference to the fact that politics and power have created pathways in which these differences are signified, in terms of being socially and politically constructed to maintain various forms of racialisation, rather than a question of biology or genetically determined traits. It is the recognition of this that makes it ever more important to understand the different historical situations in which 'race' has grown to become pertinent (Gilroy, 2002; Harrison, 2013).

In analysing the concept of 'race' in popular culture and the historic nature of disengagement among young Black men, research by Bradley (2010); Claire (2007); Gines (2013) and Hall

(1997) highlight two distinct moments in the history of 'race' and racism within the UK. These include the transatlantic slave trade and the 1950s Black immigration movement following decolonisation.

It is these historic movements that put 'race' and racism at the forefront of public discussion and provide an overview of the complex experiences of racism for the Black community, thus giving some basis to the widespread disengagement of young Black men from mainstream society (Bradley, 2010; Castles & Miller, 1993; Harrision, 2013 and Richardson, 1968).

2.2.2 Racism and Slavery

Woodson (1933, cited in Higginbottom, 2008, p.2) gives an illustration of oppression during the slaving era:

> *"When you control a man's mind you don't have to worry about his actions. You do not have to tell him not to stand here or go yonder. He will automatically find his proper place and stay in it. You do not need to send him to the back door. He will go without being told. In fact, if there is no back door, he will cut one for his special benefit."*

It is commonly argued that xenophobic tendencies often deriving from ignorance and fear have existed as long as different ethnic groups have existed; from this perspective 'race' and racism have a long and complicated history (Claire, 2007; Halcrow, 2003; Harrison, 2013; Richardson, 1968). Racism first developed in the United Kingdom in order to defend the economic profits of slavery and the slave trade. Slavery began in the first instance because of three separate strands: 1) Black people were easy to control and exploit; 2) Black people had a huge number mass due to their tribal existence; 3) Europeans had greater technological advancements and material abundance at the time (Bradley, 2010). As a consequence of these, Black people became equated with slavery in the popular Caucasoid mind. With millions of people from Africa carried across the ocean between the fifteenth and nineteenth century the transatlantic slave trade was the greatest forced migration in history (Claire, 2007; Halcrow, 2003).

A key figure within the development of the ideology of racism during the slaving era was an individual called Edward Long who, within his article 'History of Jamaica' which was

published in 1774, makes clear assertions about the human race and its division into superior Whites and inferior Blacks.

He stated that:

> "The White and the Negro are two distinct specifies" (Long, 1774, cited in Harrison, 2013, p.169)

Long (1774 cited in Harrison, 2013, p.169) goes onto to exclaim his contempt for the Black race:

> "In the course of a few generations more, the English blood will be contaminated with this mixture, till the whole nation resembles a darker complexion of skin and baseness of mind" (Long, 1774, cited in Harrison, 2013, p.169)

Joseph Chamberlin in 1895 adds to this ideology indicating that:

> "The British race is the greatest race of governing races that the world has ever seen" (Chamberlin, 1895, cited in Harrison, 2013, p.171).

These statements offer a clear insight into the extreme nature of racism leading up the late nineteenth century, and shed light onto the beginning of the definite racial or ethnic distinctions made between Europeans and their slaves, in which the latter became inferior. In the case of Black men during the slaving era the denial of power and autonomy over their own lives and families, due to the oppression they were experiencing, profoundly influenced the male behaviour of many slaves and consequently men of African descent (Orelus, 2010; Selfa, 2002).

The attempt to perpetuate slavery was unsuccessful, with the abolition of slavery in English colonies occurring in 1833, in French and Dutch possessions by 1848 and 1863 respectively, and in the United States by the end of the civil war in 1865. However, although the 'slavery' component of the 'slavery/racial inferiority' complex ceased, the 'racial inferiority' component lingered in continued discrimination and continued racism during the next century leading up to the 1950s Black immigration movement and beyond.

2.2.3 Racism and Black Immigration

According to Owesu (2000), the influx of a significant number of migrants raised the prospect of a permanent Black presence within Britain during the 1950s and 1960s and therefore a concern arose that this would greatly impair the harmony, strength, cohesion and racial character of the English people. In assessing the articulated public anxiety about Black immigration the Conservative government put in place ad hoc administrative measures including tampering with shipping lists and schedules to place migrant workers at the end of the queue; delays in the issuing of passports to immigrants and refusing passports to the United Kingdom if migrants had no firm job prospects or fixed accommodation (Carter, Harris & Joshi, 1987; Owesu, 2000).

Public and political discussions were concerned with the problems caused by immigrants and what was believed to be uncontrolled immigration rather than about problems the immigrants themselves faced, however, almost all Black immigrants experienced some kind of racial discrimination when they lived in Britain (Brown, 1995; Hall, 1972; Harris, 1988; Modood & May, 2001). A large majority of young Black men during this period experienced several forms of discrimination, for instance, they were turned down for viable employment opportunities or, if they gained employment, were often denied promotions and kept off training schemes both by employers and labour exchanges (Modood & May, 2001; Owesu, 2000; Sallah & Howson, 2007; Warren, 2007). This discrimination was heightened through the difficulty in finding accommodation and the fact that Black immigrant families were designated to slum areas and/or areas where short-lease properties were generally available. Owesu (2007) indicates that this undesirability of Black immigrants was widespread with many government housing officials refusing to redevelop certain areas of London where Black inhabitants were situated, thus creating residential segregation. Therefore, certain areas within London became overwhelmingly segregated by socioeconomic class, and consequently Black people became a concentrated underclass where serious problems of criminality, drug addiction, and broken families were manifest. In supporting work by Owesu (2007) and Sallah and Howson, (2007), and Papke (2009) indicates that it is the residential concentration of the underclass that appears to exacerbate the social pathology.

In accordance with work by Marwick (1996), most Black immigrants, in particular Black men, believed that the negative attitude of the White British people towards them would never change:

"You are unwanted. You are here because some higher order official let you stay, not because I want you. … You only create problems. You want my job, you want my food, you want to live in my home, you want to use my school, my hospital, my stores. But don't take it personally; I have no quarrel with you as a person. It's immigration I cannot tolerate" (Marwick, 1996, p.218)

Research by Harrison (2007) and Marwick (1996) has shown that the extent to which racist discrimination during this period ensured separation between races and classes was immense. Young Black men at the time, particularly teenagers, experienced the highest level of unemployment. Limited prior job experience, coupled with the visible discriminatory practices of the time, meant that young Black males experienced above-average levels of joblessness, upward of 80% (Bowers, 1979). As a consequence, this channelled Black men into occupational ghettos where colluded efforts to reduce their life chances, restrict their social mobility, and to move them toward a permanently disadvantaged caste status were actively endorsed at both a Government and local level (Carter, Harris & Joshi, 1987; Franklin, Franklin & Kelly, 2006; Owesu, 2007; Sallah & Howson, 2007).

Discussions surrounding the realities of 'racism' in the Capital became popular within mainstream political circles towards the end of the 20th Century, as racial injustice and inequality were becoming more persistent within the UK. Complaints of mass stops and searches of young Black men preceding the Brixton Riots of 1981 (EHRC, 2010; Law, 2001), coupled with the failed investigation by the Metropolitan Police Force into Stephen Lawrence's racist murder in 1993 (Macpherson, 1999; McLaughlin & Murji, 2000), brought the different aspects of racism to the forefront of discussions, as racism and racial violence continued to rise.

2.2.4 21st Century Racism

In the present day widespread racism still exists within the UK, in particular London (BBC, 2013; Harrison, 2013; Gilroy, 2002). Typically, Black males' identity is closely linked with the culture and heritage which families have passed down for centuries. As a result of decades of oppression and racism, discriminatory practices have become engrained into the structure of Black society. In 2014, with many influential Civil Rights leaders gone, it has been suggested that so-called 'post-racial' Britain stews in a pervasive colourless, odourless and invisible racism (Franklin, 1999, 2004; Franklin & Boyd-Franklin, 2000; Medina, 2013). Franklin, Boyd-Franklin & Kelly (2006) offer greater insight into this matter indicating that the

talents and identity of young Black men are not seen because of the dominant nature of preconceived attitudes and stereotypes, which are often experienced as a slight or micro-aggression.

According to Franklin (2004, p.11), these slights can:

> *"Limit the effective utilization of personal resources, the achievement of individual goals, the establishment of positive relationships, the satisfaction of family interactions, and the potential for life satisfaction".*

Young Black men as recipients of these acts of slight, as with other racist treatments, often feel invisible in the shadow of its rejection and disrespect of their personhood (Franklin & Boyd-Franklin, 2000; Pierce 1995), which inflicts feelings of low self-esteem, upset, anger and depression as a consequence of race-related stress. Kelly (2004) suggests that internalised racism entwined with self-fulfilling prophecies then occur, whereby young Black men begin to internalise the covert racist views apparent within society and start to believe in their own inferiority. It is these constant experiences that are providing a continual backdrop for the widespread disengagement seen today amongst young Black men. As they struggle with racism at all levels (institutional, individual and cultural) (Jones, 1997), their belief in mankind withers away as they become emotionally burnt-out (Franklin, Boyd-Franklin & Kelly, 2006).

A further strand to the modern-day racial debate and one that Medina (2013) clarifies, is the various elements of 'colour-blindness' that keep Blacks and other racial minorities in a secondary position within society. In contrast to the Empire Windrush era, where racism was overt (e.g. signs saying *"No Niggers Welcomed Here"*, Bonilla-Silva, 2013, p.3), covert behaviours such as residential segregation by steering minorities and Whites into certain neighbourhoods, and quoting higher rental rates to minority applicants are now common weapons of choice to maintain separate communities and disenfranchise people of colour (BBC, 2013; Bonillia-Silva, 2013).

In this way and in accordance with Donane & Bonillia-Silva (2003), the maintenance of White privilege which refers to the unearned resources, power and superiority held by Whites is carried out in a way that defies racial readings. The paradigms (mechanisms and practices) of 'colour-blindness' are greatly affecting the discourse of young Black men within London, as it provides legitimacy, freedom and political cover over the continued persistence of xenophobia and discrimination, thus adding to the acceptability of racism within the UK

(Franklin, Boyd-Franklin & Kelly, 2006; Herbert & Egbosimba, 2009; Medina, 2013; Donane & Bonillia-Silva, 2003; Bonillia-Silva, 2013).

As an opponent of 'colour-blindness', research by Medina (2013) coincides with that of Donane & Bonillia-Silva (2003), indicating that racism and White privilege remain a defining feature of modern society and provide a blueprint to what 21st century racism looks like, in terms of covert bigotry and modern racism that hides in plain sight. Bonillia- Silva (2013) provides further support for this concept and understanding of the meta-attitudes that channel and guide the racial social perception of 'colour-blindness' that young Black men witness today, in terms of the 'White ways' of seeing Black people (Franklin, Boyd-Franklin & Kelly, 2006; Halcrow, 2003; Harrison, 2013; Medina, 2013).

Elizabeth Sellman (1988, p.12) illustrates this:

> *"White children like me got early training in the boomerang perception when we were told by well-meaning White adults that Black people were just like us – never, however, that we were just like Blacks"*

It is this blindness rooted in privilege, oppression and social injustices (Bonillia-Silva, 2013; Franklin, Boyd-Franklin & Kelly, 2006) that create numbed and desensitised conditions that young Black men do not only have to try and exist within, but also excel within, which at times becomes merely impossible. Unfortunately, many forms of insensitivity which have been inherited by 'White mainstream' are still being continually recirculated through various avenues such as institutionally racist educational and organisational systems, negative media stereotyping and racial profiling, and discriminatory policing strategies (Macpherson, 1999; McLaughlin & Murji, 2000; Reviadi, 2014). As a consequence, many young Black men are facing a disengaged future with the looming threat of turning into a permanent, irrevocable underclass (BBC, 2005).

A possible explanation of the root causes of the widespread disengagement and violence amongst young Black men today is that the maladaptive behaviours developed through slavery have been passed down through generations (Orelus, 2010). Leary (2002; 2005) simplifies this into a category called 'Post-Traumatic Slave Syndrome' and states that the racism and cruelty inflicted on Black people created residual effects that are manifested in present behaviours. It is these multigenerational traumas experienced by Black people as a result of slavery, coupled with their past and present experiences of racism and discrimination, which have created distinct emotional and psychological traumas. These

have then been transmitted intergenerationally and have not been repaired, thus continuing to have psychological consequences for young Black men within the UK. Leary (2002; 2005) supports notions represented by Orelus (2010), with regards to the culture of oppression enacting through a lack of self-esteem, or the anger and violence currently seen in some young Black men in London.

2.3 Understanding Black males and reasons for their disengagement

The complicated nature of Black youth disengagement is attributed to the ominous array of social and economic hardships that this particular demographic endure within wider society (Noguera, 2003). This section of the literature review provides a breakdown of the specific factors related to Black youths' social environment and cultural influences, which when combined are thought to have a multiplier effect on risk behaviour and disengagement endeavours (Amara *et al.*, 2004; Noguera, 2003; Paglia & Room, 1999; United Nations, 2002).

2.3.1 Black underclass

According to underclass theory, the 'underclass' are a group of individuals that have the lowest possible position in the class hierarchy and are affected by multiple factors of social exclusion (Putman, 2000; MacDonald & Marsh, 2002), which encompass three main types. Firstly, economic (those *who have few legitimate employment opportunities*) (Agnew, 1992); secondly, cultural (*those with a high likelihood of involvement in deviant activities due to belonging to a group with a 'weak' culture and high levels of social problems*) (Cook & Hudson, 1993; Murray, 1996); and, thirdy, educational (*those lacking academic knowledge and social skills needed for upward mobility and progression*) (Burke, 2005; Foster, 2000; Johnston, MacDonald *et al.*, 2000).

Media coverage from the BBC (2005, p.1) clearly suggests: *"that the critical mass of failure is threatening to turn the Black community into a permanent, irrevocable underclass"*, whereby their only outlet would be through intensified anger which could spark moral panics (MP) in the form of riots and unrest. Drawing upon the context of the Black community and media

depictions, the concept of MP was identified by Hall and Morley (1996), with television programmes echoing a 'mugging' panic surrounding young Black men (Cook & Hudson, 1993). As a consequence, audiences were injected with the negative social representations of Black men as muggers and delinquents that the media fed them, which created fear within society and resulted in an undue amount of attention from the criminal justice system (Cohen, 1980; Cohen, 2010; Hall *et al*, 1978; Hall & Morley, 1996). Due to the creation of a status of MPs, Black youth were labelled as deviant and a threat to mainstream society.

In accordance with labelling theory, society unjustly labels people or groups of individuals because of the behaviour of others belonging to that race or social group (Morris, 2002; Morris & Maxwell, 2000; Siegel & Welch, 2005).

Muncie (2004, p.117) goes on to say:

> *"Behaviour may be labelled criminal but it is not this behaviour in itself that constitues crime".*

In the case of young Black men the label of 'criminal' assigned to them by society can trigger the process that traps them into a criminal lifestyle (Dwyer, 2001; Heale, 2008; Bernburg & Krohn, 2003). In accordance with work by Cohen (2010), the framework of MPs is useful in understanding how public furore can develop with regards to youths in Black communities. The mainstream media are central in disseminating widespread imagery attached to deviant statuses, and sensationalising particular events surrounding violent Black youth crime. In order to make it newsworthy, the media attach a level of drama, which in turn plays a significant role in shaping the general public's perception of crime and its perpetrators, and in some respects keeps the negative associations of the underclass system in the public eye (Garland, 2008; Marsh & Melville, 2011; Jenkins, 2009; Jewkes, 2004).

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In assessing the factors that contribute to the sustained longevity of the underclass system, Oliver (2006) reported an array of factors such as single parent families, housing issues, possessing low educational aspirations and expectations, poor schooling and school

exclusion, which either individually or combined play a major role in keeping young Black men at the bottom of the hierarchical chain (Clayon & Moore, 2006; Hirschi, 1969).

This has led to significant contributions (Humprey & Palmer, 1987; Forstater, 2000; MacDonald & Marsh, 2004) indicating the Black underclass is emerging within inner city "ghettos" around Britain, similar to the diaspora seen across some of America's poorest areas, due in part to generational suppression which have developed from a lack of opportunities and barriers to legitimate goal attainment, low levels of educational attainment leading to denial of work ethic, dependency on state benefits (for example, *income support and jobseekers allowance*), and failed morality which greatly influence social immobility and alienation further (Featherstone & Deflem, 2003; Muncie, 2004).

Black cultural studies have predicted that the Black underclass communities will become more chaotic and violent (Cohen, 2010; Gans 1995; Owesu, 2000), lending weight to the argument that physical segregation within poorer neighbourhoods leading to further social exclusion will become more entrenched into existing society (Murray, 1996), due in part to the fact that middle class dual-parent families will move further out towards the suburbs to escape the unfolding pandemonium.

With reference to the role of social exclusion in the underclass spectrum, the essentials of social bonding (*such as attachment, commitment, belief and involvement*) in creating strong inclusive communities infer that:

> *"Though independent, these four variables are also highly interrelated and are given equal weight and can help prevent law breaking activities in most people"* (Burke, 2005, p.209).

In relating social bonding to underclass groups, it could be suggested that the members of the Black underclass have multiple exclusion factors, very similar to weak social bonds which have been ruptured through dysfunctional or multi-antisocial behaviour patterns. Merton's (1938) theory of structural Anomie/Strain sheds light on the social limitations placed

on some young Black people, in particular young Black men; these include social stratum, unemployment and geographical location. His two part theory implies that if these individuals cannot access their goals legitimately then they are more likely to turn to illegitimate means to obtain monetary success and status (Merton, 1938; 1968; Murphy & Robinson, 2008).

The tendency of young Black men from poor communities to get involved in criminal activity is a consequence of the underclass environment that they were born into and continue to be surrounded by, and the pressures that it represents for them (Jha & Kellerher, 2006). Within such environments the adoption of certain types of masculine characteristics and anti-school manifestations are praised by fellow gang members and delinquent cohorts. Figueroa (2000; 2004) avers that the majority of the Black men who progress onto traditional professions of law, medicine, finance and teaching would have more often begun their education within a private preparatory school that encompassed an array of privileges (Powell, 2008). Jha and Kelleher (2006) mentioned the role that academic underperformance plays in restricting progression for those from underclass communities. In their study on 'Boys' Underachievement in Education' they recommend that more work at a grass roots level needs to be done to stop entrenched alienation and a continued class hierarchy between Blacks and Whites (Jha & Kelleher, 2006).

2.3.2 Educational underachievement

In the UK, and in accordance with work by Stephenson (2007, p.6) on exclusion, *"Black pupils are over three times as likely as Whites to be permanently excluded".* Adding to this notion is the fact that only 25% of Black boys obtained 5 GCSE's according to a BBC report on 'Educational Disparities' (BBC, 2004b), in comparision to other students within the same age range. The discrepancy in these figures lends weight to the fact that environments the adoption of certain types of masculine characteristics and anti-school manifestations are praised by fellow gang members and delinquent cohorts. In a job market that is becoming ever more competitive, academic qualifications are increasingly important (Atkinson & Hills, 1998). More specifically, sucessfully acquiring academic qualifications means that there is a reduced risk of being unemployed, and as a consequence a reduction in the possibilities of carrying out deviant behaviour due to the strain associated with social immobility and a perceived need to commit crimes to acquire material goods, as averred by Merton (1938).

Martino and Meyenn (2001, p.141) indicate that *"Black boys are both loved and loathed at school, they set the standard for both hip-hop music culture and athleticism while experiencing disproportionate levels of punishment and academic failure"*. It is this juxtaposition, however, that leads to a range of defiant behaviour patterns, which sets the tone for the overall problematic experiences of Black boys within educational contexts (Bourne, Bridges & Searle, 1994; Richard & Ince, 2000; Nehaul & Sewell, 1997). As suggested by Martino and Meyenn (2001), the response of these boys to a context that defines them as both sexy and as sexually threatening is often confusing and problematic for the young mind. Crozier (2005) and Ferber (2007) further support this statement and comment that the spaces these boys create in response, offer a sanctuary for the development of a set of relational and performance patterns that are unique to this demographic group. These masculine spaces are erected (*consciously or subconsciously*), in schools that construct them as alien and undesirable (Crozier, 2005; Ferber, 2007; Ferguson, 2000).

Though there are numerous contributing factors, what has emerged from the literature on the educational problems of Black males is the existence of an archetype of masculine behaviour. Henry (2002, p.114) defines this as a *"particular type of Black masculinity defined mainly by an urban aesthetic, a nihilistic attitude and aggressive posturing"*, which many of these young Black men believe shows a sense of power and a viable way for them to assert their manliness (Ferber, 2007; Henry, 2002; Kubin, 2005; Oliver, 2006). This argument is somewhat extended by both Figueroa (2000) and Martino and Meyenn (2001), who indicate that as a consequence of schooling and educational choices being perceived by many Black boys as being a feminine endeavour, and with homophobic views prevalent within both music and popular culture, signs of Black male "intellectualness" at a school level are not seen as "macho" or socially cool (Archer, Pratt & Phillips, 2001; Martino and Meyenn, 2001; Townshend, 2011; Winkeil, 2006). This means that many Black male students run the risk of accusations of homosexual tendencies, leading to a loss of street respect, peer isolation, ridicule and bullying. With no guarantee that their White adolescent peers within a school setting will accept them once rejected from their Black clique, this is a risk that many of today's young Black adolescents are not willing to take.

This debate has resulted in increased interest amongst Government Ministers into educational programme initiatives targeted at increasing Black boys' and young men's attainment levels within schools and colleges, with a need to mobilise proactive community

resources to improve the academic chances, and find sustainable soloutions for Black male achievement (Cassen & Kingdon, 2007). These intentions are readily supported by Trevor Phillips, head of the Commission for Racial Equality, who suggests that Britain needs to address issues such as Black adolescent disaffection towards the world of academia (BBC, 2005a; 2005b; Economist, 2005; Reid, 2007), which should bolster self-esteem and enhance the development of new forms of self-identity amongst socially disengaged Black youth.

Yet in the midst of trying to get a handle on the educational 'crisis' of young Black men within the UK, attention must be given to the underlying causes that have shaped Black male underachievement, in terms of how young Black men construct personal meaning for their social and academic lives, and what support structures, if any, they have in place to further progression and facilitate them to embrace the diversity of male roles and integrate better with one another (Daily Mail, 2011; Haralambos & Holborn, 2008; Youth Justice Board, 2004a).

2.3.3 Family structures

Goulbourne and Chamberlain (2001) and Murray (1996) identify two distinct Black family structures associated with the underlying kinship patterns of many British Black communities, which shape the concrete responses visible in the households that we see today. Firstly, the 'unmarried mother/single mother' accounts for 65% percent of Black families (Murray, 2006), and in such cases mothers rely on their own mothers and other relatives to look after their children, in order to cut down on childcare costs and reduce feelings of stigmatisation that society places on them. Although reports have shown that many children are raised well by lone parents, a disproportionate amount of UK studies show strong correlations between broken homes and delinquency, with 70% of young offenders coming from one parent families (Centre for Social Justice, 2012; Hymowitz, 2005; Smith, 2007)

Murray (1996) adds to this, indicating that many adolescent Black men have removed themselves from traditional routes to adulthood, or more specifically manhood and fartherhood, as many have detached their minds from the concept of parental responsibilities

and the importance that it holds (Green, 1993; Ojumu, 2007; Smith, 2006). Lemos (2009) indicates that many young fathers feel poorly equipped for the role, lacking both knowledge and experience in fatherhood and wider life, which effects the trend of negative social and economic outcomes for the mothers and children involved (Humphrey & Palmer, 1987; Lemos, 2009; Storr, 1964). This provides further insight into how so many Black women become single parents, and why the trend of single parent families appear to be common place within many poor Black communities.

The absence of father figures within the home is a major cause for concern. Arthur (2007) argued that 'dadless homes' and broken families are contributing factors to the array of criminal and delinquent behaviour outbursts amongst young Black men, as absentee fathers are leaving a series of disaffected youths who then seek out *"affirmation and affection from gang membership and turn to drugs to numb the pain"* (Daily Mail, 2011, p.1). According to the BBC (2006a) 57% of children from Black Caribbean households grew up within single parent households, compared to 25% of White children.

Parsons (1937) theory on masculine identity can help explain the basic status and gender ideologies of men and women (Zuo &Tong, 2000), and the implications of absent fathers on masculine identity. Firstly, the main social role of an adult male is as the breadwinner whilst the female role was originally structured around domestic duties and child rearing (Pascall, 2008). However, when the father is consistently absent from the home or some cases non-existent, the function as a masculine role model for his offspring cannot be fulfilled (Cooper, Smith& Upton, 1994; Burke, 2005).Consequently the child or adolescent male has no father figure and so tends to identify more with his mother. The ramifications of single parent households can be huge, as a lack of financial support from the father often results in a single mother working more, which can in turn affect the son because he receives less one-to-one attention, time and moral guidance to ensure he is performing well educationally and developing emotionally.

Additionally, studies have shown (Hopkinson & Moore, 2006; Saint-Aubin, 2002) that in particular male children from female-headed households within deprived communities are subject to behavioural expectations, for instance the need to be 'tough and aggressive' and the need to carry out certain delinquent behaviours, as the young man perceives these as

masculine characteristics or as a way of gaining the attention and respect of peers. In this sense, modification of self-image is a direct consequence of the stigma and attached stereotype of being brought up in a single parent-household, whereby a self-fulfilling prophecy is enacted and young Black boys become the label (a delinquent) ascribed to them (Bernburg & Krohn, 2002).

Merton (1968, p.477) adds to this notion and describes self-fulfilling prophecy as:

> *"A false definition of a situation, evoking a new behaviour that makes the orginal false assumption come true"*

Studies by Burke (2005a) and Murray (1996), indicate that a common pattern arising from past forms of domination has created a sense of 'normality' with the structure of single motherhood within Black families, in particular Caribbean communities, this in turn has blighted the progression of Black boys and teenagers within educational settings. Ultimately, for young Black men to achieve in society and academically, for them to reach their full potential and overcome their lack of self-confidence which often leads on to a fear of achievement, they need to gradually rediscover their internal self and become whole again. Normally, this would be facilitated with the help of the father but, without him or other male role models, generations of young men have been left unknowing of their own power, and holding a poor vision of who they are (Owesuli, 2000).

2.3.4 Black role models

This leads to the consideration of a further strain within some of the literature that has been produced on disengagement within the context of societal norms. The absence of male role models is another factor that comes up regularly, and it assumes the stance that young men's needs (*within the home, educational settings and broader society*) are different from those of young women (Arthur, 2007). In addition, there are strong concerns about the lack of Black male role models that young Black men can relate to and identify with. Abram, Ruthland and Leader (2009), who conduct the 'Reach' programmes for young men across

London, argue that young Black men will seek out negative 'macho' role models to fill the gaps at home, school or college, and the resultant anti-schooling behaviours will leave a generation of young men with an 'emotional deficit' that inhibits social mobility and progression, Edmund-Woods (2011) support this viewpoint.

A study by Figueroa (2000) highlighted that young Black boys and young men value Black male role models. Abram, Ruthland and Leader (2009) supported this notion and indicated that many of the young men on their 'Reach' programme referred to materialistic role models as being more competent and someone that they wanted to emulate. With relation to social psychological theory, this perhaps suggests that materialistic outcomes are more easily identified as attractive and thus have the most immediate, if not necessarily the deepest, impact for disengaged Black youth. Additionally, Featherstone and Deflem (2003) noted that youths began to hold positive self-images through attending educational programmes and mentoring schemes that assigned professional Black men as role models for young boys and men, typically in secondary schools, colleges and pupil referral units, whereby views on their own cleverness and skilfulness were positively affected.

The justification for these initiatives points to the need for consistent and positive Black men in educational and work related settings (such as *apprenteceships and employment training*) who provide models for these young males to emulate. It is no surprise that Black male organisations such as The Hutchinson Foundation, From Boyhood To Manhood Foundation, and Black men's church groups, such as The Black Christian Leaders Forum, are at the forefront of these intervention programmes within the UK (NextGen Magazine, 2005). Other academics agree that the increased presence of committed and successful Black male adults in educational environments is essential for enhancing Black boys' academic attainment levels and social development (Majors, 2001, Lockwood, Jordan & Kunda, 2002). This positive male presence is meant to diffuse masculine characteristics that reflect aggression and other undesirable stances, and in doing so counteract negative gender role socialisation assigned to them by society through labelling and social typification (Ickes, 1993).

So far, this review has defined some key interrelated variables that provide reasons for disengagement avenues, leading to blocked life chances (*such as limited education,*

weakended family structures and a lack of positive role models) for young Black men in relation to this study. It is now suggested that such factors should be understood in a developmental context of the target population and relevant theories looked at in greater depth.

2.4 Theories associated with youth disengagement and intervention programmes

This section provides guidance on blending relevant aspects of social psychology and sociological theories within the context of this research to provide a more comprehensive theoretical framework for understanding the interrelated variables of Black youth disengagement, such as social and cultural causes. It also aids the development of possible solutions for changing problem behaviours amongst this demographic group. Intervention research suggests that theories and evidence based on empirical findings should be implemented into the design and evaluation stages of intervention programmes (Bartholomew, Parcel, Kok & Gottlieb, 2001).This section of the literature review provides insight into potentially important theories that might help explain the mechanisms of intervention based programmes.

There are an array of theories that could explain the disengagement crisis affecting young back men in London and the mechanisms of intervention programmes. For this interdisciplinary study, focus will be given to self-concept theory (Blash & Unger, 1995; Foucault, 19977; 1984; 1995; Goffmman, 1968); labelling and self-fulfilling prophecy theory (Hargreaves, Hester & Mellor, 1975); anomie/strain theory (Agnew, 2001; Merton, 1938), social learning theory (Bandura, 1986; Sutherland, 1937), social support theory (Hupcey, 1998), and empowerment theory (Zimmerman, 1995). Selection of these theories is based on their relevance to multidisciplinary areas of research, as each theory has been shown to have been implemented into promising delinquency intervention programmes for high at-risk youth such as 'Roca' (Roca, 2006) and 'Reach' (Abram, Ruthland & Leader, 2009).These theories will now be presented seperately within the next section.

2.4.1 Self-concept theory

Self-concept remains a popular theory especially as it pertains to the Black community in terms of helping to understand the factors associated with the type of self evauations that young Black men hold (Blash & Unger, 1995; Foucault, 1977; 1984; 1995; Goffmman, 1968; Scott, 1997). The two dimensions of the self-concept theory that relate particularly to young Black men are self-esteem and ethnic identy as highlighted by Blash and Unger (1995). In accordance with work by Smith and Cohen (1993) self-concept is a multifaceted construct that refers to the perception a person has of themselves; this develops over time through experiences and responses from the environment, through the peceptions that others may hold and through reflecting and internalising own behaviour (Cohen, 1972 cited in Gelder & Thronton, 1997; Smith & Cohen, 1993; Spearman, 1927 cited in Engin, 2004).

Self-esteem, one dimension of self-concept, is defined as an individual's subjective evaluation of themselves, that is, the feelings and value that a person places on themselves and the worth that they hold within (Hattie, 1992). Ethnic identity, a related but distinct dimension of self-concept, refers to a sense of belonging to a specific ethnic group, and the thoughts and behaviours that are due in part to ethnic group membership and the enhanced need to belong to a unified culture (Baron & Byrne, 2004; Phinney & Rosenthal, 1992; Sercombe, 1992).

Ethnic identity has been proposed as a critical dimension of 'self' for young Black men, providing a sense of belonging and group pride, alongside a positive means for youth to cope with racial prejudice, peer pressure, and differences between the values and norms of their subculture and those of the majority 'White' culture (Phinney, Lochner & Murphy, 1990; Tajfel, 1981). In examining how ethnic identity has a major impact on the construction of self for young Black males, Cohen (1972 cited in Gelder & Thronton, 1997) lends weight to the fact that ethnic identity is a tool that young Black men use for shaping these contradictory and confusing ideological forces to enable the young person to exist within society (both act and live). Some of that is resistance, because some of the initial pressure is domination, and *"there are no relations of power without resistances"* (Foucault, 1984, p.95). Some of it is merely poetry, a *"magical resolution"* (Foucault, 1984, p.95) of social and economic conflict at the level of what they wear, patterns of words that they use or activities that they

participate in. Or to put it in another way, dressing alike and wearing expensive staus symbols to feel good even if they are uneducated and living in urban poverty. Obviously this does not change the situation and disengagement that many young Black men currently face, but it does make them feel better about themselves, thus having a major effect on their overall self-concept.

In this way, and in line with work by Sercombe (1992), many young Black men see the aformentioned decisions (wearing expensive status symbols, using slang and informal English words; participating in similar leisure activities) as a survival skill, and nothing is more logical than trying to survive. Both Goffman (1968) and Foucault (1977; 1984; 1995) support this ideology, and go on to highlight that the intersections between power and knowledge that are played out by the majority 'White' culture and exerted to form their own forms of 'normal identity' have a great impact on the creation of the modern 'self' for young Black men. In this way, young Black men view power as something that is owned by the few and exercised over the many who have less power (including themselves), thus enabling the status advantage afforded to persons of White complexions to continue (Bond & Cash, 1992; Boyd-Franklin, 1991; Thompson & Keith, 2009).

At a social-psychological level, these studies (Bond & Cash, 1992; Boyd-Franklin, 1991; Thompson & Keith, 2009) have found that negative self-concept development portrayed by many young Black men within modern society is strongly related to feelings of self-worth, self-image, self-control, satisfaction, and quality of life which are shaped by their experiences of existing within mainstream White society. A possible route to balancing these feelings of worthlessness and outward stereotyping is the development of coping strategies and a sense of belonging by identifying with their own ethnic group.

Self-concept theory does not help explain how the negative self-evaluations held by many young Black men can become ingrained through reflecting and internalising poor self-concepts. Therefore, the relevance of labelling and self-fulfilling prophecy theory in terms of why young Black men continue to execute negative behaviour patterns will be outlined below.

2.4.2 Labelling and self-fulfilling prophecy theory

One of the most promising approaches to develop in relation to understanding deviance and disorder has been the labelling approach, in which criminal behaviour becomes a by-product of a conflict between a certain group and the larger community. In accordance with labelling theory, society unjustly labels people or groups of individuals because of the behaviour of others belonging to that race or social group (Jewkes, 2004; Holborn & Haralambos, 2008). Bernburg and Krohn (2003) indicate that this could have a profound and detrimental effect on the social standing of a person and, therefore, be a crucial step in building deviant behaviour patterns and norms.

Muncie (2004, p.117) goes onto say:

"Behaviour may be labelled criminal but it is not this behaviour in itself that constitues crime".

In the case of delinquent youths the label of 'criminal' assigned to them by society, triggers the process that traps them into a criminal lifestyle (Dwyer, 2001). According to Welsh (2002; 2007) this creates distinct outcomes, the formation of stigma, racial typification and the modification of self-image. In accordance with work by Holborn and Haralambos (2008) self-fulfilling prophecies occur because of two main outcomes. Firstly, stigma and racial typification which refers to society's views and interactions, for example, a Black man might be made to feel unwelcome within certain employment avenues. Secondly, modification of self-image is a direct consequence of the stigma and attached stereotype, whereby a self-fulfilling prophecy is enacted and Black men become the label (*a criminal*) ascribed to them. In accordance with work by Hamlin (2001), the process of a self-fulfilling prophecy begins when it becomes harder for the individual to act contrary to what society expects. Lastly, a deviant career is moulded once the individuals are organised into a group consisting of a strong negative social bond, then a deviant subculture is produced and group norms and identities become solidified (*an example of this could be becoming part of a gang*) (Hamlin, 2001).

In this way, and in line with work by Merton (1938), many Black men begin to commit more crimes and form an idenity with the role (*criminal*) and its associated values, attitudes and beliefs. Lemert (1951) and Becker (1963) refer to this as 'deviance amplification' and aver that punitive punshments such as imprisonment only strengthen the individual's perception of this behavioural norm (*that of being a criminal*). Therefore, although the label might have initially been intended to sway Black men away from violence and crime it actually produces the opposite outcome (Burke, 2005; Holborn & Haralambos, 2008). Labelling and self-fulfilling prophecy theories cannot explain all criminal and anti-social behaviour, however, they can provide useful information when planning and delivering intervention based programmes for at-risk youth groups from lower economic backgrounds, as it might help explain reasons for previous criminal endeavours.

Another theory that is closely related with labelling and self-fulfilling prophecy theory, in terms of its relevance to youth disengament and crime, is the anomie/strain theory. Theorists (such as Agnew, 1992) have argued that youth delinquency is a result of negative affective states such as outer-directed emotions like anger or inner-directed emotions like depression, which could be created as a result of negative labelling or social limitations to achieving legitimate goals. The next section, therefore, covers the general Anomie/Strain Theory.

2.4.3 General anomie/strain theory

In looking at the two parts of the theory separately, Anomie Theory seeks to explain why some societies have higher crime rates and deviant behaviour patterns compared with others and the reasons behind the distribution of deviant behaviour across a range of groups defined by class, race and ethnicity (Bernard, 1987; Merton, 1938; Murphy & Robinson, 2008). Some people within the underclass, for example the Black community, are polar examples of individuals who view 'success goals' as the acquisition of material goods, such individuals aspire to and want to emulate people who drive fancy cars, wear the latest designer clothing and live in nice areas of the country, these are their role models. However, due to social limitations on individuals achieving their goals legitimately, crime might be adopted as a method to accomplish such material rewards, with Featherstone and Deflem (2003) providing a strong argument to support this viewpoint.

Furthermore, Strain Theory relates to the low-class individuals reaction to societal pressures that they perceive are placed on them, and explores the notion that these groups of people are under huge amounts of 'strain' due to the hindrance of achieving success in a lawful manner (Murphy & Robinson, 2008). Merton goes on to explain that in order for these types of individuals to adapt to the strain in their lives they usually either conform or rebel (Merton, 1938; Featherstone & Deflem, 2003), with the overrepresentation of young Black men in knife and gun crime (*firearm homicides and shootings in 2006, 75% of the victims and 79% of the suspects were Black*) and more recently, the London riots (*where the London rioters were predominantly Black youth*) supporting this viewpoint (Boothe & Cherie, 2008; Eden, 2011; Heale, 2008; Malcolm, 2011).

It has been found in many literatures that outer-directed emotions like anger are strongly associated with youth disengagement and violence (Agnew, 2001; Bernburg, 2002; Brenzine, Piquero & Mazerolle, 2001; Hoffman & Spence, 2010). Bernburg (2002) also suggested that for some segments of the population, the overriding anomic pressures to achieve, whilst confronted with normative restraints on legitimate modes of achievement, facilitate greater forms of deviance. Similarly, strain could be derived from negative relationships with others (Agnew, 1992), and the more negative the relationship becomes, the greater the likelihood of crime and delinquency.

In line with Agnew (1992) and Bernburg (2002) the present study investigates whether the participants had any strains and if the overriding pressures to achieve at all costs contribute to youth disengagement from mainstream society. Qualitative focus group discussions with the youths are helpful in examining whether the strains that they were exposed to triggered anti-social behaviours. While the aforementioned theories (*labelling and self-fulfilling prophecy theory and anomie/strain theory*) provide an explanation of how and why negative emotional states might be created amongst high-risk and disengaged youth groups, in terms of providing greater understanding regarding the gap between expectations and actual achievements (Agnew, 1992). The theories do not help explain how relationships between an individual and their environment (*for example, learning from significant others*) could have a detrimental effect on continued deviant practices. Therefore, the relevance of the social learning theory in terms of how criminal and deviant behaviours are learnt will be outlined below.

2.4.4 Social learning theory

The traditions of the social learning theory have long been used to help understand crime and delinquency acts (such as Aker, 1998; Bandura, 1986; Glaser, 1956; Sutherland, 1937), with a shared notion that individuals learn criminal and delinquent behaviours from response consequences in the form of either punishment or rewards for their actions (Aker, 1985). Within the context of this study one prominent theory within the traditions of the social learning theory regarding juvenile crime and delinquency will be reviewed.

Sutherland's theory on differential associations focuses mainly on the importance of others on developing delinquent behaviour patterns, indicating that the principal part of the learning of criminal behaviour occurs within intimate personal groups in the form of family or peer influences, with symbolic models such as television and other media channels also influencing and shaping criminal behaviour (Sutherland, 1937; Warr, 2002). The basic prediction of differential association theory is that usually people become offenders because they have been socialised and become classically conditioned within families and groups where there are some pro-criminal norms. A certain amount of evidence suggests that criminal behaviour tends to run in families. Walmsley, Howard and White (1992) found that a third of UK prisoners claimed to have a family member also in prison (Farrigton, Jollifffe, Loeber, Stouthamer-Loeber & Kalb, 2001). Espelage, Holt and Henkel (2003) also found that juvenile delinquents are more likely than non-delinquents to report having peers who engage in criminal activity, stating that deviant behaviour amongst young people is a consequence of their social network systems and whether pro-social or multi-antisocial behaviours are reinforced by the peer groups. Differential association theorists state that if an individual changes their associations within their social network, then behaviour changes can also occur (Aker, 1998; Espelage, Holt & Henkel, 2003; Warr, 2002).

The underlying premise of the social learning theory has been applied to the design and implementaion stages of many intervention programmes (Farrell *et al.*, 2001; Kelder *et al.*, 1996). Firstly, to provide an understanding of how youths observe violent behaviours from others, such as their peers, parents and the media. Secondly, to help understand the outcomes of those behaviours, which could include the glorification of violence and gang involvement. Since young people could learn problem behaviour patterns from significant

others and negative social models (Aker, 1998; Bandura, 1977; Scott, 2007), reduction in such negative social influences is imperative to enacting change outcomes. Within a programme setting, changing the perceived outcomes of the youths' behaviours, such as rejection from authority figures and non at-risk youths is paramount. In addition, consistent reinforcement of successful achievements and positive behaviours, such as social skills, social bonding and teamwork, will facilitate change. Whilst the social learning theory explains the significance of positive social bonding between youths and significant others, the theory does not really explain how positive relationships occur and ways in which they can be strengthened and maintained. Social support theory extends this research avenue and provides knowledge on facilitating positive relationships, as discussed below.

2.4.5 Social support theory

The underlying concept of the social support theory has been a recurring theme throughout youth based intervention research with a notion that the development of positive relationships with significant others (*for example, teachers, non-at-risk youths, parents, positive role models*) could prevent problem behaviours (Espelage & Swearer, 2003; Hupcey, 1998; Vaux, 1988). Research by Thoits (1982) and Kalogerakis (2003), indicate that an individual's basic social needs (*for example, affection, esteem, approval, belonging, identity, and security*) are fulfilled through the development of relationships and connections with others. Emotional support (*which entails the affection, empathy, and acceptance gained from social support*) and informational support (*involving advice and information conveyed from social support*) are deemed the most appropriate forms of social support for at-risk demographic groups, as research has shown that they have an enhanced need to belong to a group, and are more likely to actively seek advice and guidance from in-group members (Baron & Byrne, 2004**;** Kalogerakis (2003).

Kalogerakis (2003) made reference to the importance of positive peer groups and/or respectable adults as important factors in reducing negative social relationships and decreasing the likelihood of deviant coping strategies (Agnew, 1992). In the case of delinquent youths, Agnew (2006) believed that strains such as parental rejection, child abuse and neglect, negative school experiences, residing in low socioeconomic status communities, and experiences with prejudice and discrimination are more likely to cause crime than others. Therefore, Amara *et al.*, (2005) and Operario *et al.*, (2006) both indicate that youths that represent recurring risk variables are in greater need of effective social support systems that can provide emotional and informational support to strengthen and

create a positive social network and social capital (Putman, 2000; Sampson, 1998; Sampson, Morenoff & Earls, 1999). With many academics agreeing that early intervention to stop criminal and violent behaviour patterns can have a strong influence on preventing later violent behaviour (Gable, Arllen & Hendrickson, 1994; Reilly, 1999; Walker, Stieber, Ramsey & O'Neil, 1991).

These elements are seen as central to a social inclusion agenda for high-risk and disengaged youth, as social capital and building positive social relationships is a way of expanding self-empowerment and well-being to function and develop into healthy adulthood (National Research Council and Institution of Medicine, 2002), thus contributing towards an improved civil society.

Moreover, as Spies-Butcher (2006, p.6) writes:

> *"Social capital theory is little more than the long standing acknowledgement that civic involvement and social networks can have positive implications for individuals and society as a whole*" (Spies-Butcher, 2006, p. 6)

In short, social support perspectives make reference to social support as a dynamic process that includes both the provider (*for example, educator and intervention programmes*) and the recipient (for *example, the youths*), through mutual reciprocity to build positive social relationships and reduce negative outcomes. In addition, Pearce and Larson (2006), expand on this, indicating that through effective social support to focus on eliminating certain strains and the dynamics that underpin youth problems, the empowerment process can begin in which a renewed sense of personal control can start to take place (Peterson & Zimmerman, 2004)**.** The next section, therefore, covers the Empowerment Theory.

2.4.6 Empowerment theory

Empowerment theory is different from the prevailing intervention theories, as it attempts to show a more positive perspective of young Black men as a demographic group. According to Holden *et al.*, (2005) and Njai, *et al.*, (2005) the application of empowerment theory replaces the traditional perspective of high-risk and disengaged youth as community problems, rather they are seen through a more positive lens as community assets (Zimmerman, 1995). Holden *et al.*, (2005) argued that with this in mind, at-risk youth should be seen as the means of the intervention programmes rather than the end, and the attributes that they already possess should not be neglected.

It has been found in much literature that the injection of empowerment language within social intervention programme settings can enable at-risk youth to gain control over their lives and their environment, by providing critical opportunities for them to participate in decision making processes and take control of their own destiny (Fals Borda, 2001; Mattaini, 2002; Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995; Peterson & Zimmerman, 2004; Zimmerman, 1995). Thus, providing youth-focused interventions where life skills can be gained helps to prevent negative outcomes. This notion therefore suggests that the empowerment process is an integration of changes to the individual, as well as environmental conditions (Angelique, Reischl & Davidson, 2002).

As previously mentioned, empowerment focuses on youth as a resource for the community rather than as a negative element (Holden *et al.*, 2005); therefore, its main interest appears to be facilitating changes in negative behaviour patterns through empowerment practices that support autonomy. Research has shown that community projects which had a strong emphasis on youth leadership have yielded the highest empowerment scores (Fals-Borda, 2001; Njai & Zimmerman, 2005). Therefore, it is critical that intervention programmes such as Fight for Peace encourage high-risk and disengaged youth to take ownership of the programme through youth council posts and other leadership opportunities.

2.4.7 Summary of theories

In concluding the use of social-psychology as a discipline and its relevance to this interdisciplinary study, it should be noted that there are two social psychologies, the first being psychology and the other being sociology (Jones, 1998). The central focus of psychological social psychology is how individuals respond to social stimuli, whereas sociological social psychology addresses this topic on a wider scale, by focusing on larger group or societal variables, such as people's socioeconomic status, their social roles, and cultural norms (Stryker, 1997).

In response to these variables, the clear under-current of social-psychology as a discipline and the way in which it is projected through the blending of relevant theories within this section, provides clarity in terms of the distinct need for both social-psychological and sociological theories to exist within the context of this research area.

The researcher believes that the amalgamation of strong social-psychological theories towards a unified outcome of knowledge, enables a more comprehensive theoretical framework to understanding the interrelated variables of Black youth disengagement and

the crisis that they are currently facing, alongside the development of possible solutions for changing problem behaviours amongst this demographic group to be sought (Bartholomew, Parcel, Kok & Gottlieb, 2001; Stryker, 1997).

The word "crisis" in our culture often has negative connotations. Yet, through an empowerment process, these negative conditions can be successfully turned into new awareness and opportunity creators, in which disengaged and marginalised youths blighted by unemployment, poverty and low levels of education can actively confront their environment (Donnelly, Akinson, Boyle & Szto, 2011; Lord & Hutchinson, 1993; McWhirter *et al.*, 2004). In this study the possibility of gaining empowerment through an alternative form of education and re-engaging at-risk youths back into mainstream society by providing varied opportunities through intervention programmes and vocational learning options, guides the research towards the examination of sport-based intervention programmes. The educative role of sport for high-risk and disengaged youth, which is the aim of this particular study, will be reviewed in the next section.

2.5 The educative role of sport and physical activities

Sport can provide a break from routine for people whose lives are too monotonous, but can also provide a means of structure and routine in the lives of those who otherwise lack this. Sport acts as a much needed distraction to daily life but, perhaps more importantly, sport acts as a tool through which specific sets of learning outcomes (Kirk, 2010), such as life skills (Danish, 2002), team-building skills (Priest & Gass, 1997) leadership and decision-making skills, can be adopted (Moore, 2002; Robertson, 2000). At the same time, sport can harmonise high-risk and disengaged youths together within a safe and structured setting, reducing street delinquency and violence, and promoting a healthier lifestyle (Andrews & Andrews, 2003; Coakley, 2002; Colley, Boetzelen & Hoskins, 2007;Collingwood, 1997; DCSM, 2002; Hartmann, 2003; Hellison & Wright, 2003; Tacon, 2007; Council of Europe, 2005). This section of the literature review provides insight into the educative potential of sport-based intervention for the target population.

2.5.1 Sport as a microcosm

"Sport is an extraordinarily pervasive social phenomenon" (Eitzen & Sage, 2003, p. 1)

Scholarly work by Eitzen (2001) examines the phenomenon of sport and indicates that sport mirrors the human experience and in doing so reflects the society in which it operates. In this way sport is seen as a microcosm of society complete with all its assets and defects, with the overwhelming similarity that *"society is lived by people and sports are played by people"* Boxhill (2011, p.1).

Ernst Cassirer remarked in his essay on 'a man' that:

"What we feel in art is not a simple or singular emotional quality. It is the dynamic process of life itself" (Cassirer & Lukay, 2006, p.1).

Like art, sport may be expected to provide a glimpse into life itself. Research by Boxill (2011) and Simon (1991), add to this notion and argue that sports are not distinguishable from the activities that constitute life, as they are facilitators that provide effective mediums for bringing out the characters of people, and in doing so serve the best and the worst of people.

In observing sport as microcosm, Boxhill's (2011) study draws on particular similarities between sport and wider society, in particular, her study highlights that:

"Just as there is corruption in society, there is corruption in sports; just as there is violence in society, there is violence in sport" (Boxhill, 2011, p.1)*.*

On the other hand:

> *"Just as there are rules and regulations in society, there are strict rules and regulations within sporting competitions; just as heroes inspire society with their successes, there are heroes and success stories within sports too"* (Boxhill, 2011, p.1)*.*

In all these ways and others, sport based endeavours reflect society; Boxill (2011) supports this viewpoint. Furthermore, Redhead (2007) pointed out that football is a microcosm of that larger reality, in which life is based on the quality of experience of all those in the society, he goes onto state that:

> *"Football, being less than life itself, allows one to appreciate and empathize with the joy of human accomplishment, which becomes internalized and part of one's personality"* (Redhead, 2007, p.31)

Performers especially do not really disengage sport from the realities of life. Bob Richards, Olympic pole-vaulter said in a public address on the 'Heart of a Champion' in 1959 that:

> *"The qualities that possess the contestant are the same qualities that we need in living"* (Richards, 1959, p.1)

Boxill (2011) expands on this trail of thought indicating that sport is a microcosm of society in which is also compresses and heightens the certain aspects of society. In this sense, sport may provide new values that society has not yet recognised (*such as discipline, hard work, maintaining stability, providing a platform for perseverance of goals to be enacted*) (Boxill, 2011; Ewing, 2012). So it does not simply reflect society. It can also reinforce values or inequalities that exist within society, or be used as a means of resistance against dominant values or social inequalities. The educative role of sport for marginalised or excluded groups would be an example of this.

2.5.2 The impacts of sports and physical activities

Within the discourse of sport and its connection to life there exists a further notion, and one that focuses on how sport impacts upon aspects of our lives on a daily basis (Lyras, 2007). Danish and Nellen (1997) acknowledge that involvement in sport and physical activities benefits participants on both a physical and psychological level. A study by Rich, Corbin, Bloom, Rich, Evan and Wilson (2009), adds to this and highlights the importance of sport in terms of its significance as an outreach tool that is rich in learning opportunities needed for personal growth, development and healing the hurt of trauma and adversity experienced by a high proportion of young Black men (Berger & Owen, 1988; Crabbe, 2000; Hartmann, 2002; Moore, 2002; Priest & Gass, 1997; Rich *et al.,* 2009; Robertson, 2000).

Given the significance of sport and physical activity for many young people in contemporary society (Brettschneider, 1992; 2001), Holroyd and Armour (2003) encourage sports organisations to use sport as a suitable vehicle for engendering negative behaviours, particularly with high-risk and disengaged young people and those from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds (Crabbe, 2000; Nichols, 1997). Furthermore, Yeung (1996) argues that moderate exercise not only has profound effects on health through the prevention of obesity and cardio-vascular diseases, but also facilitates enhanced mood states and a sense of empowerment and wellbeing (Bartholomew, 2001; 2006; Biddle, Gorely & Stensel, 2004; Glanz, Lewis & Rimmer, 1997; Njai et al., 2005), an essential element for individual change and the reinforcement of traditional values.

Similarly, research by Kirkcaldy and Shephard (1990) suggested that improvements in self-respect, body image and mastery orientations were outcomes of exercise involvement that was sensitive to the needs of the cohort, their study signified that this sense of relatedness also positively influenced the empowerment process. In all these ways sport may spur moral change (Doty, 2006; Eitzen, 2001; Kupermic, Aleen & Arthur, 1996).Moreover, sport has been strong enough to stand the test of time, and in doing so, several researchers have noted its potential to be used as a tool for moral development and character-building when applied in the right environment (Coalter, 1988; Long & Sanderson, 2000). The socio-moral role of sport will now be reviewed in further detail within the next section.

2.5.3 The socio-moral role of sport

While the notion that sports build character and ethics has in recent years come to the forefront of modern day culture (Doty, 2006; Feezell, 2004; Mastrich, 2002; Schneider, 2009), the belief in the potential of sport and physical activity to develop character was around long before organised sports became popular. In fact, there is a consensus among scholars (Dunning, 1986; Guttmann, 1994; Mangan, 1981; 1992) that private (euphemistically called 'public') secondary schools in Britain were the first to institutionalise organised sport during the nineteenth century. Sport during this era was used as a vehicle for promoting morals and religious discipline (Arnold, 1994; Mangan, 1981). In this context sports were seen as a vital part of the national curriculum because of their 'character building properties'. By the middle of the nineteenth century the role of sport as a vehicle for developing 'character' and promoting pro-social behaviour was firmly established (Dunning, 1975). Team games were a central part of the middle class ideal of 'Muscular Christianity' (Putney, 2001), whereby participation in sport could contribute to the development of Christian morality, physical fitness and a 'manly' character. The practices of muscular Christianity and the 'cult of athleticism' were seen as the means by which sports would improve youth discipline and instil a strong work ethic for pupils (Dunning, 1986; Downing, 2008; Hall, 1994; Holroyd & Armour, 2003; Watson, Weird & Friend, 2005).

Newsome (1961) clearly stipulates discipline and moral standards as the overarching aim for the young men at Rugby School (*a public school for boys*), which was implemented via a system of prefects who were responsible for maintaining order among the other boys through moral influence (Mangan & Walyin, 1987). This ideology was rooted in training young men for the duties, struggles and responsibilities that would confront them during adulthood (Downing, 2008; Hall, 1994). Sports, such as boxing, cricket and rugby were intended to teach 'manly' characteristics which emphasised physical strength, physical toughness, group loyalty and self-reliance thus; such sports became a central means of achieving this aim.

A significant number of Protestant elite of the time advocated the use of sport and in doing so supported the promotion of the harmonious development of mind, body and soul (Dunning, 1986; Hall, 1994; Haley, 1978). The power of this belief spread and disseminated to all corners of the globe, and the principle of sport as a tool for social development became entrenched (Coalter, 1988; Holroyd & Armour, 2003; Long & Sanderson, 2001). Over time,

sport and exercise intervention have had a defining impact on contemporary social thought, with an array of researchers noting the educational and therapeutic properties of sport and physical activity (Argent, 2005; Becker & Larson, 2004; Cameron and MacDougall, 2000; Coalter, 1988; Cote and Abernethy, 2003; Danish & Nellen, 1997; Elling, De Knop and Knopper, 2001; Gould and Carson, 2008; Haralambos and Holborn, 2008; Hartmann 2003; Hellison & Walsh, 2002; Hellison & Wright, 2003; Long & Sanderson, 2001).

The underlying principles of such movements may be reviewed within the modern era, potentially as a means of re-engaging high-risk and disenfranchised young people in order to help address issues of rising crime and anti-social behaviour amongst certain demographics, and as a means of instilling 'character building properties' (Eitzen, 2001). Sports such as boxing have provided successful examples within literature (Murphy & Sheard, 2006; Sheard, 1992; Sheard, 1997), in terms of the attainment of physical fitness and stamina being used as a builder of developmental assets, positive development and promoting moral change (Benson, 1997; Lerner, Brentano, Dowling & Anderson, 2002; National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2002).

2.5.4 Sport-related intervention

As previously mentioned sport-based intervention strategies have long been supported by the idealistic view that sport can generate character building properties (Crabbe, 2000) and specific learning outcomes, such as life skills (Danish, 2002), team-building skills (Priest & Gass, 1997) and leadership (Moore, 2002; Robertson, 2000). Whilst empirical evidence has shown the effectiveness of sport-related intervention within the field (Colley, Boetzelen & Hoskins, 2007;Council of Europe, 2005; DCSM, 2002; Elling, De Knop & Knopper, 2001; Hartman, 2003; Hellison, 2002; Hellison & Wright, 2003; Tacon ,2007), the on-going challenge with these type of programmes appears to be the current lack of consensus in the measurement and evaluation of success outcomes and whether the participants are able to transfer the skills learnt from sport to other social domains (Danish, Petitpas & Hale, 1992; 1993; 1995; Hodge, Cresswell, Sherburn, Dugdale, 1999; McKnight, et al., 2009; Sports Coaches' Outreach, 2005). This research therefore aims to draw conclusions regarding the effectiveness of sport interventions in fostering transferable skills by investigating the experiences of both participants and educators involved in such programmes.

The 'Greenhouse Charity' has great relevance to the present study. The findings showed that sports projects which centre on social change aspects rather than personal benefits have been and continue to be advantageous at a grassroots level (Greenhousecharity, 2010). For example the Greenhouse Schools Project, which aims to help 11 to 16 year olds from poor backgrounds take part in quality sporting activities (Footymatters, 2011; Greenhousecharity, 2010; The Times, 2010). It is not far-fetched to say that this programme might be preventing future violence and crime in London's most troubled boroughs (*such as Peckham, Deptford and New Cross*), that are more often in the headlines for gun crime and gang warfare (Astbury & Knight, 2003; Chapman, Craig & Whaley, 2002; Laureus, 2011; Positive Futures, 2004).

One of the organisation's striking successes is the Peckham-based junior football club Greenhouse Bethwin FC, located between two of London's largest and most notorious housing estates in Peckham (North Peckham and Aylesbury), the community club has more than 540 playing members and twenty-six teams competing in local leagues (Greenhousecharity, 2010). Its mission is to give young people from some of the most deprived areas in London access to a wide range of quality football, by tapping into the anger and frustration displayed by many borne out of social immobility and a lack of direction and purpose (Footymatters, 2011). Therefore, the Greenhouse charity provides healthy activities for youth who might otherwise get sucked into gang affiliated lifestyles.

Place based initiatives such as Greenhouse Bethwin FC where the activity is taken to the community using non-traditional spaces and locations, such as the street, parks or local community centres, to deliver programmes and activities, have been proven to be extremely effective (Greenhousecharity, 2010; Jamieson & Wolter, 1998; McClanahan, 2004). In line with Botes and Pelser's (2005) and Skinner, Zakus and Cowell's (2006) suggestions on attributes for successful programme development, trust is a key element in social inclusion programmes and the development of social capital. It is vital when working with at-risk groups that the establishment of trust and rapport occurs within a safe and familiar place before coaches and educators begin to challenge other elements needed for social inclusion such as cultural, attitudinal or physical boundaries (Skinner, Zakus & Cowell, 2006).

Additionally, reviews on various sport based initiatives targeted at engagement pathways found a number of external barriers towards taking part in sport; these included cost of

transport, locality and lack transport (Skinner, Zakus and Cowell, 2006; Sport England, 2006). Therefore, by providing access to sport in the street, local parks, or community centres participants do not need to find transportation and this allows 'freedom' of space to slowly introduce participants to activities (Crime Prevention, 2002). Halpern (2004) indicates that this process can aid in building social capital as relationships can be developed, and, over time access to other facilities, programmes, and services can be facilitated through the development of opportunities and social capital networks. The educative and therapeutic properties associated with sport have a powerful force when applied to such settings (Hartmann, 2003; Vail, 2007).

Positive Futures is another organisation that uses outreach as a method of engagement within some of London's most deprived boroughs and has developed organically over time by responding to local need (Cowell, 2006). In accordance with work conducted by Crabbe *et al* (2006) programmes such as Positive Futures see sport providing a relationship strategy as:

> *"Projects need to be set free to operate at the radical edge of this field of work in order that they can attempt to find ways of engaging with and inspiring those young people who have been alienated by more structured mainstream approaches"* (Crabbe *et al.*, 2006, p. 25).

Organisations such as Positive Futures and Greenhouse that operate free from the confines of bureaucratic structures found in more traditional sports clubs and, as a result, have been able to flourish and become more sustainable over a long-term basis (Skinner, Zakus & Cowell, 2006). This notion supports Crabbe *et al* (2006) who suggest that a successful balance of bridging and bonding can occur when sport and physical activity initiatives are adopted without the involvement of institutionalised government bodies (Crabbe *et al.*, 2006; Skinner, Zakus & Cowell, 2006). There is a strong indication within current literature that positive outcomes, such as the development of emotional and enhanced social skills, increased bonding between participants, and lower crime rates, are obtainable from this new style of policy and programme arrangement at a grassroots level for clubs whose mandate is to engage directly with hard to reach groups from minority populations (Burnett, 2006; Pelser & Botes, 2005; Kvalsund, Nyheim & Telford, 2004; Strategy Unit, 2002; Sugden, 1991).

The Positive Futures through Sport Foundation uses a sports-based social inclusion approach. It is a relationship strategy which focuses on engagement through sport and the building of mutual respect and trust (which are social capital markers) can provide a cultural gateway to alternative lifestyles away from gang cultures (Postivefutures, 2009; Skinner, Zakus & Cowell, 2006). This project recognises that in today's world many young people face a number of interrelated problems, including living in deprivation and risk environments, lack of education, unemployment, drugs, low aspirations, lack of autonomy and low self-esteem (Nash, 2006; Rich & Grey, 2005; Skinner, Zakus & Cowell, 2006), and use sport as a means of overcoming these issues.

In conclusion, the lessons learnt from the previous sport-related intervention studies indicate that sport was used as a hook to engage and encourage young people to look at the broader issues within their own lives, such as crime, family breakdown and low educational attainment (DCMS, 2002, Tacon, 2007). It was clear from reviewing the aforementioned literature that successful implementation of sport-based intervention was agreed upon because the programmes were able to effectively tackle the various strains presented to the young people - including parental rejection, child abuse and neglect, low levels of income, negative school experiences, residing in low socioeconomic status communities, and experiences with prejudice and discrimination (Agnew, 2006; Diana, 2000).

Within this context, sport was used to educate and develop positive learning outcomes, such as positive bonding experiences, positive characteristics and skills that were transferable into other aspects of life (*for example, goal-setting in sport and physical activity competency and goal-setting in life and academic competency*), which was one of the key concerns raised by previous researchers when discussing the challenges of sport-based intervention programmes (Burnett, 2001; Danish *et al.*, 1995; Sports Coaches' Outreach, 2005).

However, unless programme managers and development workers understand the purpose of sport in the development and rehabilitation process of Black male youth, then there is danger that sport will remain of limited use, or at worst work against the objective of providing upward mobility avenues for high-risk and disengaged urban youth in London (Burnett, 2001; Danish *et al.*, 1995; Miller, 2002; Reeves, 2014).

2.6 Summary of literature review

In conclusion, the procedure for identifying, synthesising, analysing and reporting relevant thematic findings from a review of literature that were relevant to the current study has been achieved. This has enabled the researcher to map and assess existing intellectual territory and to specify research questions and methodological considerations in order to develop the existing body of knowledge further. The methodological considerations in relation to this study will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

METHOD AND METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

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3.1 Introduction

Writing about social science research, quantitative and qualitative, Argent (2005) infers that methodology in its most general sense is the association between social theory and practical research methods. Blaikie (2000) offers a fuller definition to the meaning of theory, he claims that theory is the starting point of all research as it creates a paradigmatic lens through which the researcher views the world, after which one's ontological and epistemological assumptions are then created (Grix, 2002). These positions form an overall theory of knowledge embedded in the theoretical perspectives and thereby govern the methodological orientation of the researcher and research methods adopted in a given study (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

This chapter introduces the research methods most appropriate to the researcher when exploring the educative role of sport and how involvement in sport based programmes impacts on and promotes character development, transferable skills development and moral values amongst high-risk and disengaged youths within London. By focusing on the experiences of the participants within the sport programmes the researcher wishes to investigate whether it is appropriate to conceptualise sport as both a cultural and educative resource related to the potential development and sustainment of specific sets of learning outcomes such as life skills, team-building skills, leadership and decision making skills as discussed by Danish (2002), Kirk (2010) and Priest and Gass (1997).

3.2 Sampling

Participants were sampled according to the principle of 'purposive sampling' which is recommended for qualitative and mixed-methods studies (Acaps, 2012; Bryman, 2004; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Nyamongo, Broomhall & Ballard, 2011). Denzin and Lincoln (2005)

also suggested that this particular method allows a sample to be chosen based on characteristics relevant to the study. Furthermore, Nyamongo, Broomhall and Ballard (2011) express that purposive sampling strategy enables an initial understanding of the situation to occur, whilst identifying the needs of the relevant group(s). More specifically, this type of sampling technique produces a sample where the included groups are selected according to specific characteristics that are considered to be important as related to risk variables (*for example, growing up poor and in single parent households; living in poor housing conditions; living in crime ridden neighbourhoods; possessing low educational aspirations and expectations; exposure to substance abuse from a young age*).

The sample population consisted of *n*=32 participants. The study populations constituted two distinct groups: 1) at-risk young Black men in the age range of 18 and over (*n*=15), and 2) key informants, educators, coaches or other individuals involved in the delivery of the intervention sport-based programmes (*n*=17 questionnaires; *n*=12 interviews).

A purposive, non-random sampling technique was used to select participants for questionnaires *(with educators)*, semi-structured interviews *(with educators)* and focus groups discussions *(with at-risk youths)*. In justifying the adoption of the purposive sampling strategy, it could be suggested that time constraints meant that limited numbers of questionnaires, interviews and focus group discussions could be conducted and analysed during the allocated time period. Moreover, all of the participants were selected based on their availability, openness, and ability to give clear and articulate responses to questionnaire, interview and focus group discussions.

Although non-random sampling has its drawbacks (*for example, opportunity for more biased views to emerge as the participants chosen are not at random and answers might not represent what another population thinks*) (Nyamongo, Broomhall & Ballard, 2011), within this study it was of great benefit, as it enabled the researcher to obtain a large amount of rich and detailed information, in a relatively short time, about at-risk behaviours and pro-social attitudes and knowledge on how the sport-based intervention programmes provided a means of education, because the researcher was targeting this particular group. Secondly, a theoretical sampling technique was employed during the second stage of data collection. Theoretical sampling is based on the sampling and selection of participants until categories

or themes identified during data analysis become 'saturated' with enough information and no new information is being produced from focus groups discussions or interviews (Bryman, 2008). The researcher therefore had no direction as to how many semi-structured interviews or focus group sessions were actually necessary at the outset of data collection; the sufficient number was only attained once focus group sessions and interviews were not producing any 'new' data (Guest *et al*, 2006). By using this particular concept the researcher was able to ensure that unnecessary interviews and focus groups were not conducted.

3.2.1 Selection Criteria

By using a purposive sampling approach, the researcher was able to summarise a range of experiences (*for example, how and why young Black men in London have become socially disengaged from mainstream society; how and why educators that use sport as a means of education within their programmes achieve success*). The research selected a sample of sites which represented a cross-section of the affected groups and areas in London. Consequently, the educators (*delivering the sport-based intervention programmes)* were selected based on their expert knowledge about youth crime, risk behaviours, services and programmes within London; and policies, laws, and norms affecting young Black men in London. Those who took part in the questionnaire and interview phases of the research included sports coaches, sports volunteers, youth mentors, programme coordinators and managers and programme directors.

The youth participants for this study were accordingly included depending on their ethnicity (Black); sex (male) and if they were high-risk and disengaged (prescribed set of negative dynamics). When recruiting focus group participants, the researcher developed sampling frames based on the information gleaned from the key informant interviews with the educators at the start of the data collection stage. The young Black men represented the full range of variation within a particular risk group. For example, individuals from the Fight for Peace represented nearly all of the relevant categories for high-risk and disengaged group profiles (such as *grown up poor and in single parent households; lived in poor housing conditions; been involved in criminal and violent activity; obtained low levels of education; exposure to substance abuse from a young age*). In terms of the inclusionary criteria a

further determinant was geographic location to ensure that all participants who took part in the study were solely selected from sport-based intervention programmes within London.

3.3 Research philosophy

Delanty and Strydom (2003) envisage that a philosophical perspective is implicit in the espousal of research strategies, the conduct of research and the interpretation of data. Theory is relevant to identifying the perspective through which the researcher views the world, and is required to direct the researcher to relevant ontological and epistemological positions (Grix, 2002). These positions subsequently structure the design of research questions and confirm a consistent design of research methods to be utilised (Bryman, 2008). As Denzin and Lincoln (2005) report, the paradigms of epistemological, ontological and methodological views become a framework to guide the direction of research, and the decisions chosen throughout. Theoretical stances thus impinge on the research process by informing the researcher of the most appropriate research methods (Argent, 2005; Grix, 2002).

3.3.1 Ontology and Epistemology

Based on observations by researchers such as Boham (1991) and Marsh and Furlong (2002), it is well established in literature that ontology and epistemology assumptions have an important status in the social research process.

According to a study by Grix (2002, p.177) on 'the generic terminology of social research':

> *"Ontology is the starting point, after which one's epistemological and methodological positions logically follow"*

In short, and according to Blaikie (2000, p.8):

> *"Ontological theorisations refer to the assumption that what we believe composes social reality"*

For example, ontological positions are viewed as those contained within perspectives of either objectivism (*which asserts that social phenomena and their meanings have independent existence*) or constructivism (*which asserts that social phenomena and their meaning are accomplished by social actors on a continual basis*) (Grix, 2002). From these two examples, it is clear that the ontological process will affect the way in which research is undertaken. If ontological assumptions imply what we may know, then from a research perspective, epistemology is concerned with the theory of knowledge-gathering, and focuses on how we come to know what we know (Grix, 2002). For example, epistemology positions are those contained within perspectives of interpretivism (*advocates a predication upon the view of strategy and asserts social scientists to grasp the subjective meaning of social action*) and positivism (*advocates the application of the methods of the natural sciences to the study of social reality and beyond*) as defined by Bryman (2000) and Schwandt (2000).

Positivism is associated with an ontology of actualism, which purports absolute reality within a research context, which can be perceived in an objective, detached, value-free way. This is where the positivist-interpretivist paradigmatic debate fundamentally resides; whereas the positivist believes in an objective truth, the interpretivist assumes the real world is mediated by human beings' social construction of it (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Schutt, 2003). Critical realist ontology allows the researcher to use qualitative data to understand actors' own explanations of such underlying structures and their causal impact (Argent, 2005; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Critical realism refers to transcendental realism that rejects methodological individualism and universal claims of truth and recognises the reality of the natural order, and the events and discourses of the social world (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Critical realists acknowledge that there is a distinction between the objects that they are researching, and the terms that are used to account for, and describe, these phenomena (Bohman, 1991). By implication, and in accordance with research by Bhaskar (1975; 1989), critical realists readily admit that their explanations of phenomena are theoretical, and generate theories, which

account for the mechanisms, processes and structures of the patterns that are observed (Bryman, 2004).

This philosophical stance appears particularly relevant to sociological, cultural and educational research, with its emphasis on observation and data collection, and the interpretivistic view, emphasising subjectivity in interpretation and learning rather than prediction. Critical realists hold knowledge that this world is socially constructed, and endorse the view that society is made up of feeling and thinking human beings (assume that there is a real world out there), and that their interpretations of the world must be studied (Kinchelo, 2001; Pring, 2004).The use of critical realist ontology allows the researcher to use quantitative and qualitative data to understand actors' own explanations of such underlying structures and their causal impact. Based on these observations and the works of Roy Bhaskar and Rom Harre which are well associated with this approach and support the use of both qualitative and quantitative inquiry, critical realism has been adopted as the methodological framework for this research study.

The following sub-section considers the role of reflexivity within this area of research, in particular within the realms of questionnaires, semi-structured interview approaches and focus group sessions as well as in research analysis more generally.

3.4 Introduction to reflexivity

Work by Guba and Lincoln (1994) indicates the importance of maintaining a critical perspective on what the ideal of an 'objective' viewpoint might be, thus leaving room for a broad array of implications to arise from such criticisms. However, within the realms of this thesis, focus will be given to the importance of context and reflexivity. In Guba and Lincoln's (1994) review, critical realism was a prominent paradigm researched and is of great relevance to this thesis, as it focuses on the contextual nature of knowledge gathering, including aspects such as gender, ethnicity and culture, alongside social, political and economic factors as well as differing levels of realities (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). This stance addresses the contextual and interactive nature of a methodology that is the transactional nature of research, and the existence of relationships between the researcher and

participators (Israel et al, 1998). In view of this, a reflection upon the conditions in and through which this research was conducted in order to evaluate the results is called for.

3.4.1 Reflexivity within this research

In reviewing aspects of reflexivity and the fact that it is believed to be a valuable and necessary aspect of current research approaches (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995; Pain & Francis, 2003), the researcher was concerned with acquiring and demonstrating professional competence in identifying and gathering data. Particular emphasis was put on the relationship between theory and method, analysis, meanings and context, replication, comparison, about collecting data over time and at varied levels of organisation, as well as about the values and impact of the research in line with its original purpose.

Prior to the data gathering stages, the researcher become acquainted with the three organisations (Fight for Peace; From Boyhood to Manhood Foundation; KidGloves) through various pre-research visits which were organised with the managers beforehand. The aim of this was to meet the participants and educators that the study would involve, and become familiar with the three distinct research settings. The researcher found that the best way to understand this particular demographic group (young Black men) was to become immersed into their world and gain the subjects' trust and rapport, this was achieved through observing their interactions within the organisations' settings, and essentially learning about the culture that they existed within whilst they were at the organisation.

In addition to this, the researcher became a part of the culture and used the existent knowledge gained with regards to this particular subculture to obtain rich data, this included dressing 'street' during interview and focus group sessions and using informal English words and terminology to connect with the audience, and blend in with the young people for the purpose of the research. The payoff was immense as the researcher was able to gain more information about the subjects and their subculture, although the drawbacks meant that a lot of time, dedication and resources were required to enable immersion to take place (Crossman, 2014). Engagement and creating a sense of belief in the minds of these young men was the pinnacle point of this research study, as without their willingness to engage with

the researcher and believe in the value and possible impact of this particular research topic to both themselves and the Black community as a whole, then the data gathering process would be pointless.

In analysing the choice of research methods (questionnaires; semi-structured interview; focus group sessions), in terms of the how and why, it is important to note that the researcher made decisions in terms of the choices of methods based on combined elements such as the low educational attainment of the young men, volatile nature of the participants, sensitivity of subject area being researched and the purpose of the study.

In light of this, the researcher required the educators and leaders to fill out the self-completion questionnaires, as it was believed that a high majority of the young men would have found it difficult to write the answers by hand, as many had reading, spelling and grammar difficulties and had either completed mainstream education with English GCSE below a grade E, or not completed with a GCSE at all. In addition, the content of the questionnaire went through a logical order of topics: demographic /background information; delinquency patterns; neighbourhood and the city of London; aspirations and patterns of identification; advice and guidance; racial attitudes, organisations and approaches. Therefore the researcher made a judgement that eliciting such rich information would have required a combination of knowledge and experience, both of which the researcher believed would more likely have been accessible from individuals with vast experience within the youth sector, something that the young men did not possess.

Secondly, in justifying the use of semi-structured interviews with the educators and leaders, it was believed that due to the limited attention span of the young men, coupled with the amount of information that needed to be retrieved from each interview session, educators and leaders would be the most appropriate choice. Semi-structured interviews with educators and leaders also allowed room for more mature enquiry to be gained, alongside gaining insight and understanding of the mechanisms that enabled programmes and educators that used sport as a means of education for disengaged young Black men to achieve success, thus satisfying research objectives.

Lastly, the researcher felt that focus group sessions were more appropriate for the young Black men to participate in, as it created a sense of group unity and ethnic identity membership, due in part to the fact that the young people were able to sit together and answer questions cohesively when required. The focus group sessions also enabled participants to experience greater comfort and control within familiar settings, and allowed the researcher to view how the group interacted within the programme environment.

3.5 Mixed-methods strategy

The methodological strategy adopted for this research constitutes a mixed-methods triangulated approach. Both Gratton and Jones (2004) and Hussein (2009), refer to triangulation as the use of multiple means of data collection to explore a single phenomenon. Within the context of this study the logic of triangulation was used to compare the findings of the three phases of the research, which were questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and focus groups. Each is presented separately later in this section.

Within the field of social research, the use of mixed methods approaches, that is, utilising a combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods, is widely advocated (Argent, 2005; Bryman, 2008; Jackson & Mazzei, 2011; Jick, 1979; Schostak & Schostake, 2009). The mixing of qualitative and quantitative approaches has been identified as adding to the completeness of the research, with differing research methods allowing the strengths of one technique to compensate for the weaknesses of another (Argent, 2005; Bryman, 2008; Jick, 1979), thus, this multiple stance towards the research provides greater accuracy.

However, the complexities associated with relevant epistemological positions that underpin varying methodological stances mean that the use of a mixed methods approach should be undertaken with careful consideration (Blaikie, 2000; Creemer, Kyriakides & Sammons, 2010; Walliman, 2006). Indeed, the debate surrounding whether quantitative and qualitative methods can be combined is based on the view that the approaches are embedded in epistemological perspectives incompatible with one another (Guba & Lincoln, 2008; Hussein, 2009; Olsen, 2003, 2004a; 2004). Therefore, if one was to collect questionnaire data as well as participant observation, Bryman (2008) argues that this does not represent an

assimilation of different research methods as the two methods constitute dissimilar epistemological views regarding the comprehension of social reality.

In accordance with Smith and Heshusius (1986), the integration of research methods from different philosophical perspectives ignores the principles and assumptions associated with research philosophies that underpin relevant research methods. However, a number of authors have stated that the differences that exist between paradigms are not as great as they were initially reported, and that areas of commonality exist (Harriss, 2002; Olsen, 2004). For, Bryman (2008, p.604) the argument of Smith and Heshusius (1986), that research methods are deeply embedded in epistemological paradigms', is *"very difficult to sustain"*, as he believes that quantitative and qualitative research methods have significant areas of *"overlap and commonality between them"* (Bryman, 2008, p.604). Indeed, Bryman (2008) and Onwuebuzie and Johnson (2006) endorse the amalgamation of methods from dissimilar epistemological positions to mutually assist one another in the research strategy.

However, the mixing of data types is only suitable if a common epistemological method can be sustained (McEvoy & Richards, 2006). Indeed, Grix (2010) argues that these distinctive paradigms identified may leave out important variables that could assist in methodological approaches within various research contexts. Grix (2010) thus suggests that a philosophical approach that goes beyond the rigidity of these approaches is required. This leads to the debate surrounding the philosophical approach to research of critical realism, which will now be justified.

Critical realists seek to combine both qualitative and quantitative approaches, as despite their differences in philosophies, McEvoy and Richards, (2003) state that there is a degree of flexibility within critical realism in the way that methodologies are used. For Lawson (2003), methodologies should be utilised as and when appropriate, with the most effective method being to integrate a combination of both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. This view is supported by an array of other researchers including Angus and Clarke (2012); Harriss (2002); McEvoy and Richards (2003; 2006); Yeung (1997). Consequently, because a critical realist approach embodies a multi-layered view of social reality that is structured into three domains (the empirical, actual and the real), then a research methodology that entails the usage of both qualitative and quantitative enquiry is best equipped for uncovering those

deep structures which cannot be easily observed (Creemer, Kyriakides & Sammons, 2010; Danermark, 2002; Olsen, 2009; Yeung, 1997).

Focus group discussions and interviews can illuminate participants' perceptions and own understandings of these structures and causal influences which could not have been uncovered through pre-determined questionnaires (Kumar, 2005; Mingers, 2004; Schostak, 2002). On the other hand, quantitative methods have been identified as productive in establishing statistical associations in the exploratory phase of research whilst qualitative methods focus on thoughts, feeling and perceptions that people might have on particular topic areas. Theories and understanding can then be constructed at the 'real' level to identify the structures that support social phenomena, as identified by Argent (2005).

The mixing of methodologies holds some strength within a critical realist methodological framework; this is based on the relevance that quantitative and qualitative research techniques can complement one another to give a more complete picture of the research aim and thus allows for greater accuracy (Jick, 1979). Although some authors reject a mixed methods approach for the reasons identified above, including the associations of different methods with dissimilar epistemological paradigms and their assumed incommensurability (Leinenger, 1994; Guba & Lincoln, 2008) and the idea that quantitative and qualitative methods are incompatible with one another, other authors (Gratton & Jones, 2006; Bryman, 2008) believe that an integration of methods can produce a research methodology which highlights the significant contributions of both. Mixed methods approaches have augmented in the field of sports studies in recent years, with qualitative findings being used to support and explain quantitative data and vice versa (Gratton & Jones, 2004). Henderson *et al* (1999, cited in Gratton & Jones, 2006) illustrated the potential of mixed method approaches in complementing one another during data collection stages;

> *"Descriptive statistics do not tell the meanings of physical activity. In depth interviews alone are not necessarily representative of the sample. Together, however, linking the data gives a bigger picture of some of the issues..."* (p.253)

Therefore, in accordance with the present study's aims and objectives, it would be consistent to follow a multiple methods approach, where all three methods investigate the same

phenomenon, for example, mixing survey data with interview and focus group discussions, which is a more pronounced form of triangulation (Olsen, 2004). For this particular study, quantitative methods will be used to collect relatively simple numerical data and a range of question types *(including likert-scale and rating-scale)*, whereas the qualitative methods will be used to collect rich data from the sample *(through interviews and focus group discussions)* (Sociology, 2012). In this sense quantitative and qualitative methods can be deployed to jointly address the research questions concerning the same phenomena (Gratton & Jones, 2004).

Many authors including Cresswell, Fetters and Ivankova (2004); Greene, Caracelli and Graham (1989), and Hammersley (1996) propose a number of purposes for mixed-method evaluation and research, including facilitation, complementarity and triangulation. Facilitation is a strategy that employs one particular research strategy in order to aid the alternate research strategy (Hammersley, 1996; Hurmerinta-Peltomaki & Nummela, 2006). Complementarity can be utilised in order to ascribe research strategies to different objectives of the research project, findings can therefore be enhanced by cross checking the data with one another (Greene, Caracelli and Graham, 1989; Hammersley, 1996). Triangulation refers to the method of corroborating findings to support their validity and reliability (Cresswell, Fetters & Ivankova, 2004; Hammersley, 1996). Findings can therefore be enhanced by cross checking the data with one another, providing a suitable means through which to give a more complete answer to the research questions (Bryman, 2008; Cresswell, Fetters & Ivankova, 2004). Therefore, the triangulation procedure is a pertinent method to address the objectives within the present study.

In summary, the rationale for critical realism as a methodological framework for an exploratory study of this nature, and as an aid to the adoption of a multiple methods approach, is embedded in the acknowledgment that by forming a third stream between positivism and post-structuralism, known as the antipositivist movement (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005), the relevance of critical realism to the social science researcher becomes more pronounced. Its adoption within the context of this particular study will enable the researcher to re-emphasise the directional relationship between ontology and epistemology assumptions within this study. For example, the realist view of being in the ontological domain, while also acknowledging that the relativism of knowledge is socially and historically conditioned in the epistemological domain as defined by both Bhaskar (1978) and Mingers (2000).

This clearly facilitates mixed-methods inquiry of the educative role of sport for high-risk and disengaged young Black men youth - a multi-disciplinary area of research that requires a qualitative and quantitative investigation in order to meet the research objectives. In accordance with Archer *et al.*, (1998) and Singleton, Straits and Straits (1993), critical realism facilitates this approach by conceptualising a stratified ontology of reality, which allows the researcher to generate findings at an empirical and real level, by providing the researcher with specific philosophical assumptions, and then generating theories to explain these findings. Each data collection method will now be presented in relation to the specific research objective it is seeking to uncover.

3.5.1 Use of questionnaires

The use of questionnaires as a research technique is widely promoted in the exploratory stages of social science research (Blaikie, 2000; Silverman, 2005; Bryman, 2008). For Gratton and Jones (2004) and Bryman (2008), self-completion questionnaires offer a quantitative approach that is applicable to deriving data from large sample groups, the advantages lying in the method's ease of accessibility to populations (Gratton & Jones, 2004), a potential reduction in response bias that can be attributed to the attendance of the researcher (Cresswell, 2009) and finally, self-completion questionnaires can be completed at a time convenient to the participant, thus increasing the likelihood of response rate (Bryman, 2008).

Therefore, self-completion questionnaires were identified as an appropriate method of data collection for a study of this nature and as a means to gather shallow amounts of numerical data (Gratton & Jones, 2004). Significantly, questionnaire data allowed the researcher to gain accurate descriptive statistics from those involved in the study. Two types of question styles were used within the actual questionnaire; these consisted of likert-scale questions and rating-scale questions (see appendix 1). This method allowed research objectives to be met, as the combination of closed, likert and pre-coded questions enabled respondents to provide basic demographic information, in addition to reporting detail on various topics that are currently affecting young Black men.

The order of the questions within the survey was an important factor and therefore the researcher grouped the topics accordingly, as this order established both the questionnaires logic and flow (Babbie, 1973; Bradburn, Sudman & Wansink, 2004; Dillman, 2000; Fanning, 2005). In accordance with research by Dilman (2000), cognitive influences which relate to how respondents may have answered and rationalised their questionnaire responses was also taken into consideration by the researcher during planning stages, whereby an anchoring effect was adopted (respondents answered preceding questions to establish direction for the questions that followed) (Dilman, 2000).

The content of the questionnaire was grouped in a way that was logical to the flow and purpose of the survey (Dilman, 2000). This was achieved by grouping the content of the questionnaire in the following order: demographic/background information; delinquency patterns; neighbourhood and the city of London; aspirations and patterns of identification; advice and guidance; racial attitudes, organisations and approaches. By grouping the content of the questionnaire, the researcher enabled respondents to focus and organise their thoughts and reactions, and keep logical ordering to ease the cognitive burden (Dilman, 2000; Fanning, 2005). In addition, by ensuring that respondents answered a series of questions related to the same underlying phenomena, respondents were able to gain more understanding of that construct (Knowles, 1975).

The questionnaire was categorised into sections, with closed questions throughout. This technique was based on approach and survey recommendations whereby this approach eliminated the use of complex questions at the initial stage of the questionnaire. No start or finish dates were enforced by the researcher, and envelopes were provided for the return of questionnaires, in an attempt to increase the probability of response.

The use of closed-ended questions would facilitate a more structured format during the initial stage, meaning that answers could be completed quickly and direct comparisons between respondents' answers could be made (Gratton & Jones, 2006). The researcher was also aware that the questions should follow a logical format, where similar questions were grouped into themes to ease data analysis.

3.5.1.1 Questionnaires: data analysis

Quantitative data comprises data gathered from the questionnaires. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the relatively simple amount of quantitative data gathered from the questionnaires. The researcher ended up with twenty (n=20) collected questionnaires from educators and leaders from the various sport-based organisations. Among those three had so many unclear or missing answers that the researcher decided that they were not rewarding for the study, leaving a new total of seventeen (n=17). All answers from the questionnaire were entered into Excel and graphs created. Each question had answering options and the researcher coded every option into a number *(for example in the column indicating sex, '1' would substitute male and '2' would substitute female)*.

3.5.2 Use of semi-structured interviews

Semi structured interviews were conducted over a two month period. Interviews were conducted with the educators and leaders *(these included sports coaches, sports volunteers, programme managers, youth mentors, programme directors)* (n=12). Interviews comprised an outline that encouraged an expression of ideas, and perceptions related to this particular topic area, which were topics which other researchers had underlined as influential on the educative role of sport for the demographic group that the educators worked with via the intervention programmes. The semi structured interviews were guided by the researcher, who followed an interview guide (see appendix 2) that highlighted questions and prompts that would maintain conversation and participation interaction.

The semi structured interviews were conducted at the organisations' premises or at another location convenient to the interviewee. The choice of interview location was left to each participant's discretion, as it was envisaged that this would allow participants to choose an environment where they would experience greater comfort and control of their behaviour (Bryman, 2008). With the participants' consent, interviews were digitally recorded using an Olympic Digital Voice Recorder VN-5500PC, and each lasted between 45 and 60 minutes. All participants were offered the chance to view transcripts following the interview to

comment upon potential discrepancies (member checking), although none requested to do so.

Interviews can range from more quantitative approaches such as the structured questionnaire interview approach to the unstructured, qualitative approach where respondents are free to answer under unconstrained conditions (Cresswell, 2003). The advantage of the interview technique is in the method's ability to generate a more insightful account of the interviewee's subjective experience (Kendall, 2008). Yin (1994) sees interviews as capable of providing valid data from the interviewee's own perspective, which is relevant to research which seeks to elicit information related to social phenomena (Bryman, 2008).

Moreover, interviews can allow unexpected data to emerge that may not have appeared through more structured, quantitative techniques (Gratton & Jones, 2004; Bryman, 2008) and establish inferences behind participant behaviour (Yin, 1994) through exploring the points of view of research subjects (Miller & Glassner, 1997). The subjective nature of interview techniques corresponds with the critical realist epistemology that the world is socially constructed. For DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006), semi structured interviews *"allow the interviewer to delve deeply into social and personal matters"* (p.314), thus providing insights into the participants' perceptions which allow inferences to be made with regard to how these lead to social phenomena (Cresswell, 2008). Data is conceptual and theoretical, and is based on the lived experiences and occurrences of interviewees (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). As a consequence, the interview process is based on the interviewees' own experience that is the most relevant knowledge of the phenomenon under investigation.

3.5.3 Use of focus group discussions

Focus group discussions were conducted informally over three separate days with different groups. The focus groups comprised a thematic outline that encouraged an expression of ideas and experiences concerning anti-social behaviour patterns, delinquency patterns, culture, social networks, social integration and sports participation, as these were topics that

previous research has underlined as influential on Black British youths' progression and are key elements to creating sustainable intervention strategies (Eling, De Knop & Knoppers, 2001; Holborn & Haralambos, 2008; Hartmann 2003; Hellison & Wright, 2003). The focus groups were guided by the researcher, who followed a prepared guide (see appendix 3) that highlighted questions and prompts that would maintain conversation and group interaction.

The focus groups were conducted at each organisation as it was envisaged that this would allow participants to experience greater comfort and control within familiar settings, and developing a structure that allows all participant's ideas to be heard (Bryman, 2004; Rowan, 2014). Moreover, this allowed the researcher to view how the group interacted in the familiar programme environment. Focus groups were completed over a period of two weeks at three different organisations. Firstly, with the Fight for Peace group ($n=5$), then the Boyhood to Manhood group ($n=5$) and lastly, with the Kid Gloves group ($n=5$). With the participants' consent, focus groups were digitally recorded using an Olympic Digital Voice Recorder VN-5500PC and lasted no longer than 45 minutes. All participants were offered the chance to view transcriptions following the focus group interviews to comment upon potential discrepancies, although no participants requested this (refer to appendix 4 and 5 for example transcripts).

3.5.4 Semi-structured interviews and focus groups discussions: data analysis

Following the approach of Bryman and Burgress (1993) and Burnard (1991; 1994), a systematic method of analysing the interview data and focus groups discussions was adopted; this consisted of breaking text down into meaning units, developing a category system and grouping together ideas that had underlying similarities (Burnard, 1994). In this sense, it is similar to the process of interpretative phenomenological analysis and content analysis. Each transcript was worked through and the text divided up into meaning units *(this was a discrete word/phrase, sentence or series of sentences which encompassed one idea or related to a set of perceptions)* (MacQueen & Neidig; 2003; Mostyn, 1985).

The purpose of this was to try and understand the content and complexity of those meanings which were not transparently available - the researcher had to obtain the meaning through a

sustained engagement with the text and a process of interpretation. Once all the meaning units within the transcripts had been separated out, the researcher looked through the text to try and find meaning units that grouped together, and wrote down words that summarised the themes that were discussed in the focus group discussions, as outlined by Burnard, (1994). The headings that were written down were the categories under which the meaning units were grouped. Descriptive categories/labels were used in line with work by Melia (1987) and Morrison (1992) *(i.e. promoting bonding between youths; positive impact of sport; motivated to do sport).*

The purpose of developing a category system was to ensure that all of the meaning units within the focus group and interview texts were accounted for. Once a sufficient category system that was able to describe all meaning units had been developed, each category was allocated a letter *(i.e. a= practical life issues; b = educational concerns)* (see appendix 6). Units that could not be defined within the system were left until all other units were allocated letters, then the unclassified passages of textual data were re-read and explored again (Burnard, 1994). To account for the units that did not fit into the existing ones, new categories were developed.

3.5.5 The transcription process

During the early stages of the research study, the researcher made the decision that the process of transcribing would be conducted solely by the researcher. This allowed the researcher to become immersed in the data, and therefore was seen as a useful step in the process of interpreting the 'voices' of the participants (Hancock, Ockceford & Windridge, 2009; Hansen, 2006). As the researcher became more familiar with the data, terminology and language contained within the semi-structured interviews and focus group sessions, both unnecessary mistakes and prolonged transcribing periods were greatly reduced.

3.6 Background: response rates and sampling technique

Response rates refer to the number of participants who have completed questionnaires or answered interviews and/or focus group questions divided by the numbers of participants who were originally asked to participate, this is usually expressed as a percentage (Department of Health and Human Services, 2010). Academically, failure to achieve an adequate response rate can limit the usefulness of the results obtained, with various aspects such as evaluation of design, the use of the results and standard practice being taken into account when looking into what constitutes an adequate response rate (Boyd, 2002; Gratton & Jones, 2004; Department of Health and Human Services, 2010).

In this study a purposive sampling technique was used to target members of the three research phases (questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and focus group sessions), as advocated by Smith and Stewart (2001). This yielded n=17 survey responses and n=12 interview and n=15 focus group responses. Patton (1990; 2002) supports this technique and indicates the strength that purposive sampling holds by stating that *"the power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting information-rich cases for sampling for the study in depth"* (Patton, 1990, p.169). Therefore, the aspiration to use this technique and gather rich data accounts through the use of questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and focus groups was achieved by the researcher.

3.6.1 Response rate: Questionnaires

A purposive sampling approach was used to select the educators and leaders (*delivering the sport-based intervention programmes),* based on their expert knowledge about youth crime, risk behaviours services and programmes within London, policies, laws and norms affecting young Black men in London. Those who took part in the questionnaire phase of the research included sports coaches, sports volunteers, youth mentors, programme coordinators and managers and programme directors who were purposively selected based on the aforementioned characteristics.

The original questionnaire sample consisted of educators and leaders from various sport-based organisations. This sample came from the selection criteria described above. At the baseline data collection, a total of twenty (n=20) educators and leaders completed the questionnaires. Of those completed, questionnaires were used from n=17 respondents as three questionnaires had so many unclear or missing answers that the researcher decided that they were not rewarding for the study, leaving a successful response rate of 85%. Of n=17 participants, n=9 were representatives of Fight for Peace, n=6 were from Kid Gloves, and n=2 represented the organisation From Boyhood to Manhood (*see table 4.3.1.1 and table 4.3.1.2*).

Concerns about the validity of these discrepancies are allayed by the assertion that n=17 is an ample number from which to draw inferences due to the focused nature of sample group and the fact that all participants were guaranteed to be either employed or volunteering within a sport-based intervention programme in London (Fletcher & Byers, 2008; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003).

3.6.2 Response rate: Semi-structured interviews

Within this study the educators and leaders (*delivering the sport-based intervention programmes*) were selected based on their expert knowledge about youth crime, risk behaviours services and programmes within London, policies, laws and norms affecting young Black men in London. Those who took part in the second phase of the research included sports coaches, sports volunteers, youth mentors, programme coordinators and managers and programme directors who were also obtained using a purposive technique based on the aforementioned characteristics.

Semi structured interviews were conducted over a two month period. Interviews were conducted with the educators and leaders *(these included sports coaches, sports volunteers, programme managers, youth mentors, programme directors)* (n=12). The interview sample was sourced from the original n=20 educators and leaders combined from all three organisations. Interviews were conducted with n=12 of these for a successful response rate

of 60%. Of *n*=12 participants, *n*=7 were representatives of Fight for Peace, *n*=4 were from Kids Gloves, and *n*=1 represented the organisation From Boyhood to Manhood.

Concerns related to validity are dispelled by the assertion that five interviewees are sufficient to gain consensual views from the educators and leaders representing the three sport-based intervention programmes in line with research by Fletcher and Byers (2008), this particular research study had more than double the recommended amount (*n*=12). The researcher conducted all of the interviews, due to their semi-structured and exploratory nature it was important to maintain consistency and rapport with participants, therefore it was deemed unwise to employ another interviewer.

3.6.3 Response rate: Focus group discussions

The youth participants for this study were accordingly included depending on their race (Black); sex (male) and if they were high-risk and/or disengaged (prescribed set of negative dynamics). When recruiting focus group participants, the researcher developed sampling frames based on the information gleaned from the key informant interviews with the educators and leaders previously. In terms of the inclusionary criteria a further determinant was geographic location to ensure that all participants who took part in the study were solely selected from sport-based intervention programmes within the London area.

The focus groups were conducted at each organisation as it was envisaged that this would allow participants to experience greater comfort and control within familiar settings (Bryman, 2004). Moreover, this allowed the researcher to view how the group interacted within the programme setting. Focus groups were completed over a period of two weeks at the three different organisations. Firstly, with the Fight for Peace group (*n*= 5), then the Boyhood to Manhood group (*n*=5) and lastly, with the Kid Gloves group (*n*= 5), for a successful response rate of 100%.

Concerns regarding validity are allayed by the assertion that *n*=15 is an adequate number from which to gain consensual views from the young Black men and draw relevant

inferences, due to the focused nature of purposeful sampling and the fact that all participants were guaranteed to be Black, male, high-risk and disengaged (*not engaging with mainstream society*), and participating in a sport-based intervention programme within the London area (Fletcher & Byers, 2008; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Lastly, the successful gathering of data from hard to reach sample populations that was rich, varied and purposeful was a positive assertion that the adoption of purposive sampling was the most relevant technique for this type of research study, as advocated by Patton (1990; 2002).

3.7 Limitations

Carby (1997) illustrates the constraints of conducting research with minority groups, arguing that it is difficult for outsiders to capture the experiences of minorities. Consequently, as the researcher was not only from a different cultural and social background to the group, but a different gender as well, the participants may have been reluctant in expressing their full opinions to the researcher in such a short amount of time when trust between the two is still limited. Due to this, it is possible that there are limitations with regard to the extent to which Black Males' experiences within educative sports programmes may have been revealed.

With regards to data collection, it is undoubted that further interviews and focus groups sessions would have elicited a greater quantity of responses and data, participants were questioned on their decision to decline interviews and focus group meetings, with the most frequent answer being 'lack of time'. This could be contributed to either the considerable time pressures that these individuals already face, in terms of the frequency at which they play and compete in sport and physical activity, or feeling uncomfortable when issues of race and ethnicity come up in discussions, and not being willing to temper feelings during data collection stages so that European individuals will not feel uncomfortable, which a number of participants noted due to the fact that topics raised during both semi-structured interview and focus groups sessions touched on sensitive issues for this particular demographic group (The Black community as a whole).

Initially, the researcher aimed to carry out focus group sessions with educators and leaders. However, the initial focus group received a low turnout of participants, and the task of

obtaining a high number of respondents at one time all from the same project was found to be too difficult. Consequently, semi-structured interviews were considered a more appropriate method due to the convenience they offer to the participant in selecting an appropriate individual based time. Although the researcher acknowledges that focus groups offer greater depth of discussion through the interaction and generation of ideas amongst group members, and are considered less artificial than other data collection methods, as by emphasising group interaction (a common element of everyday life), it diminishes the gathering of data in an unnatural setting (Bryman, 2004), when working with larger groups (for example, *n*=17 educators and leaders), semi-structured interviews and questionnaires offered a greater strength of data to be obtained due to interviews being conducted one-on-one with participants.

Moreover, semi-structured interviews have been identified as a more perceptive approach than other qualitative approaches (Gratton & Jones, 2004) due to their ability to elicit information that respondents may be unwilling to provide during focus groups (Bryman, 2008), this allows for unexpected data to emerge through participants revealing insights into their actions and behaviour. Furthermore, Bryman (2004) proposes that there can be an overemphasis on conducting too many focus groups if the researcher can anticipate what the next group is going to say, and subsequently the researcher felt the final number of focus groups was sufficient in answering the research questions that focused on the young men's views.

3.8 Introduction to reliability and validity

An important part of social science research is the quantification of human behaviour and measuring this behaviour through the use of various instruments, which researchers must ensure are valid and reliable (Fletcher & Byers, 2008). Within this study issues of reliability and validity are significant to ensuring that the research study remains accurate. Reliability is fundamental to ensuring the consistency of measures remains stable, whilst validity refers to the issues of assuring research techniques measure the phenomena under investigation (Bryman, 2008). These issues differ depending on the particular research method being utilised. This section of the thesis will provide both an overview and a critical account of reliability and validity for this particular study.

3.8.1 Pilot study

The method's appropriateness to measuring the phenomena under investigation was also ensured through a pilot testing with potential sport educative organisations representative of the main sample population, and validating the findings with participants. Questionnaires were distributed to leaders within n=2 organisations (Pro-active London and The Prisoners Education Trust) who were contacts of the researcher. These organisations were based in London and were comparable to the sample used in the main study. The pilot testing confirmed that the results of the questionnaire corresponded with the sport leaders' subjective perception on the educative role of sport for high-risk and disengaged young Black men in London area. Validation of qualitative data was maintained through respondent validation. On completion of semi-structured interviews and focus groups discussions, participants were debriefed and summarised on the findings and accuracy of the session. Its application to this study means that participants were offered the chance to view transcriptions of the focus groups to validate what had been said and to make any further additional comments.

3.8.2 Reliability

Reliability of the questionnaire was maintained through processes consistent with Bryman's (2008) guidelines on maintaining the reliability of quantitative research. Inter-observer reliability was preserved through disseminating the questionnaire to n=2 leading pilot organisations within the field of education, sport, cultural and health research within London (these included Pro-active London and The Prisoners Education Trust), to provide feedback on the questionnaire prior to data collection. This ensured the questionnaire was not based exclusively on the subjective judgement of the researcher (Bryman, 2008). Internal reliability of the questionnaire was maintained to confirm its accuracy (Gratton & Jones, 2004). This was followed through recommendations from members of the supervisory team to ensure the questionnaire was accurate.

Internal reliability of qualitative methods was assured through cross checking coded transcripts with the project supervisor to neutralise the concerns of over subjectivity of the

researcher, which can lead to the misinterpretation or over reporting of phenomena (Onwuebuzie & Johnson, 2006). In addition to this, member checking was made available; this process gave participants the opportunity to look over transcripts if required, which added rigour to the research process. Bryman (2008) alludes to the issue of external reliability within qualitative research, stating that although it is complex to deploy during qualitative studies due to the difficulties of replicating the social environment under differing conditions, it can best be maintained through the adoption of similar methodological approaches from comparable studies (for example Brookhart, & Durkin, 2003; Lai & Waltman, 2008). This included using an interview protocol akin to that of Jenschke (2005) and the Mentor Research Institute (2009), which seeks to understand reasons for youth disengagement and how intervention programmes can foster positive youth development.

Additionally, the mixed method strategy allowed the potential over-reporting of themes via inappropriately emergent individual anecdotes to be countered, therefore the researcher had to ensure that the experiences of both the youth and educators was captured correctly, using text in general and words and phrases through the use of a category system akin to Burnard (1994) and Onwuebuzie and Johnson (2006). Use of a mixed-methods strategy also allowed triangulation to occur. This process of triangulation offered the potential to support or refute findings of each of the three research methods. Findings of qualitative research were corroborated and thus strengthened using this approach (Bohman, 1991), which arguably enhances the reliability of this research study.

3.8.3 Validity

Validity refers to the legitimacy of data analysis and research presented. The ability for the research to represent the truth objectively rather than subjectively is thus paramount to determining the validity of the study. However, it is argued that both qualitative and quantitative methods have different procedures for the testing of validity (Kirk & Miller, 1986) due to the differing paradigms that quantitative and qualitative inquiry are located within (Guba &Lincoln, 1989).

Bryman (2008) proposes a number of categories of validity in quantitative research. Within this research study a variety of validity categories were adopted to assure the validity of the research techniques. Face validity refers to the methods' appropriateness to what the research aims to achieve. This was ensured through the process of pilot testing with n=2 employees of Pro-active London and The Prisoners Education Trust, leading sport and educational intervention programmes who were contacts of the researcher, and validating the findings with participants. Questionnaires were given out to people within those organisations based in London and were comparable to the sample group within the main study. The use of pilot testing confirmed that that the results obtained (via the questionnaire) were comparable with the educators and leaders perceptions on the current level of disengagement facing young Black men and the educative role of sport within the restoration process.

Further, and in accordance with Bryman (2008) and Gratton and Jones (2005), the questionnaire was distributed prior to data collection to members of the sample population, which in this case was the sport educators and leaders to critically assess the appropriateness, and that the research method adequately measured what was intended. Hence, the researcher initially confirmed with the director and/or manager of each organisation where participants were purposively chosen that the topic areas and questions were sufficient to the study, as participants can become frustrated if they feel questions are irrelevant to the aims of the project. Also asking irrelevant questions wastes people's time and this can be seen as unethical. This is an approach Bryman (2008) and Silverman (2004) believe to be essential to validation of measures.

Discriminant validity was adopted to compare the measure of results with results developed through differing methods, this was utilised through comparing coded semi-structured interview data with questionnaire scores (Carless, 2004). The data thus provided criteria against which to compare interview data to determine the validity of the questionnaire in measuring the educators and leaders perceptions of young Black men and the prominent issues that are currently affecting them.

Furthermore, problems relating to validity were counteracted through the adoption of a purposive sampling technique which enabled the gathering of information-rich data from

participants that had a vested interest. Although response rates were skewed slightly across each research phase, 85% (questionnaires), 60% (semi-structured interviews) and 100% (focus groups sessions) respectively, the first-hand account of purposive sampling overcame this discrepancy, as the researcher was still able to gain rich data from a population (young Black men) which is often hard to access, with the use of a reflexive approach on a practical level adding value to the data gathering stages (Cornwall & Jewkes, 1995; Pain & Francis, 2003).

Lastly, validity was assured through the rigorous design and choice of research instruments (questionnaires, semi-structured interview questions, focus group outlines) that captured the phenomenon in question and the piloting of this, the coding process that assured that context was not lost in what participants said, the continual referral to the array of interview transcripts during the data analysis stage to ensure correct interpretation, and the display of a positive correlation between data analysis and the conclusions drawn at the end of the study (Fletcher & Byers, 2008; Ritchie & Lewis, 2003).

3.9 Ethical issues, confidentiality and consent

Ethical approval was applied for and subsequently approved by the Life Sciences Ethics Committee with Delegated Authority at the University of Hertfordshire. All protocols and methods in the study were carried out in accordance with required ethical guidelines under Project Number: LSGP2/09/090.

Throughout the data collection and analysis, confidentiality was ensured by an allocation of a code for the participants known only to the researcher, and all names were kept anonymous. Electronically stored data, including recordings of focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews, were password protected and these were also only known by the researcher. Informed consent was obtained verbally and through the completion of a signed subject briefing form from each participant prior to the research gathering stages of this investigation. All participants were made aware of their rights to withdraw from the study at any times, and/or to choose not to answer certain questions without explanation to the researcher.

3.10 Management plan

Throughout the duration of this study, the researcher acted as project coordinator, and structured the workload accordingly. Questionnaire, semi-structured interview and focus group analysis were all performed by the researcher, under the direction of the project supervisors. Throughout the project, interim dates and targets were developed, and monitored by the researcher to assure that all deadlines were met effectively.

3.11 Considerations of the study

Due to the sensitivity regarding the target group and the research project, difficulties were encountered locating organisations and participants willing to express and share their experiences (Black males, anti-social behaviour patterns, and knife and gun crime trends). Initially some umbrella organisations felt that the content of the study might raise feelings of 'anger' amongst some Black youth enrolled on their educative programmes, and thus, declined from the study at the last minute. Therefore, although the researcher acknowledges that a greater amount of participants from different educative sport and community projects would have enhanced the amount of data gathered, in reality only a small number of organisations agreed to partake in the study, due to the sensitive nature of the research area.

3.12 Summary of methodological considerations

This chapter has identified the methodological strategy adopted in this study. The rationale for the adoption of critical realist ontology and epistemology were provided in the context of the overall aim of the research area. This included the identification and relevance of critical realism to the educational research field. Use of a mixed-methods strategy was justified as a means of strengthening findings, enabling triangulation of qualitative and quantitative research methods, which subsequently strengthened the findings. All the data collection techniques were discussed and justified. The chapter also discussed participant selection and data analysis. Finally, the ethical issues related to this study and the researcher

management plans were outlined. The findings of the research study will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

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RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

The study aimed to investigate the role of sport in educating and reaching out to high-risk and disengaged at risk young Black men in London and thus sought to understand whether 'sport builds character' principles can effectively be used to provide an alternative model of education for Black male youth in London who are disengaged from mainstream society. In this section a justification for the order of the themes is firstly provided, followed by the results from both stages of the research. The questionnaire results are presented separately from the interview and focus group data. It begins by presenting interview and focus group findings which comprised the main body of research within this particular study, although it should be noted that the questionnaires were conducted first in order to gather background information followed by interviews and focus groups (refer to appendices 1, 2 and 3). The questionnaire findings are then reported which were used to triangulate the findings of the qualitative research. Results within the interview and focus group section include a selection of direct quotations representative of the responses collected by participants, followed by a brief summary.

4.2 Results: Semi-structured Interviews and Focus Group discussions

This section will present some of the themes and subthemes that emerged from the interview findings and focus group discussions, demonstrated through illustrative quotes and flowing exchanges. Data associated with each theme are presented under the framework of:

1. *Practical Life Issues*

2. *Educational Concerns*

3. *Social Bonding*

4. *Personal Development*

5. *Attitudinal Change*

6. *Role of Sport*

4.2.1 Justification of themes and order ranking

Initially, the process of looking for themes within the material gained from both the interviews and focus group discussions meant that the researcher had to paw through transcribed texts and mark them up with different colour pencils, identifying discrete words, key phrases, sentences or series of sentences which encompassed one idea or related to a set of perceptions (Ryan & Weisner, 1996; MacQueen & Neidig; 2003; Mostyn, 1985). Tesch (1990) indicates that this form of data condensation helps researchers concentrate on the core of what otherwise might be a mass of confusing data. Using this technique known as Key Words in Context (KWIC), the researcher identified key words or phrases and then systematically searched for them throughout the corpus of transcribed text *(obtained from interviews and focus groups sessions)* to find all instances of each key word or phrase. Each time the researcher found an instance, copy of it was noted as well as its immediate context in relation to the research questions. Within this research themes were generated by physically sorting word and phrase examples into piles of similar meanings which were then allocated a coding letter.

In this way, the adoption of thematic analysis allowed the researcher to focus on examining themes within the data, and organise the words and phrases, this went beyond just simply counting phrases and words within a specific text and moved more towards identifying implicit and explicit ideas within the data set. The use of coding meant that the researcher could develop themes within the raw data, thus allowing important words and phrases to be recognised and participant 'voices' interpreted. In this research the interpretation of these codes included adoption of word frequencies and identifying theme co-occurrence and similarities.

Once themes were discovered, the ranking exercise then took place and was paramount to ensuring that the generated themes were illustrated correctly within the structure of the

study. Within this research study the researcher ranked the themes using the funnel approach *(broad to specific)*. In this sense, the first three themes *(practical life issues; educational concerns; social bonding)* represented the macro-level *(societal)* impact of the findings, whereas the latter three *(personal development; attitudinal change; role of sport)* represented micro-level *(personal)* aspects gained from the research. Although the researcher acknowledges that the theme *(role of sport)* could have been represented at a macro-level because it is a central concept of the study, it is important to note that the role of sport was represented at a micro-level because for the young men within this study, personal *(micro)* level engagement in sport, in terms of it appealing and connecting with them occurs before wider conclusions on sport and its role can be adequately drawn.

These themes were presented in a logical manner, as the broader issues that emerged from the focus group discussions and interview findings were detailed first as they reflected the issues that currently affect disenfranchised young Black men. The themes that followed narrowed the various aspects that affected disengaged young Black men, with a clear focus on the actual real life impact and changes that sport had created for the young men within this research study, reflecting their perspective and the educators' viewpoint, thus strongly supporting the initial research enquiry.

4.2.2 Reflexivity in the thematic process

Given that mixed-methods research is inherently interpretive by nature, the biases, values and judgement that the researcher decides need to be explicitly acknowledged and understood in terms of how the data is presented within the thesis. It is this openness that is considered as a positive within the research community (Cresswell, 1994; Locke, 1987). Work by Cresswell (2007) supports the fact that the researcher should be acknowledged as the person that shapes the thesis and is a tool for collecting and analysing the data. Furthermore, reflecting on the data gathering and interpreting stages, the various decisions that were made in line with the research objectives are very important, as they show research transparency and assist with reliability and validity of the findings.

4.2.3 Theme one: Practical life issues

Practical life issues was identified as a significant theme discussed by interview and focus group participants. Subthemes included: (a) crime; (b) alienation; (c) historic and cultural circumstances; (d) family breakdown; (e) racism; (f) social exclusion and lack of access to opportunities; (g) long-term unemployment; (h) ethnic inequality;(i) unplanned pregnancies

Crime

The subtheme of crime became evident throughout interview and focus group transcription. A sports director explained some main triggers of criminal activity amongst young Black men within London:

> *"For many of the young men we have here at the academy [Fight For Peace] drugs was their trigger into the cycle of criminality, once they found drugs be it cannabis, heroin or crack that became their God, they committed street robberies to help fund their habit. A life of crime became the norm, well it had to be if they were [Black male youth] to survive the streets, it's tough out there, once these young adolescents become exposed in the street, many become curious. In many cases curiosity turns to fascination and awe of older and powerful figures that rule the street after midnight hours [12am onwards], and to some extent I'd say many enjoyed the buzz they got off repeat offending, it's a negative cycle". (Interview, #10)*

Focus group participants from Group #2 (KidGloves Boxing Academy) described the importance of postcode respect, as illustrated in the following exchange:

Male #1:   *It's all about being hard, well you [Black male youth] gotta [got to] be hard init [isn't it]*

Male #2:   *Can't be seen as weak brov [mate] and if it means you [Black male youth] gotta [got to] throw a few punches to show them [the police] who is boss, then you gotta [got to] do that init [isn't it]*

Male #3:   *For us [Black male youth] weakness is like showing like you care about others on the street, it's wrong, never show fear, how can you be seen to show fear*

Male #4:   *It's like we [Black male youth] are representing our code [postcode], imagine if man [a another youth] from west [west London] come over here to south [south London], we [youth] need to be strong, sort them out*

Male #5:   *I'd sort them out brov [mate], it's not a crime, it's self-defence, self-defence of my area, you get me brov [mate]*

Male #3:   *That's true, police see it as a crime, but we see these streets as our home, it's like would you let someone come into your house and steal your things without putting up a fight, no you wouldn't, well that's what this area is like to me, it's my home and my people [the youth] are my family*

Male#1:   *If the feds [police] call it a crime then cool, but I just call it looking after what's rightly mine.*

Alienation

The emotion of rejection was an underlying subtheme in focus group discussions. One youth from group #1 (fight for peace) discussed how rejection from both White and Black youth led to alienation from learning and academic progression:

> *"If you pick up a book or say you're going to the library after college the guys make jokes and say that you're gay and stuff like that. I lost so much street respect, I was pretty much isolated from my own people [other Black male youth] and bullied for wanting to learn and wanting to be intelligent, they'd say you coconut [a term referring to a person of colour who is White on the inside, acts White, has a White persons accent] and other horrible things. And then when I tried to make friends with the White guys, they rejected me. I was totally alienated from both the Blacks and the Whites, I felt like I was in no man's land, so I rejected academia and progression in*

my BTEC course at college and went back into the fold, back to the of the thuggish lifestyle with my fellow Black boys, I began drinking, smoking cigarettes and dating multiples girls, my life spiralled out of control, I felt pressured by my peers" (Group #1, male #2).

Another youth from group #3 (From Boyhood to Manhood Foundation) commented on how low levels of Black role models within the community has led to emotional deficits and feelings of rejection:

"I had no one, felt totally empty as a child, no one to kick a football around with and my mum worked three jobs so I rarely saw her. It was that lack of male presence that created that gap, I needed something, anything to fill it, you know like I was in pain and I felt rejected, so I started getting defiant at school and at home, I hated the world and I thought the world hated me. Since coming here I have realised that it wasn't my fault that my parents spilt, it wasn't my fault that I had no male role models around during my most productive years and I can really understand why we have so many issues within the Black community now, it's a simple ingredient that's missing, the recipe is imbalanced, not enough male and too much female, it equals a boyhood crisis which can lead to a manhood crisis if not tackled, we need more Black educators, more Black coaches and more Black dads that love their kids enough to stick around" (Group 3, Male #4).

Another youth mentor commented:

"Totally misunderstood by society and that's the main conflict we are having day-in day-out. Their [young Black youth] parents do not understand them and the education system does not understand them nor is it willing to learn how to understand them, so that solutions to these issues can found and found quickly" (Interview, #1).

Historic and Cultural Circumstances

Historic and cultural circumstances emerged as a subtheme of practical life issues. A sports volunteer commented on ways in which historical events have shaped Black male underachievement:

> *"Many of the Black males we see here really struggled with manhood prior to coming to us and getting involved in the programme we offer, many suffered from high levels of female headed households, never-married childbearing and high levels of divorce as a by-product of historic and cultural pathology. History in my opinion plays a big part in the high levels of underachievement that we see today, the oppression of slavery nearly 200 years ago is still very active and I believe that the stripping away of manhood all those years ago is having dramatic consequences on modern day underachievement within the Black community. Black men had to be men in a different historical and cultural context that varied radically from White males, in looking at historical records it is clear that, during slavery, Black men struggled to develop a sense of dignity and self-worth and were usually unconnected to their families. During slavery the men were stripped of their manliness and placed in a completely reliant role, all of their rewards came from absolute obedience of their masters, a situation that severely limits the need for achievement and progression"* (Interview, #3).

Family Breakdown

The subtheme of family breakdown became evident throughout qualitative data transcription. One sports coach described in an interview the benefit of the connexions strategy which is intertwined into the programme:

> *"Besides direct sporting activities, we also do activities that help these disaffected youth to get back on track through the connexion strategy. We look at things like*

family breakdown, which we believe is a multifaceted issue but one that is a key source of social destabilisation, and a drain on society's resources. We make every effort to use the principles of the connexions strategy such as a flexible curriculum that engages the youth, ensuring high-quality provision, targeting financial support and outreach work and guidance to help rebuild their outlook on life and mend their disengagement from their family network and support systems that might have been fragmented" (Interview, #6)

Racism

A recurrent subtheme of racism and ethnic inequality was identified by participants. One youth from group #1 (Fight for Peace Academy) described how prejudgements induce academic failure amongst Black youth:

"I'd say racism doesn't help the matter, it doesn't help us [young Black men] achieve academically at all, if anything it makes us fail. Like when we [young Black youths] go into a college classroom we already know that people [other students and teachers/lecturers] have stereotypes and prejudices against us. Other ethnic groups get racism of course but it's different for like Asians and stuff than it is for Black youth. Like for me I would always get anxious and feel stressed most days at college, I'd find it hard sometimes to fight against the system and increase my self-control and my self-belief so that I could keep my overall goals in mind and so that I could act appropriately, I dunno [don't know] I really struggled to take effective notes and keep a study schedule, it's just that feeling of knowing that your stigmatised by others, stigmatised by educators, it interferes with your ability to maintain focus in lesson. I always had self-doubt when I'd give in assignments even if I knew I'd done my best (Focus group #1, Male #3)

One sports mentor explained that time discrimination and educational training is a factor that heightens racism in both educational and work environments:

"It's very easy to take negative portrayals of these youth [Black youth] and believe it if you don't educate yourself in your spare time. But I reckon that the racism we see today, the sly racism, is partly due to the fact that many old school teachers and managers within mainstream society get on better with little moulds of themselves and they have done for years. They're not quite sure how to deal with the person who doesn't fit into that, so they deal with the students or work colleagues they are comfortable with. Many teachers these days do not have much time on their hands between marking and lesson delivery, they just don't have the time or energy to think how the other person will fit in, so it's in a way a lack of time discrimination, they don't have the time or educational training to effectively teach students who don't fit into their little box" (Interview, #4)

Social exclusion and lack of access to opportunities

Social exclusion emerged as a subtheme of practical life issues. A youth poignantly described his outrage with regards to the amount of Black males being excluded from educational settings:

"By excluding me from secondary school when I was young they took away my ability to learn in a structured setting, they didn't respect my legal right to education. From then I went bad, I was so bored at home that I just started hanging around with the older boys on the estate when my mum was at work. It makes me well mad, because it always happens, Black boys get excluded and White boys don't, even if we are both disruptive the Black guy always takes the hard knock" (Focus group #2, male #2)

One sports coach described in an interview that youths that embarked on their programme automatically had access to a pool of opportunities:

"The project and sports we do here is very important because it takes young people off the streets and occupies their free time, the young Black men that come to us are

hard to reach and lack motivation, but we give them hope again and breakdown any barriers they might have to learning. Most of the time a lack of academic success is because they lack authentic educational opportunities and training. We give them alternative opportunities in terms of apprenticeships" (Interview, # 7)

Long-term unemployment

Long-term unemployment was identified as a significant subtheme in both interviews and focus group discussions. Some youths in focus group #2 (Kid Gloves) discussed the impact of unemployment and how sports programmes combat this by providing appropriate training opportunities, as illustrated in this flowing exchange:

Male #1:   *The sports programme really inspires you to do better and you want to get the skills needed for the job market and cross over the ghetto's invisible wall…[laugh]…*

Male #2:   *Brov [mate] there are no jobs, I've been long-term unemployed for nearly a year now, apply, apply, apply but nothing*

Male #3:   *It's bad I know, the jobseekers money I get just about covers my food and travel, I have nothing left after that, feel depressed sometimes because I really want to get a job, like seriously what can you do with a hundred and thirty five pounds every two weeks, errrr nothing, its crap*

Male #4:   *JSA (Jobseekers) is rubbish they just sit opposite you and look at your searches for the last two weeks, ask you some stupid questions and then off you go, no interaction and no training is really offered by the jobcentre either. But this academy is different they offer you stuff that's appropriate to your needs*

Male #5:   *It's true they do, like their training programmes are near where I live or at least I can get a train there, it's not like miles away*

Male #1:   *Like I got help from them here*

Male #3:   *Doors will begin to open.*

Unplanned pregnancies

Focus group participants identified unplanned pregnancies as a subtheme of practical life issues. One youth from group #3 (From boyhood to manhood foundation) described teenage pregnancy as a major stumbling block to academic progression:

> *"Like once I got my girl pregnant my options were limited I left college and had to get a job to support her and the baby. We never planned to have a child but things happen, so I tried to do right by her, but it's hard to stay in college and work and raise a baby. I dropped out of college and I aint [have not] been back since really. But now I come here to the academy on a Thursday after work and I'm learning again, I'm learning the basics that I missed, through the sport I'm learning discipline which is something that I've lacked for many years, the academy is an excellent resource to me as it encourages me to work hard and stay disciplined"* (Focus group #3, Male #2).

4.2.4 Theme two: Educational concerns

Educational concerns was defined as a significant theme discussed by interview and focus group participants. Three subthemes emerged: (a) educational growth and development; (b) ethos of education; (c) level of education

Educational growth and development

Educational growth and development between youths was identified as a significant subtheme in both interviews and focus group discussions. Youth participants' focus group #3 (From Boyhood to Manhood Foundation) discussed how the programmes had helped in these areas, as illustrated in the following exchange:

Male #1:   *Yes I'd say I've grown, like in my education mainly and that's what I can take with me into my future*

Male #2:   *Like by doing sport here we [Black male youth] all have become more focused and we [Black male youth] have new ideas on what kind of life we want now, like if we wanna [want to] go college or do an apprenticeship or something*

Male #3:   *Of course I've picked up loads since taking part in the boxing sessions, like developing self-discipline and how to practice self-control and that's great*

Male #4:   *But more importantly we get given the opportunity to grow and develop like with our education, we get interview practice, college and job-searching skills here at the academy*

Male #5:   *Yeah we do budgeting and work-based training as part of the career programme they run here too*

Male #4:   *All of us [Black youth] have improved.*

Ethos of education

The sub theme of ethos of education became evident throughout qualitative data transcription. One sports coach stated how several key groups of youth are being neglected by the educational system:

"This one size fits all approach of current system is rubbish and it neglects those most at risk, it does not work, the youth we work with have been disadvantaged their whole life, you can't put them in a classroom and expect a miracle to happen. It's a massive problem. They [Black male youths] need work to really understand the purpose and ethos of education for their life, like the questions they are asking is 'why should I learn academics'? 'what will it do for me'? 'how will my life be changed'?. Unless these youth, the ones that we work with from the poorest households are identified and helped using an approach that they will adhere to,

they'll be lost by our nation as citizens who can contribute to our society, it's sad but this is happening already across London" (Interview, #8).

Level of Education

A recurrent sub theme of level of education was discussed by both focus group and interview participants. In some of the focus groups, the issue of education levels came to the fore as is illustrated in the following exchange from Group #2 (KidGloves):

Male #1:   *I think we [Black youth] are different from the start; I mean the gaps in our levels of education are noticeable from preschool I reckon*

Male #2:   *It's true cos [because] I had so many issues with my reading and maths and like cos [because] my mum never really had much cash, I didn't go extra lessons or anything. By the time I was in secondary school the other kids in my class were way ahead.*

Male #3:   *I lived in Tottenham when I was at school and the neighbourhood was not that great and the quality of the school I went to was bad as well, I think it's a combination of a bad learning environment and also low teacher expectations that affected my level education, I didn't even leave with GCSE's*

Male #4:   *It's true the teachers had really low expectations of me and I was always criticised, the school was not that brilliant*

Male #5:   *Well it's our own fault, I mean secondary I got kicked out for fighting with a teacher, and by the time I re-enrolled I'd missed so much learning, and the gap was just too big by then*

Male #4:   *I dunno [don't know] my mum weren't really involved in my learning and education, my home was really up and down and that affected my learning and level of education*

Male #1:   *I agree with you, education levels and achievement in the basics is affected by parents and family structure, these really affect educational achievement starting from school all the way through.*

A programme manager stated:

> *"It's possible to reduce crime rates by raising the education potential of these young Black men, high levels of education in both academia and general life skills alters these youths preferences in indirect ways, which may affect decisions to engage in crime, for example education increases their patience and aversion"* (Interview, #9).

4.2.5 Theme three: Social bonding

This theme refers to the development of social bonds and networks amongst demographically similar groups. Subthemes identified were: (a) Black role models; (b) friendship; (c) community; (d) members of a team; (e) promoting bonding between youths; (f) interracial harmonisation; (g) building social capital; (h) positive community networks.

Black role models

Black role models emerged as a sub theme of social bonding. A youth poignantly described his outrage with regards to the amount of Black role models:

> *"Just angers me because there should be more of them [Black role models], more Black role models I mean. I can count the amount of them [Black role models] in the public eye on one or two hands literally. Mine is Barack Obama of course, he has achieved and continues to achieve greatness. Academically I'd say I'd love to be like him and be a Harvard law school graduate, maybe not president, but definitely a law graduate from a top university. To me Obama makes it possible, he has stepped it up for all of us [Black youth and Black people in general], especially Blacks. I just hope that as a culture [Black culture] we [Black people] realise this"* (Group #2, Male #3).

One of the Programme Directors explained the problematic issues and outcomes of not having enough Black male role models:

"Black masculinity or even just masculinity in general is somewhat shaped or should I say influenced by others. How to be a man and show manly characteristics of strength and courage would normally be facilitated with the help of the father, as he should be the role model that is mirrored. But without a father or other Black male role models, generations of young Black boys have been left holding a poor vision of who they are" (Interview, #11).

Friendship

A recurrent sub theme of friendship was identified by participants. One youth from Group #1 (Fight For Peace Academy) described the stepping stones to his friendship with another male participant at the organisation:

"Like when I first got here I knew no one then I started talking with like one of the other guys who was doing the MuayThai class and every week we chatted in the break and if we had an afternoon session then we'd talk at lunch as well, I felt like I could be myself with him and we have been friends ever since really, we are proper close" (Group #1, #2).

The issue of friendship within the sports academy was discussed further by youths from group #2 (KidGloves), as illustrated in the flowing exchange:

Male #1:   The friendships that I've made here at KidGloves is the thing I'll take away from here once I leave

Male #2:   And it's because here [at KidGloves Boxing Academy] everyone is just like us [Black youth], most of us [Black youth] are either like African, Caribbean or mixed race really and we kinda [kind of] like all had the same experiences

Male #3: Of going jail and then trying to get back on track, you know what I'm saying

Male #4: And therefore we [Black youth] all understand each other so the friendships made here are real not fake

Male #1: No we are never false with each other

Male #5: Coming KidsGloves and doing boxing each week we [Black youth] see each other and we also do stuff outside of the academy too.

Community

Another youth from Group #3 (From Boyhood to Manhood Foundation) gave an example of violence within the local community:

"Feelings about the community these have changed dramatically because I got involved with the From Boyhood to Manhood Foundation. Before I didn't really care much about it, but now I take pride in my area, little things like not dropping my chocolate wrappers on the floor but instead putting them in the bin. An area is only unattractive because of the people in it have unattractive behaviours or an area only has high levels of violence and crime because the people in it are behaving in a violent way and are doing criminal things" (Group #3, Male #3).

Members of a team

Members of a team was an underlying sub theme present in both focus group and interview discussions. Some youths in focus group #2 (KidGloves) discussed the strengths of the sports programme openly, as illustrated in this flowing exchange:

Male #1: The sessions are so intense, physically I am drained once I finish

Male #2: But you enjoy it though don't you brov [mate]

Male #1:   *Yeah of course I do, it's good I enjoy it totally, all of us are in it together*

Male #3:   *Teamwork and feeling included in decisions is a major strength I reckon*

Male #4:   *But it's because everyone here is encouraged that's why...by the coaches and mentors to respect each other's culture and religion*

Male #5:   *We [the youth] have team talks at the end of each session with the coach, we are all at the same level here, all members of one team.*

Promoting bonding between youths

Promoting social bonding between youths was identified as a significant subtheme in both interviews and focus groups discussions. One sports coach stated:

> *"They have not been shown how to socialise and bond with other youths in a healthy manner. This is a trigger towards anti-social behaviour in my opinion"* (Interview, #6).

A youth participant from group #1 (Fight For Peace) also commented on bonding with his friends:

> *"I gained leadership skills, yes definitely, we [youth] all get to be a team member and then a leader in the group as well. All these chances to practice different roles is beneficial for us, the leaders encourage us to bond with one another"* (Group #1, Male #2).

Interracial harmonisation

Several interview participants identified interracial harmonisation as a sub theme. One programme director described the harmonisation structure of the organisation:

"Strength of the programmes we offer here, well from its conception this organisation and the programmes that we had in mind for the prospective youths that we wanted to reach were created to be culturally diverse, strengthened by the free flow of ideas. Also I'd say interracial harmonisation and its promotion was a key strength and still is a driving component of our programmes here" (Interview, #11).

Building social capital

A recurrent sub theme of building social capital was identified by interview participants. One sports director described some of the key problems facing Black youths today:

"Whether those needs are provided by gangs or conversely by schools, religious places, and sports leagues, it is up to us as a society to help. We [adults] have these young people's futures in our hands to mould, and the choice we make has short- and long-term ramifications. It's the social capital available to young people that plays a role in how well they learn, if they will attend university or choose crime routes, with a strong likelihood that they will do drugs. In a country that prides itself on constant reinvention; young people represent the promise of a stronger United Kingdom, and their well-being extremely important to our communities. As our young people go, so goes our nation. A young person's wants and dreams are really the same as everyone else's, respect, success, and opportunities. But adults often only pay attention to young people, when they get into trouble and do crimes. That's the problem facing the youths today Black or White" (Interview, #10).

Positive community networks

Positive community networks emerged as a sub theme of social bonding. Focus group #3 (From Boyhood to Manhood Foundation) discussed how the organisation promoted a more positive relationship between young people and their local community, illustrated in this flowing exchange:

Male #1:   *About the community, my feelings have changed*

Male #2:   *Yeah it's true because here we [Black youth] learn about recycling and this has helped me appreciate my surroundings much more*

Male #3:   *We [Black youth] get to volunteer with lots of local organisations to gain experience*

Male #4:   *There's [there are] lots of positive opportunities to work with the community*

Male #5:   *And positive community networks*

Male #3:   *It's because we [Black youth] are all a part of the From Boyhood to Manhood family.*

4.2.6 Theme four: Personal Development

Personal development was defined as a significant theme discussed by interview and focus group participants. Four sub themes emerged: (a) learnt skills; (b) communication; (c) health and well-being; (d) sport builds character.

Learnt skills

One youth from Group #3 (Boyhood to Manhood Foundation) remarked that since starting the programme many skills have been learnt:

> *"I feel blessed that I found this organisation. I'm working towards making things right again in my life, so far I've learnt how to prepare a basic meal from the cooking classes that they have here. I now have a stronger sense of discipline since getting involved in this boxing programme"* (Group 3, Male #2).

Communication

Several interview and focus group participants identified communication as a key sub theme. One mentor elaborated:

"I think that many of the youths that pass through our doors communicate solely through aggression and dominant behaviour patterns in order to survive on the streets, which is understandable because it's hard out there for them. They shout, fight and swear and for them that's communication, be it to their friends, parents, girlfriends or whomever, they don't see it as an issue. And I must say this is an escalating problem facing many of our Black youths today, in a sense they have forgotten how to communicate with the outside world in a respectable manner. Here at the From Boyhood to Manhood Foundation we re-teach them the art of communication, but healthy communication, induced by sport and the physical activity sessions we teach them things like conflict resolution" (Interview, #1).

Health and well-being

A recurrent sub theme of health and well-being was discussed by both focus group and interview participants. In some of the focus groups, the issue of public use and dealing of drugs came to the fore and is illustrated in the following exchange from Group #2 (KidGloves Boxing Academy):

Male #1:   *Before I use to smoke weed [drugs] all the time, like every night...I even had chest problems because of the amount I smoked!*

Male #2:   *With Peckham [an area in London] we [Black youth] all use to freely deal and take stuff [drugs] and people just smoke it [drugs] all the time...nothing's done about it*

Male #3:   *Since coming to KidGloves I quit smoking and starting taking part in their midnight basketball classes instead*

Male #4:   *Don't you have more energy now you quit taking weed and stuff [drugs]?*

Male #1:   *Yeah definitely, now I have so much more energy, it's great because I actually feel fit in my body again and have no more health problems.*

Male #5:   *I now try to model healthy lifestyles behaviours to my mates*

The role of these sport programmes in developing healthy lifestyles and contributing to an all rounded individual was identified by a sports volunteer:

"You know these youths come here to us at KidGloves Boxing Academy with preconditioned stress instilled in them. From a young age many have led unhealthy lifestyles and lived in unwholesome environments. Through the sports programme that we offer they are able to develop a healthier concept of life, free of drugs and gang warfare. We give them the tools with the aid of boxing and one-to-one mentoring to begin to construct a sense of well-being firstly, in their minds and then their bodies" (Interview, #3).

Sport builds character

Focus group participants from Group #2 (KidGloves Boxing Academy) commented how the cohort of youths enrolled on these types of educative sports programmes have developed a better sense of character, as illustrated in the following exchange:

Male #1:   *Skills, yes of course I've pick up loads since taking part in the boxing sessions, like cooperation with team mates, developing self-discipline and how to practice self-control*

Male: #2:   *You also learn morals and ways to respect the sports environment that we [youth] use*

Male #3:   *All of these are great skills that have improved my character...like I'm more polite to other now*

Male #4;   *The sports coach is tough and he makes us be polite and have manners in every sessions*

Male #3   *That's what I mean we all have a better character since starting here*

Male #5   *Yeah I agree, all of us [Black youth] have improved since doing boxing at the club.*

4.2.7 Theme five: Attitudinal Change

Attitudinal Change was defined as a significant theme discussed by interview and focus group participants. Seven sub themes emerged: (a) respect; (b) mood; (c) empowerment; (d) motivated to do sport; (e) attitudinal changes; (f) successful studios behaviours; (g) self-fulfilling prophecy.

Respect

The sub theme of respect became evident throughout qualitative data transcription. One sports coach described in an interview the lack of authority and low levels of respect:

> *"I wouldn't say failure is expected of them [Black youth], but I do believe that high levels of disrespect now exists within many educational institutions, the respect spectrum has become somewhat blurred. In schools and colleges there are real issues now, teachers are not comfortable and many feel powerless to discipline students"* (Interview, #8)*.*

A youth mentor explained the importance of street respect within youth culture:

"Wow, I have learnt a lot and gained great insight into youth culture and their yearning for respect. Many of the young men we work with here at Fight For Peace have come from gangs and having spoken to a few it's quite obvious that many gravitated to a gang because they needed to belong to something and for the power and respect that was gained from being in that particular gang. I'd say that the society we live in today makes alternative lifestyles very appealing" (Interview, #4).

Mood

Mood emerged as a sub theme of attitudinal change. A youth from group #3 (From Boyhood to Manhood Foundation), discussed mood changes:

"It's my mood that changed more than anything else since doing the boxing and other sports on offer, I feel much happier, I am not snappy or tense anymore. You know if I feel frustrated I just go hit the gym [he goes to the gym]" (Group 3, Male #1).

Empowerment

A recurrent sub theme of empowerment was identified by interview and focus group participants. One sports director described how empowerment was engrained into the programmes structure:

"Ohhh yes definitely need more intervention and educative sports programmes around the London area. It's here the kids are most at risk of social exclusion. Its programmes such as ours that give youth an internal sense of power again, through sport we are able to help them develop qualities such as positive self-esteem and self-confidence. It's the process of empowerment that we are really trying to teach them and showing them through examples how to empower themselves rather than being recipients of power from gangs and other negative sources" (Interview, #11).

The focus group #3 (From Boyhood and Manhood Foundation) clearly explained the empowerment journey as an consequence of being involved in the educative sports programme at the organisation, as illustrated in the following exchange:

Male #1:   *The experience so far has been great, I've learnt how to be disciplined and more focused*

Male #2:   *We [Black youth] learn communication skills and how to be punctual to gym sessions with the other guys*

Male #3:   *These are things that will help me later in life, like when I get a job, I'll need to be on time*

Male #4:   *We [Black youth] do reading and writing practice as well, which will help me when I write CV's and things like that for jobs*

Male #5:   *Before many of us came here, don't think we knew the personal power we have inside*

Male #2:   *I agree, because I thought it was about being tough and hard, the louder you were the better*

Male #4:   *The more girls you...you know...slept with the more manly it made you*

Male #5:   *But now I have a better understanding and I'm empowered to do right in the rest of my life, think we all do right?*

Male #1:   *Yes we [Black youth] all have been changed and empowered through the sport.*

Motivated to do sport

Motivated to do sport was identified as a significant sub theme in both interviews and focus groups discussions. One sports coach stated:

"The need is humongous, intervention through sport is a strategy that has been tried and tested before and it has worked and continues to work. It's a way of getting these kids [Black male youths] enthused again with learning; get them [Black male youths] gaining coaching qualifications and leadership qualifications which can help in later life. These kids [Black male youth] are already enjoying sport outside of a structured setting and they are intrinsically motivated to do sport, so as an organisation we just tap into that interest" (Interview, #7).

A youth participant from focus group #1 (Fight for Peace) explained his love for sport:

"Boxing has always been part of my life, my uncle use to take me in my early teens and show me a few punches at the local gym by him in Tottenham [an area in London]. I'm interested in boxing and motivated to do it, it keeps my fitness up [it keeps him fit]. I came to Fight for Peace Academy because I wanted to improve, in my skills and that" (Group #1, Male #3).

A youth mentor explained the downside to overrepresentation in the media:

"The media have a strong role to play in the negative portrayal of these youths. Nowadays Black people are over represented in television sports broadcasts and crime and violence related portrayals. Black youths are motivated to do sport and they do emulate their sporting heroes, however, this has to be balanced across the media spectrum. I've noticed that there is little occupational variation other than sporting stars or musicians within the Black and famous media list" (Interview, #4).

Attitudinal changes

Attitudinal changes was an underlying sub theme present in both focus group and interview discussions. One youth discussed how participation on the sports programme has improved his attitude and outlook:

"Since I started it's my attitude that's improved, it's changed totally. I got kicked out of college because of my bad attitude I couldn't sit calmly in classes and give it effort. Instead I'd start moaning and making sexual noises to disrupt the lecturer; calling the lecturers name and all...gosh I was badly behaved before" (Group #1, Male #5).

Focus group participants from group #1 (Fight for Peace) shared and discussed how their attitudes changed since starting the sports programme, as illustrated in this flowing exchange:

Male #1:   *Old people think we [Black youths] are irritating, but we [Black youth] are not always causing trouble, you know what I'm saying*

Male #2:   *Yeah even if we [Black youth] are just sitting on the street corner doing nothing, people feel intimidated by us [Black youth]*

Male #3:   *But we [Black youth] do look kind of thuggish [unwelcoming]...and we [Black youths] always walk in groups, so guess it is a bit intimidating*

Male #1:   *And our [Black youth] attitudes generally were bad before coming here right? [fight for peace academy]*

Male #4:   *I guess, I mean I use to swear if someone asked me something I didn't like...bad man*

Male #5:   *But it's all changed now, our [Black youth] attitudes have changed, we like understand the importance of learning manners and respecting others now*

Male #1:   *A clean attitude will help us [Black youth] in all aspects of education, life and work*

Male #3:   *Our new attitude is helping us [Black youth] already, thanks to this organisation [fight for peace], I'm able to think more positive about myself*

Male #1:   *And it's the sport we do here [fight for peace] that really teaches us the morals, team working skills which help our attitude improve*

Male #2:   *I'm happy with the progress I've made; you must give out a good attitude...that's my motto now.*

Successful studious behaviours

The sub theme of successful studious behaviours became evident throughout qualitative data transcription. One sports coach stated how sport can promote tangible academic rewards:

> *"Kids involved in sports may reap tangible academic rewards, as long as there is a balance and understanding of the commitment required. Obviously there are no guarantees, but when young people are busy with sport, there is less time to be tempted to fall off the path into relationships and activities that may lead to problems. The attitude and discipline they learn on the field can be transferred to the classroom and can help promote successful studious behaviours"* (Interview, #2).

Youth participants from Focus group #2 (KidGloves) explained their views on academic success and attainment through sport engagement, as illustrated in the following exchange:

Male #1:   *It's not always easy to do well at college if you don't have the basics and can't concentrate for more than 10 minutes*

Male #2:   *Yeah but competitive sport help with the concentration, it's demands a high level of concentration don't you think?*

Male #1:   *Yeah I guess it did help with my concentration, but it took awhile to get into the right mood to learn*

Male #3:   *Anyway I think that when I started focusing in the ring [boxing ring] that I began to understand the need to focus on academic related tasks as well*

Male #4:   *It's like transferable I reckon*

Male #5:   *How is it transferable?*

Male #4:   *The skills you learn here [at KidGloves Boxing Academy] in the ring, like being involved, training, working hard*

Male #3:   *Yeah and being disciplines, because coach makes sure we are disciplined and show leadership skills*

Male #4:   *When we are able to show these traits through our boxing, this attitude and new skill set is transferable to the classroom*

Male #1:   *and that helps develop studious behaviour*

Male #2:   *Yeah I agree promotes successful studious behaviour*

Self-fulfilling prophecy

Self-fulfilling prophesy emerged as a sub theme of attitudinal changes. A sports director described his outrage with regards to how workplaces and some educators create a glass ceiling effect for youths of colour:

> *"It just makes me mad, the glass ceiling metaphor...the invisible glass...the barrier through which these Black male youths can see elite positions in different lines of work but cannot reach them. We [Fight for Peace Academy] are trying to teach them [Black youths] values, respect, self-worth and work ethic. We [Fight For Peace] are trying to teach them all these things through the sports programme we offer. However, this barrier [the glass ceiling effect] makes them [Black youth] feel unworthy of these high-ranking positions, but also these youth feel that their teachers do not take them [Black youth] seriously or actually even see them [Black youth] as potential candidates for the highest-grossing jobs, because of this these youths [Black youth] fall into the self-fulfilling prophecy gap. And then it's us [Fight For peace] that have to try dig them [Black youth] out again and again and again" (Interview, #10).*

One youth participant from group #3 (From Boyhood to Manhood Foundation) explained why Black youth submit to the self-fulfilling prophecy in learning settings:

> *"We [Black youth] like continue to fall behind in school and college, we [Black youth] get defensive and start making negative links with education and learning. It is this self-fulfilling prophecy, like we [Black youth] become what they [White educators] expect us to be" (Group #3, Male #1).*

Focus group #1 (Fight For Peace Academy) discussed how White educators create and then indulge this self-fulfilling prophecy, illustrated in this flowing exchange:

Male #1:   *They, like the White teachers, think we [Black youth] can't...you know, that we [Black youth] can't achieve. That's the bloody issue here*

Male #2:   *They [teachers] are not even willing to give us [Black youth] the chance to try*

Male #3   *So of course if we [Black youth] don't get a chance, then we [Black youth] will just fail*

Male #4:   *They [White teachers] want us [Black youth] to, you know not get to them high-up positions in jobs and stuff, they [White teachers] keep us [Black youth] down with their ideas about us [Black youth]*

Male #5:   *Actually, I disagree, we [Black youth] keep ourselves down with this negative attitude and the belief that we [Black youth] wont achieve academically or that we [Black youth] can't get those jobs high up the ladder*

Male #1:   *Yeah but they [White teachers] think we [Black youth] can't be like them [White people], like be the lawyers, the doctors or the architects of the world*

Male #2:   *I was always at the bottom of the class, they [White teachers] never moved me up a group even when my reading and writing improved, they [White teachers] like it that way*

Male #3:   *Then we [Black youth] just play into their [White teachers] hands, by doing what they [White teachers] think. It's that whole self-fulfilling prophecy thing*

Male #1:   *So like the false stuff about us [Black youth], the bad stuff, then becomes true init [isn't it].*

4.2.8 Theme six: Role of sport

Role of sport was defined as a significant theme discussed by interview and focus group participants. Six sub themes emerged: (a) positive impact of sport; (b) sport qualities;   (c) the effectiveness of exercise; (d) sport intervention as a strategy; (e) sport programmes; (f) winning and performance.

Positive impact of sport

Positive impact of sport was identified as a significant sub theme in both interviews and focus groups discussions. One sports coach stated:

> *"The fatal stabbings among our Black youngsters [Black male youths] did not just begin when the British press discovered this callous phenomenon a year or so ago. The first generation of young Blacks in British society have turned on each other with blades [knifes and other sharp weapons], in their alienation from established order. These youths [Black male youths] are feeling demoralised and cheated by a country that belongs to them as much as it does the White kids [sigh]…you know the ones [the White youths] that live in the countryside and the big mansions away from here [he is referring to London], away from the council housing estates with high levels of crime and inter-generational worklessness".* He then went onto say: *"Solutions needs to be coming quick and fast, and the positive impact of sport needs to be used more dynamically amongst the mix of possible resolutions to tackle social issues of crime and unemployment that's rippling through series of young Black men. The government needs to look at sport in terms of its positive properties and its educative potential to teach things like self-discipline, team working skills, moral development and determination to these at risk youth"* (Interview, #5).

Focus group #1 (Fight for Peace Academy) explained some of the positive impacts of sport on their civic behaviour and emotional development, illustrated in this flowing exchange:

Male #1:   I've changed as a person since joining the academy [Fight for Peace], nowadays I care kinda like [kind of] more about others and I'm on the youth council here [at Fight For Peace], I'm like an ambassador at public meetings and stuff, it's wicked [great]

Male #2:   It's the positive stuff that we've learnt from doing the sport here that's had the greatest impact on all of us I think [Black male youths]

Male #3:   Like in the team games we learn how to be loyal to the group [the team members] and how to have stamina to finish the activity. As it's not just for us [the individual] but for the team, it's all a part of the fun

Male #4:   I've become less anxious and I'm not depressed anymore and I've got more self-esteem to do things that before I'd never even dream of doing

Male #3:   Like what brov [mate]?

Male #4:   Like….[laugh]…I went to the local library the other day, you know the one down by Asda, never would have done that before

Male #5:   True say [yes you are right], I mean like for me it's my sense of self-belonging that's improved, like I've got trust for the man dem here [he really has a notion of trust for the other guys at the academy]

Male #1:   I now focus on my achievements and I don't put personal blocks up like I was before

Male #4:   Actually I agree cos [because] through doing the structured sport here week after week, like the boxing has really helped with my aggression.

Male #1:   Yeah I get what you're saying brov [mate], like now you're at peace with yourself init [isn't it]

Male #2:   It's the positive emotions that I get, like happiness and satisfaction from winning and improving my technique and skills on the football pitch

Male #5:   The positive impact of sport is what we [Black male youths] have all experienced at different levels since joining the academy [Fight for Peace].

Sport qualities

The sub theme of sport qualities became evident throughout qualitative data transcription. One youth from group #2 (KidGloves) commented on the qualities gained from participation in the fitness classes at the academy:

> *"Got out of it…[hesitates]…I'd say confidence is a personal quality that I've gained from doing sport here [KidGloves], but a quiet sense of confidence, you know, like I've learnt how to have confidence based on my own preparation, based on my own belief and daily work habits, and the constant progress I've made in the fitness classes has helped shape this new found confidence".*

A youth mentor stated how certain qualities gained through the sports programme are transferable:

> *"Sport has an educative role in breaking the criminal cycle; well I think that by giving these Black youth a focus and arming them with the knowledge of their reality, the reality that without change their outlook is looking very askew. At From Boyhood to Manhood Foundation we teach them certain qualities such as teamwork, effort and achievement which are intertwined into our sport sessions"* She went onto say: *"These are not just qualities of sport but also qualities that will stand them in good stead for the future. Here at the centre we [leaders and educators] are imbuing them with invaluable sporting qualities that when developed can be used to increase life success. Sport is a powerful mechanism, and the qualities gained through the sport specific settings here [From Boyhood to Manhood Foundation] are very transferable in non-sport domains, I'd say things like goals setting, focus, teambuilding, motivation and resiliency are very transferable"* (Interview, #1).

The effectiveness of sport and exercise

A youth participant from group #1 (Fight For Peace) also commented on the effectiveness of sport and exercise:

> *"When I started a couple months ago I was so unfit and I lacked skill and technique on the basketball court. I was always interested in basketball but just didn't have the time to actively participate and get a routine going. A couple mates told me to come along one eve [evening] to a mid-night basketball session, so I did, absolutely loved it, signed up straight away. Slowly I've begun to learn about the true benefits of sport and the effectiveness of sport and exercise, like the physical fitness benefits but also how sport helps enhance your mental health too".*

A sports coach stated how he taught the young men about effectiveness of sport and exercise through both practicals and theory sessions:

> *"One of our key goals at the academy [Fight for Peace] is to promote health and well-being; the fitness sessions that I conduct have a particular theme - be it cardiovascular fitness, plyometric or flexibility training. It's important that the young men on this programme understand that we are using sport and exercise to aid their development in many areas. In the theory lessons I also teach them [Black male youths] about healthy eating and the effectiveness of sport and exercise"* He went onto say*: "Also teach interactive sessions on sports anatomy and physiology, they make posters and do mini-presentations. I try and cover the basics so that they can then link the theory and the practice together within their daily lives" (Interview, #6).*

Sport intervention as a strategy

The sub theme of sport intervention as a strategy became evident throughout interview transcription. One sports volunteer described how sport contributes to reducing youth crime in the Capital:

> *"It is unrealistic to claim that sport alone can reduce the levels of youth crime in Capital [London]. The causes of Black on Black youth crime are complex and multidimensional. However, sport programmes like what we [From Boyhood to Manhood Foundation] offer here can contribute to reducing youth crime by giving young people a positive identity, feelings of empowerment and by helping youth acquire leadership rather than leaving them with no healthy outlets, of course with nowhere to go and nothing constructive to do, they are going to get sucked into criminal activity. We [From Boyhood to Manhood Foundation] use sport intervention as a strategy to capture the attention of these at risk youth" (Interview, #12).*

One of the sports coaches at the Fight For Peace Academy [group #1] added to this trail of thought by describing how sport can be used to reduce gang formations:

> *"Organised sport for these youths [Black male youths] who are at risk of gang involvement is a key intervention strategy to reduce anti-social behaviour and the soaring crime rates amongst Black youths within areas like Hackney, Peckham, Bethnal Green and Bow - these are really socially deprived parts of London".* He went onto say *"We need to engage them [the Black male youth] and hook them [Black male youth] before the gang grabs their minds and hearts….[sigh]…the idea of the poor ghetto child who becomes a local hero is at the heart of the street culture, but through sport and the qualities we [Fight For Peace] teach I truly believe that the educators here can facilitate that hero status through glory and pride gained from sporting success, teamwork and perseverance" (Interview, #8).*

A sports director shared his views on how intervention through the sports programme offers an alternative for young men:

"Offending lifestyles are attractive to these young men. Offending gives them a buzz [thrill], and the money enables these guys [the youth] to buy drugs and to impress young women. But normally the guys [the youth] we see come through our [fight for peace] door are also driven by anger and the consequences of this anger are destructive for families and friends". He went onto say: *"Beneath this bravado is an uncertain and worried person. Through the boxing and martial arts we offer at the academy, the young men are able to improve their body image and to learn to be self-disciplined and calmer, their aggression is channelled through sport and in this way the Fight for Peace programme offers a positive options for young people who are at risk of drug taking, drug selling or pimping [an agent for prostitutes and collects part of their earnings], and already totally disengaged from mainstream society"* (Interview, #10).

Sports programs

The sub theme of sport programmes became evident throughout qualitative data transcription. Focus group participants from Group #1 (Fight For Peace) shared and discussed their views on the goals of the programme, as illustrated in the following exchange:

Male #1:   *Yes I think the goals for this programme are realistic*

Male #2:   *Like preventing youth crime, reintegration, poverty reduction and helping with social inclusion are all genuine goals that are very achievable*

Male #3:   *To achieve the goals and the outcomes they want Fight for peace uses the five pillar preventative model, yeah [yes]*

Male #4:   *That model really helps us [youth] understand what they [the educators] are trying to accomplish with us [the youth] all, as they [the educators] have activities for each pillar, so like we [the youth] are involved at each step*

Male #5:   *Pillar one which is boxing and martial arts is the main focus of the sports programme, it's my favourite as I love being entered into competitions*

Male #1:   *Mines pillar three which is social action and outreach work; I really enjoy meeting with local residents and other community groups and learning new skills that way*

Male #3:   *We [youths] even sometimes get to go on work placements*

Male #4;   *Ohh yeah [yes] I went to volunteer at that fencing club in Newham, Newham Swords Fencing Club, that was well fun [really fun]*

Male #2:   *So yeah I reckon the goals have been achieved and year after year more young people come here [Fight For Peace] init [isn't it], so I think whatever they [the educators] are doing must be working [laugh]*

Male #1:   *I love the boxing and the martial arts too. But for me it's the youth leadership, that's pillar five I think, that's what really makes this academy stand out from the others in London. I enjoy being on the youth council and being an ambassador at public meetings*

Focus group participants from Group #3 (From Boyhood to Manhood Foundation) explained different aspects of the sports programme, as illustrated in this flowing exchange:

Male #1:   *A strength…there are loads*

Male #2:   *To start with the skills we [the youths] learn here [From Boyhood to Manhood Foundation] they really help me make wise decisions when I'm out and about on the street with my friends, like if I need to walk away from an agreement then I will*

Male #3:   *Weaknesses none, I know the academy has some funding issues guess that's a weakness*

Male #4:   *My favourite part of the sports programme is the sense of achievement that I get when I learn a new boxing technique*

Male #5:   *I agree*

Male #4:   *Like the speed bag [a boxing technique] was hard to get the hang of but once I got it I felt a sense of accomplishment you know what mean*

Male #5:   *I dunno [don't know] other places do boxing and stuff but it's not like here, what makes this sports programme special is the coaches and mentors they really put effort into us [the youth]*

Male #4:	It's because they [the coaches and mentors] are interested in us [Black male youths]
Male #1:	We [the youths] all think it's useful. The approach they [the coaches and mentors] use here is at our level, like they [the coaches and mentors] don't think there better than us [the youth] or anything
Male #2:	It's because they [the coaches and mentors] care about us [the youth], it's like individual care we get on the programme.

Winning and performance

Another youth from Group #1 (Fight For Peace) gave an example of how winning and performance were engrained into the structure of the martial arts on offer at the academy:

"I get loads out of it, like guidance and a chance to change my lifestyle. If I'm down and bored at home I come to Fight For peace. The capoeira is a good workout for me, like if I'm in a bad mood I can come and release my anger, focus on winning that round, as soon as I get into the circle all I can see is that I want to be to the best I can be and my performances have improved week after week, I'm getting better at the aú [a cartwheel movement in capoeira] and also the macaco [similar movement to a back handspring]. But it's because of the structure here because winning in competitions and being the best you can be is engrained into the structure here [Fight For Peace], I now understand that performances get better because of the effort you put in, and that's what pillar one and two in the five pillar model [an integrated approached that Fight For Peace use known as the five pillar models] is all about".

4.3 Results: Questionnaires

The following information and tables present the data gathered from the questionnaire phase of the research.

4.3.1 Demographic Information

Of the n=17, n=10 (59%) were male and n=7 (41%) were female. Of the n=17, n=6 (35%) were 20-25, n= 8 (47%) were 26-31, n= 2 (12%) were 32-37 and 1 (6%) was 38-43.

Table 4.3.1.1 *Organisation breakdown*

Organisation	Number of People	Percentage
Fight For Peace	9	53%
Kids Gloves	6	35%
From Boyhood to Manhood	2	12%

Of the n=17 respondents, just over half (53%) of the respondents were from the Fight For Peace Academy followed by Kid Gloves (35%) and the From Boyhood to Manhood Organisation (12%).

Table 4.3.1.2. *Job role breakdown of educators and leaders*

Job Role	Number of people	Percentage
Sports Coach	9	53%
Sport Volunteer	3	18%
Programme Manager	2	12%
Youth Mentor	2	12%
Programme Director	1	5%

Of n=17 respondents just over half (53%) were Sport Coaches, with 18% being Sport Volunteers, 12% being Programme Managers and Youths Mentors and 5% of all the respondents being Programme Directors.

Table 4.3.1.3. *Age breakdown of youths that educators and leaders predominantly work with*

Age breakdown	Number of Youths	Percentage
Under 18's	0	0%
19 – 21	11	65%
22 – 24	6	35%
25 – 27	0	0%
28 – 30	0	0%

31 – 33	0	0%
34 – 36	0	0%
37+	0	0%

Of the n=17 respondents 65% worked with youths aged between 19 to 21 and 35% with those between the ages of 22 to 24.

Table 4.3.1.4 *Programme breakdown and related organisation*

Programme type	Number of respondents	Organisation(s)	Percentage
Sport based intervention	17	Fight For Peace; Kids Gloves; From Boyhood to Manhood	100%
Mentoring schemes	15	Fight For Peace; Kids Gloves	88%
Youth offender	15	Fight For Peace; Kids Gloves	88%
NEET	8	Kids Gloves; From Boyhood to Manhood	47%
Other	4	Kids Gloves; From Boyhood to Manhood	24%
Lone parent	2	From Boyhood to Manhood	12%

- *Please note that some percentages do not total 100% because respondents were asked to report all of the programme strands that they facilitated at their current organisation*

Inspection of Table 4.3.1.4 shows that Sport based intervention programmes were offered to male youths at all three organisations (100%; Fight For Peace; Kids Gloves; From Boyhood to Manhood). This was followed by Mentoring schemes (88%; Fight For Peace; Kids Gloves); Youth Offender programmes (88%; Fight For Peace; Kids Gloves); NEET programmes (47%; Kids Gloves; From Boyhood to Manhood); Other (24%; Kids Gloves; From Boyhood to Manhood) and Lone Parent programmes (12%; From Boyhood to Manhood).

4.3.2 Neighbourhood and the City of London

At least two thirds of all respondents in figure 4.3.2.1 indicated that recreational facilities were either poor or needing some improvement (72%), this was followed by police protection at 70%, condition of pavements at 67%, rubbish collection at 65%, cleanliness and appearance at 53%, quality of schools and colleges 49%, sewers 41%, crowded conditions 40%, street lights 35%, bus and tram services 32% and parking facilities at 30%.
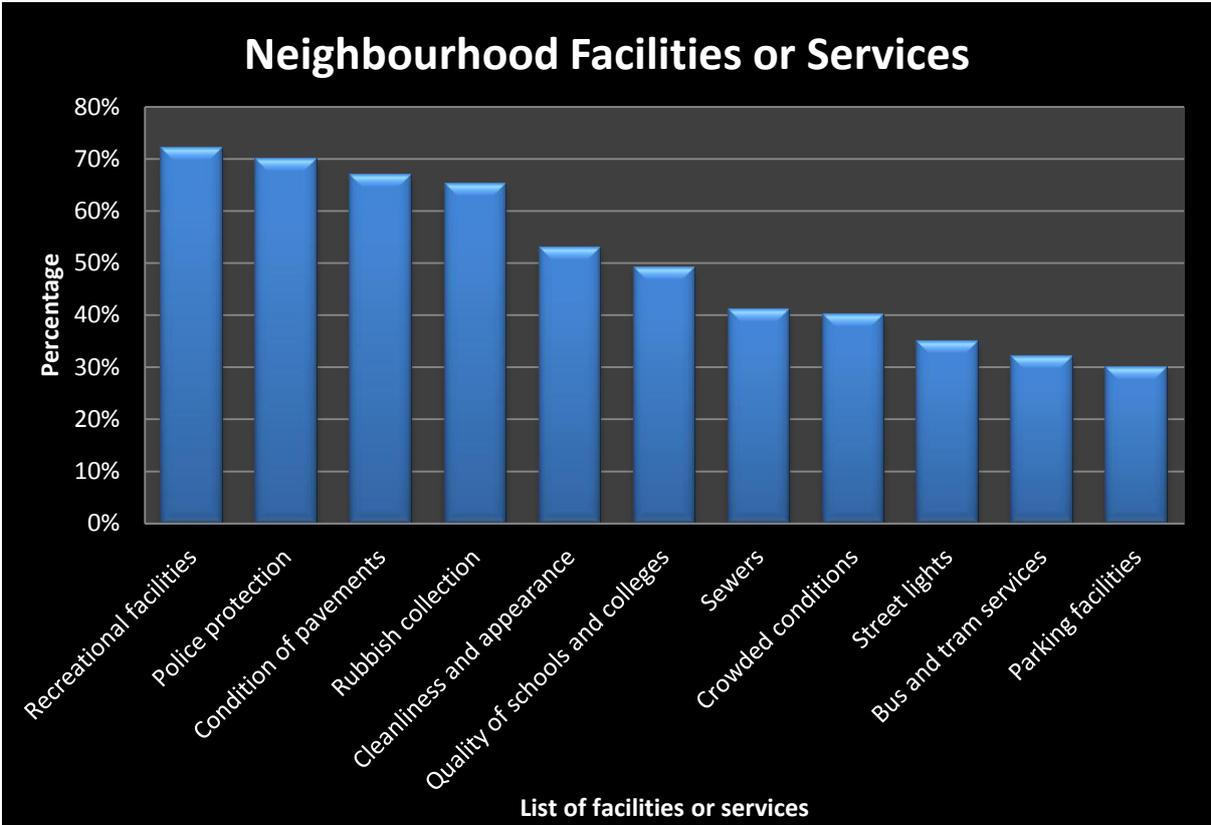
Figure 4.3.2.1: *Neighbourhood facilities or services evaluated as poor or needing improvement*

Figure 4.3.2.2 shows that ten out of fourteen items were evaluated as poor or fair by respondents; these included, race relations (74%), housing (71%), recreation (70%), police officers (65%), places to bring up kids (65%), job opportunities (65%), local government (63%), public school/college teachers (61%), public schools/colleges (61%) and moral and religious climate (60%). Four out of fourteen items were evaluated as good or very good these included welfare services (52%), Black community leaders (56%), London universities (70%) and variety of sports (71%).
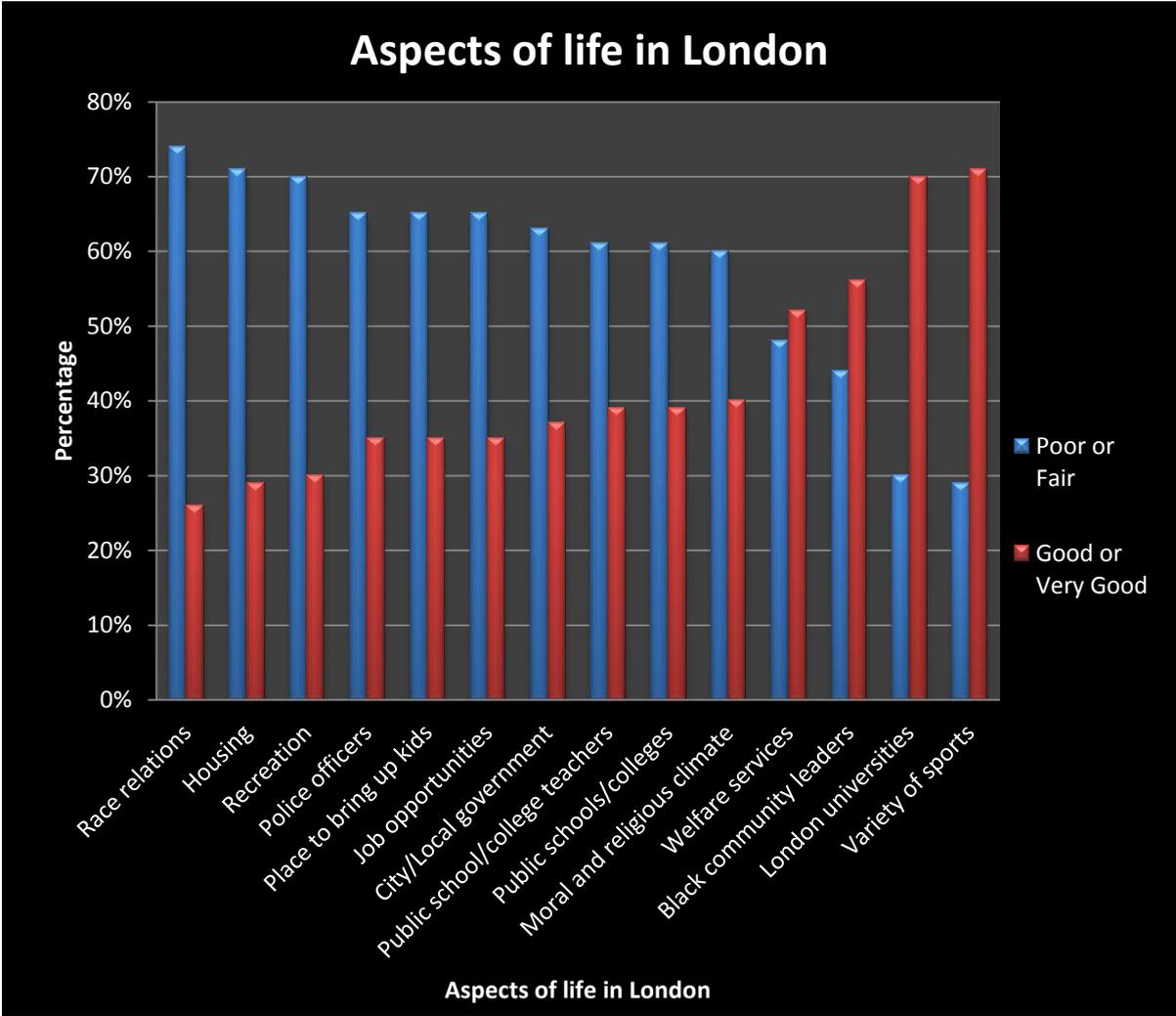
Figure 4.3.2.2: *Respondent evaluations of aspects of life in London that affect Black male youths*

4.3.3 Aspirations and Patterns of Identification

Inspection of figure 4.3.3.1 shows that the first seven items were rated as very important by 60 percent or more of the respondents (pleasant personality 89%; ability 86%; friendlessness 78%; proper morals 65%; high ideals 62%; high grades in school/college 62%; personal ambitions (61%). There is then a sudden drop in qualities rated as very important with family background (37%), good clothes (20%), athletic ability (17%) and good looks (10%) assigned relatively low priority.
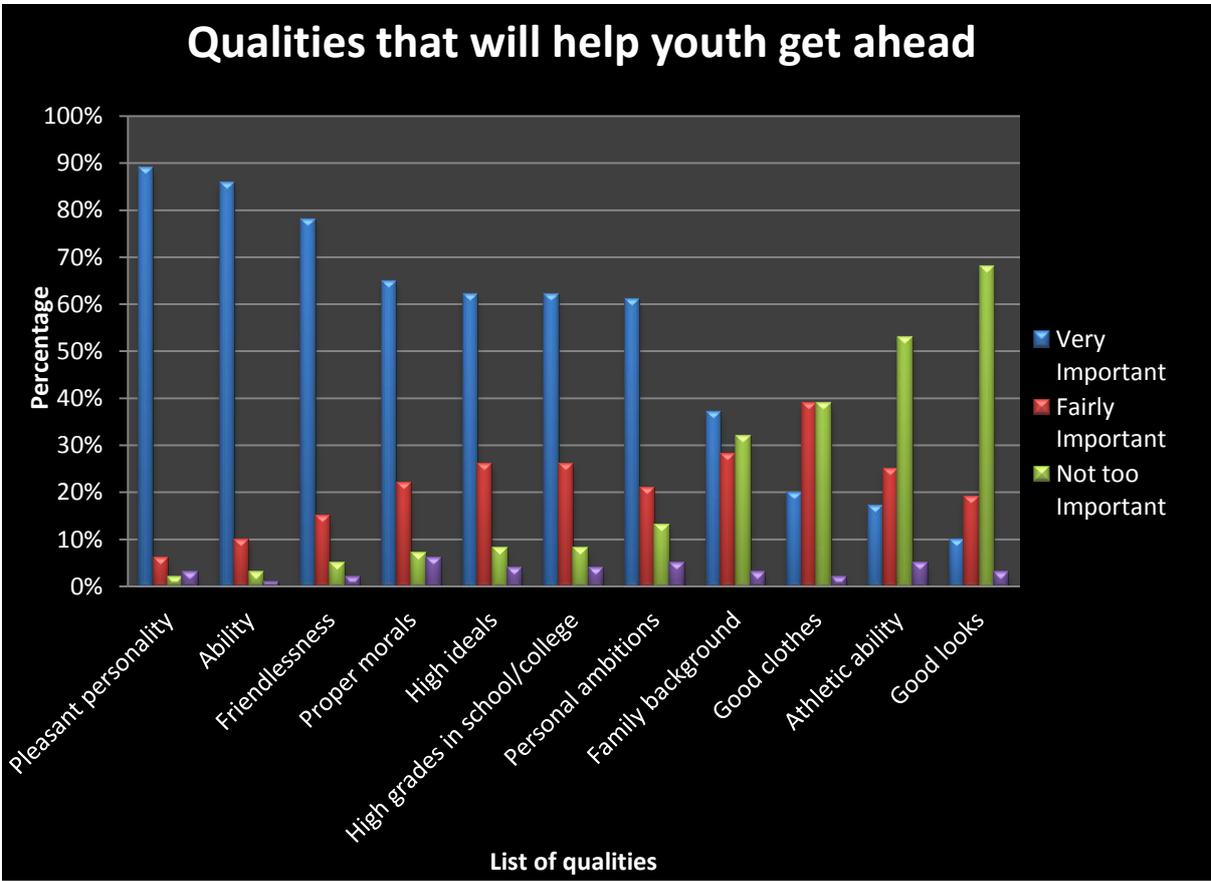
Figure 4.3.3.1: *Respondent evaluations of qualities that will help Black male youths get ahead in life*

4.3.4 Advice and Guidance

Table 4.3.4.1. Respondent evaluations of sources that youths usually turn to for advice and guidance

Sources of Advice and Guidance	*Percent of respondents who reported youths seeking advice and guidance from each source*
Sports leaders/mentors within the community	59%
Personal friend(s) of the same age	48%
Mother	16%
Other relatives	11%
Older friend(s)	6%
School/college personnel	3%
Both parents	2%
Religious leaders within the community	2%
Father	2%

- *Please note that percentages do not total 100% because respondents were asked to report as many sources of advice as were appropriate.*

Of the n= 17 respondents 59% thought that youth sought advice and guidance from sports leaders and mentors within the community, this was followed by personal friends of the same age (48%); mother (16%); other relatives (11%); older friends (6%) school/college personnel (3%); both parents (2%); religious leaders within the community (2%) and father (2%).

4.3.5 Racial Attitudes, Organisations and Approaches

Respondents disagreed with the majority of statements in figure 4.3.5.1. The relatively high percentage of respondents who said "don't know" was predictable due to the contentious nature of the statements presented. Most of them are not strong believers in "Black Power" (11), and did not think that the situation would be improved if Blacks were more separated from Whites (1). The fact that 100% of the respondents disagreed with the statement that "Sometimes Blacks ought to carry guns when protesting" (2), and 51% agreed that "Non-violence is always the best approach for Blacks to use" (7), might suggest that Black educators and leaders oppose the use of weapons and violence as a means of conflict resolution amongst young people. Although only 10% of respondents indicated that they would participate in a riot (4), the extent to which the respondents reported agreement with that statement "If things don't get better in London, there will be riots from the Black community" (14), is comparatively large (90%). This suggests that the possibility of future disturbances of a riotous nature is very likely if Black youths continue to feel marginalised by outside agencies (as seen in London during the summer of 2011).
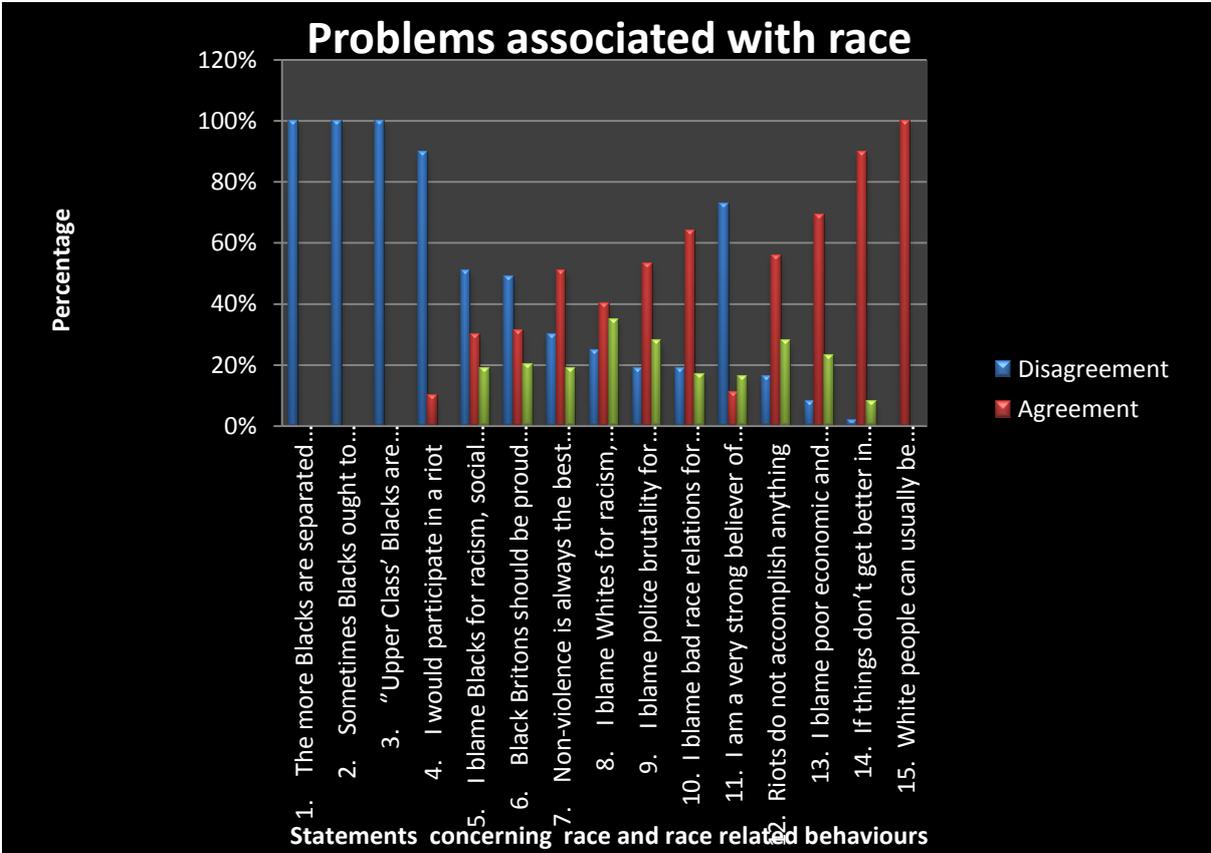
Figure 4.3.5.1 *Responses to statements concerning selected problematic aspects of race and race-related behaviour*

Inspection of figure 4.3.5.2 shows the 'educational programmes to change prejudice and discrimination' won the approval of the respondents more than any other group (96%). The order was: Educational Programmes to change prejudice and discrimination (96%); Bi-racial Committees (95%); Non-violence (92%); Christian Leadership Conference (75%); Court cases to changes racism (75%); Racial Equality Councils (72%); Black Power (69%); Street demonstrations and protest marches (63%); Rastafarian Movement (44%); Brixton Black Panthers (42%); School and College boycotts and strikes (30%); Economic boycott and strikes (29%); Nation of Islam (20%) and Riots (13%). Education is still a dominant problem faced by the Black community, and is a major concern for respondents. More than a third of all respondents endorsed more dramatic forms of activity, such as street demonstrations and economic walk-outs. The least favoured approach was riots, which received only (13%).
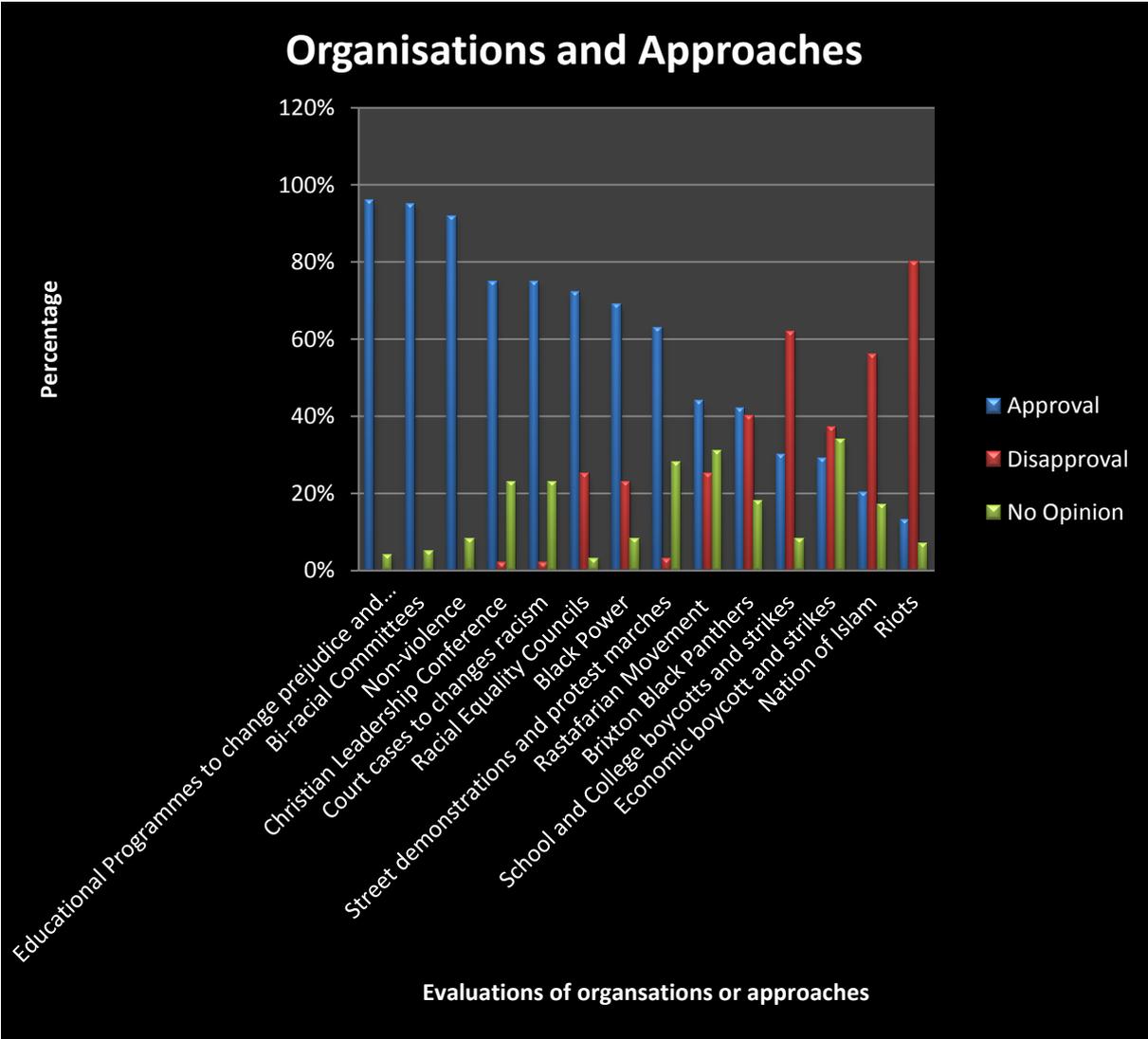
Figure 4.3.5.2. *Respondent evaluations of organisations or approaches that focus on Black and Ethnic populations within the United Kingdom*

4.3.6 Delinquency

Figure 4.3.6.1 shows that over 90% of respondents thought that youths drank and bought beer, wine and liquor (95% and 89% respectively), and that nearly 90% had driven a car without a license (89%) and been summoned to court (89%).This was followed by used a firearm (87%); skipped school or college (86%); been imprisoned (85%); taken a car without permission (83%); taken things worth more than £10 (78%); bought narcotic drugs (74%); sold narcotic drugs (72%); used narcotic drugs (63%); taken part in high risk sexual behaviours (63%); used force to get money from another person (62%); had negative sexual health outcomes (62%); sniffed glue (53%).
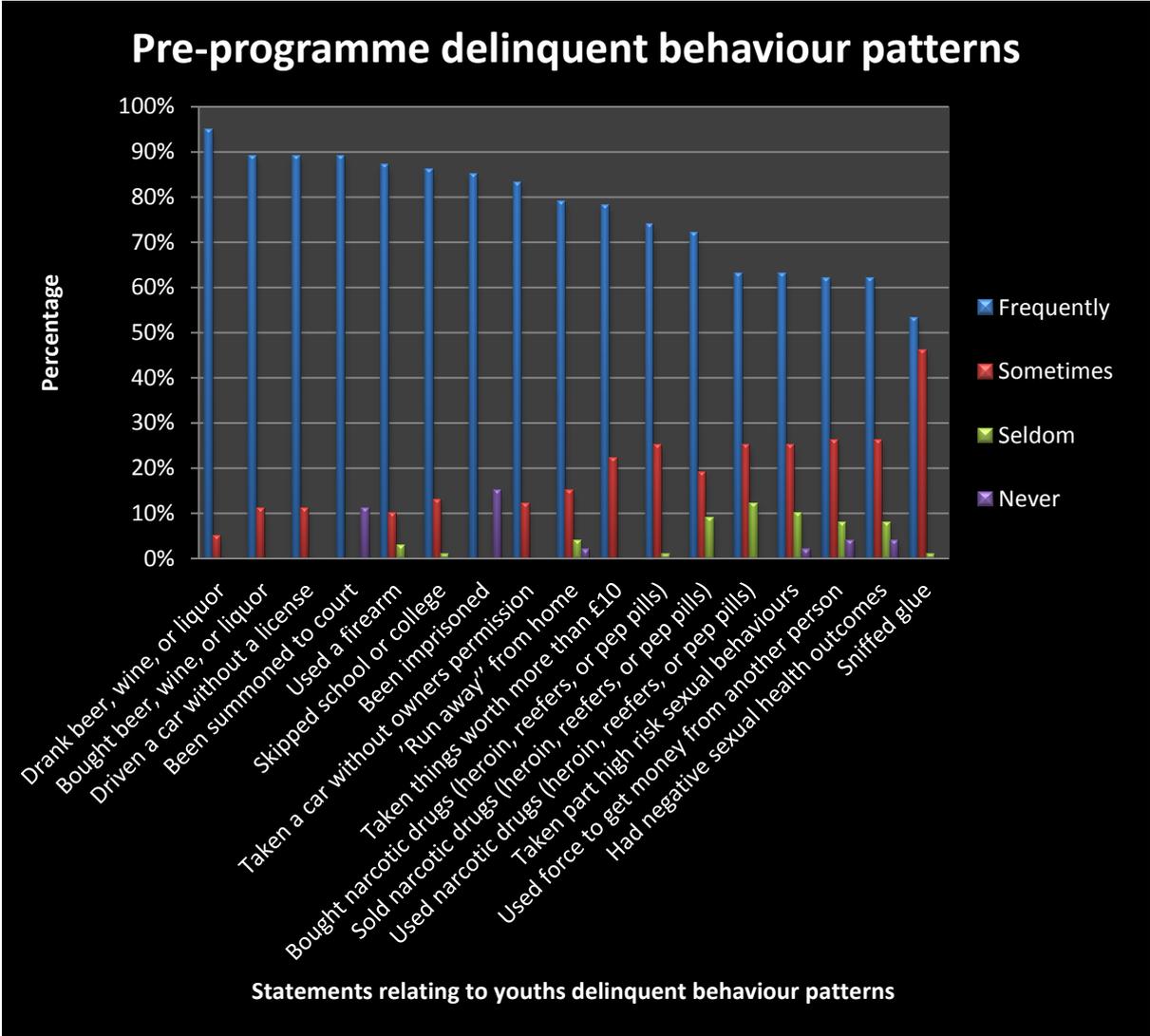
Figure 4.3.6.1. *Respondent evaluations of youths pre-programme delinquent behaviour patterns*

Figure 4.3.6.2 shows that over 50% of respondents thought that youths still drank and bought beer, wine and liquor (60% and 56% respectively), and that 55% were still being summoned to court. This was followed by run away from home (50%); sniffed glue (49%); taken part in high risk sexual behaviours (49%); had negative sexual health outcomes (42%); taken a car without owner's permission (34%); used narcotic drugs (24%); sold narcotic drugs (20%). Respondents stated that during and post programme involvement in the programme youths participation in the following behaviour patterns greatly decreased (either seldom or never); these included: driven a car without a license (81%); skipped school or college (96%); taken things worth more than £10 (94%); used force to get money from another person (45%); used a firearm (60%); bought narcotic drugs (81%) and been imprisoned (45%).
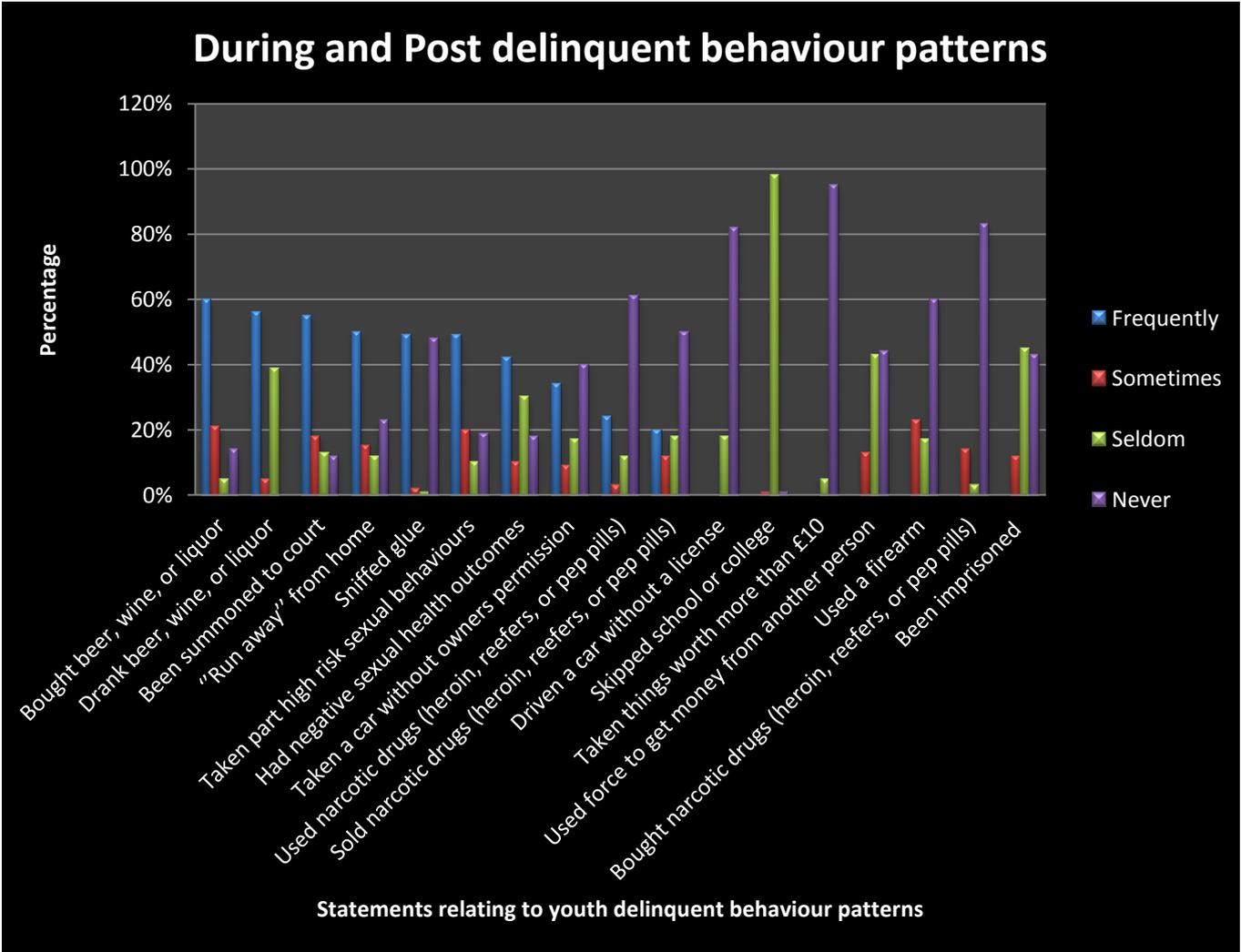
Figure 4.3.6.2 *Respondent evaluations of youths during and post delinquent behaviour patterns*

4.4 Summary of results

This chapter has described the major findings from the three methods of research. Within this section the significant themes arising from the study were also described. Chapter five will discuss these findings in the context of the previous and emergent literature.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

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5.1 Introduction

The educative role of sport as a concept includes the identification of the values it embodies, and how it can be used to develop transferable skills, such as self-leadership, is supported by research conducted within this thesis. This chapter draws together the findings from the different research phases in relation to the aims and objectives of the study, and presents the key themes that have emerged which relate to the concept of whether sport has an educative role. The findings are related to the literature review (presented in chapter two) and re-examined on the basis of relevant theories and empirical evidence. The strengths, limitations and study implications are also considered, which shed light on both future research directions and practical applications of sport-related intervention programmes in social settings.

This section consists of six sections, namely: Practical Life Issues; Educational Concerns; Social Bonding; Personal Development; Attitudinal Change; and the Role of Sport. Each of these will now be presented and discussed.

5.1.1 Practical Life Issues

The research provides evidence that practical life issues and experiences prior to enrolling onto one of the sports programmes played a major role in social disengagement for the young Black men involved in the study. The findings within the present study revealed that disengaged youth exhibited problematic behavioural actions prior to enrolling on the sports programme. Such classification (*e.g., overt behaviours*) could be supported further by Bandura's social learning theory (Baron & Byrne, 2004; Green & Kreuter, 1991; Roca, 2006).

This study draws attention to at-risk youths' behaviours prior to enrolling on the sport programmes in relation to the foundations for shaping individual-related problem behaviours, and also group-related problem behaviours which were core elements of their initial and continued disengagement. In terms of individual-related problem behaviours, this refers to

general delinquent behaviours carried out by an individual at-risk youth. A youth gave an example of this in recounting his previous behaviour patterns prior to joining the sports programme which were triggered by an internal anger towards authority figures:

"I'd just go mad, like totally cos [because] I felt that they were stereotyping me because of my colour and how I dressed and not listening to me or understanding what I was trying to say to them…and once I got mad I just lost it. I'd throw things at them [the police], vandalise police cars, and put graffiti on walls… I've even done joy-riding when drunk and stuff, all sorts cos [because] I didn't care how others saw me, and I was not bothered if I was aggressive and disorderly towards the police [authority figures]. Just wanted to make my point" (Group 3, Male #3).

Group-related problem behaviours on the other hand refer to special delinquent acts which are committed by co-offenders in delinquent groups or street gangs; formed for a variety of reasons (Bennett & Holloway, 2004), in which engagement in an array of group activities, in addition to criminal behaviour, was routinely practiced as a way to form and maintain that particular type of group and/or gang subculture.

Theodorson and Theodorson (1979) acknowledge that the concept of group delinquency is based on a common set of goals, shared norms and a sense of shared identity (Kids Count, 2006; Warr, 2002), which creates a culture of deviance and increases the likelihood of continued criminal behaviour (Gatti, Tremblay & Vitaro, 2009). Findings within this study found that prior to enrolling on one of the sports programmes over 70% of youths had sold narcotic drugs and used a firearm within turf wars or drive-by shootings (72% and 87%, respectively) as a part of the initiation process into the gang. Peer influence played a major role as many at-risk youths were accompanied during these delinquent events by *"people that they usually ran around with"* (Group 3, Male #5).

If this is indeed so, then it adds weight to the argument posed by Warr (2002), who indicates that in order for the range of relevant actors of youth crime and delinquency to be fully understood, not only individual-related problem behaviours, but also group-related problem behaviours such as antisocial group subcultures, gang initiation processes, characteristics of local gangs and decision-making processes must be clarified.

With more than 169 identified gangs in London, young Black men between the ages of 14 to 21 are described as the largest group, followed by Asians and White groups (Cox, 2011; Kids Count, 2006; Scott, 2007). In this regard, sports programmes have proven to facilitate

opportunities for advancement, empowerment and development for this particular demographic (Andrews & Andrews, 2003; DCMS, 2002; Tacon, 2007). Statistics from this study support this, with more than 50% of respondents indicating that high-risk and disengaged youth enrolled on their sport-based programmes sought advice and guidance from sports leaders and mentors within the community. It is acknowledged that young men need and value role models (Featherstone & Deflem, 2003; Figueroa, 2004), and sports leaders can fulfil this role and steer these young men away from an association with gang affiliation, murder, drug dealing, prison and violence which in contrast provide the worst role models for these young Black men.

In looking at the variables of youth disengagement more closely, Green and Kreuter (1991) proposed that the psychological characteristics such as at-risk youths' attitudes, beliefs, values and social skills also play a role in their adoption of criminal acts.

A sports coach gave another example of this by highlighting the psychological barriers experienced by many of the young men he works with, in recounting how the young men within the programme had been trained to have no sense of direction which meant that they could not manage the pressures of life, and had few social skills to manage themselves in all aspects of their lives, so they always made poor choices in the context of achieving or restoring upward mobility objectives (*such as maintaining high grades in school and college*):

> *"They come here totally unconditioned and they are susceptible to everything and everyone because they have no one in their family unit, that's if they have one to start with, that truly, cares about their progression from a boy to a man. Stability is a concept that is foreign to them; they make poor choices about study commitments, gang involvement and pre-marital sex as they have no clear sense that it could harm their chance for future success. Family breakdown has meant that they are not supported and as a consequence they do not know what they need to do and how to put themselves in the best position"* (Interview #2)

The aforementioned findings accord with theories and empirical studies which clearly show that youth criminality and delinquency acts are more likely to be committed by at-risk and disengaged youths who possess feelings of helplessness and relinquishment from childhood which hinders their ability to show balance in their life during adolescent years (The General Strain Theory; Snyder & Rogers, 2002). More specifically, many explained that the emotional deficit and distress experienced as a consequence of low levels of Black male role models

had created a gap that subconsciously needed to be filled (The General Strain Theory; Paternoster & Mazerolle, 1994):

"I had no one, felt totally empty as a child, no one to kick a football around with in the park. It was that lack of male presence that created that gap, I needed something, anything to fill it…you know like I was in pain and felt rejected, so I started getting defiant at school and at home, I hated the world and I thought the world hated me" (Group #3, Male #2)

The feelings of rejection that featured in a lot of the focus group discussions with the young men within this study appear similar to aspects associated with the transmission of male emotional and physical abandonment; Parson (1937), previously cited in the literature, referred to male emotional and physical abandonment as a relationship dynamic that occurs when an adult denies key responsibilities that is expected of them by mainstream society and government agencies, like parental obligations, and/or they choose to leave despite the trauma it might cause the child or young person within that particular family unit. This bears similarity to the subconscious inability of the young men to then bond with significant others such as teachers due to the stressors such as *"shock, confusion, shame, guilt and a bit of fear"* (Male youth, group #1) associated with being abandoned by their fathers. Another youth elaborated on this sense of abandonment and the consequence of such actions on his life:

"Don't think my dad wherever he is realised the effect his absence would have on me later in life. I needed him, I needed to be protected by my dad, instead he just left my mum to cope alone, she couldn't cope with everything, it all broke down and I was left traumatised, pushed from this person to that" (Group #3, Male #2)

According to research by The Centre for Social Justice (2011) and Trotter and Campbell (2008), it is the disempowerment that is created as a consequence of family breakdown within the Black community that really affects young Black men and causes that break down of unity that we see today. This study recognises family breakdown as a major contextual variable of youth delinquency behaviours. One youth illustrated the effects this had on his life:

"It was like when I was young I needed support and understanding, but my parents were so caught up in fighting and dealing with their own issues, that I was forgotten.

By the time I was nineteen I'd been back to jail twice and had begun to take heroin [Class A drug]" (Group 3, Male #1)

The findings are consistent with previous research studies which have indicated that there are causal relationships between family breakdown and delinquent youths (Smith & Thornberry, 1995; Smith, 2007) and between absent fathers and criminal practice and delinquent behaviour patterns in their offspring (Eastern, 2003).

More than anything, the past and present experiences of the youth within this study had a major impact on reasons for their continued disengagement prior to getting involved with one of the sport intervention programmes. Aspects surrounding racism and ethnic inequality were identified by both participants and educators. One youth [within a focus group session] explained the effects of racial stigma within the classroom on his chances of academic success:

"I'd find it hard sometimes to fight against the system and increase my self-control and my self-belief so that I could keep my overall goals in mind and so that I could act appropriately, I dunno [don't know] I really struggled to take effective notes and keep a study schedule, it's just that feeling of knowing that you're stigmatised by others, stigmatised by educators, it interferes with your ability to maintain focus in lessons" (Focus group #1, Male #3)

A programme director explained the problematic issues and outcomes of covert forms of racial discrimination existing within modern society:

"It is the combined elements of racism as a whole that is ensuring that our young Black men stay down and never push upward with successful academic grades or employment routes. The White stimuli still rule and the young Black men that I deal with on a daily basis definitely know it, they can feel the racism cycle daily. These young Black men live in urban poverty, yet their White neighbours live as urban kings. In my view disengagement and crime is a time bomb waiting to explode" (Interview #11).

As a consequence of institutionalised racial discrimination and continued White privilege within the 21st century, racism is becoming even more covert and damaging (though no less real or harmful). Bonillia- Silva (2013) provides further support for this concept, indicating that the oppression and social injustices experienced by the Black community, creates

numbed and desensitised conditions that young Black men do not only have to try and exist within, but also excel within, which at times becomes merely impossible.

Immersed in that cycle of covert racism, low levels of education and long-term unemployment meant that many felt stuck and more inclined to go towards criminal pathways to make quick money and get nice things. Some youths illustrated this within a focus group discussion:

> *"Well before I came here I'd say, if I couldn't get it then I'd steal it to get it, cos [because] I was getting it somehow"* (Group 2, Male #3)

Another went on to say:

> *"Crime paid for my trainers and hoodies back then I didn't care… "*
> (Group 2, Male #5)

As a consequence of social exclusion from educational settings this study shows that, once the young men had been excluded from school or college without basic academic qualifications, the relationships between the youths, their families and their girlfriends became exacerbated.

One youth poignantly described his outrage at the matter:

> *"By excluding me from college when I was young they took away my ability to learn in a structured setting. From then I went bad, I was so bored at home that I just started hanging around with the older boys on the estate when my mum was at work…I started getting aggressive at home with my mum and my girlfriend and I couldn't even find a weekend job cos [because] I didn't have much qualifications…my life became such a mess"* (Group 3, Male #2)

Such negative relationships could be explained as the 'circle of negative relationships' (Boyes-Watson, 2008; Burns *et al*, 2008; Roca, 2006). For instance, first they were excluded from school or college. Secondly, their parents (*mostly mothers due to being in single parent households*) punished them severely, were reluctant to help and finally gave up on them, which worsened the family relationships. Thirdly, the aggression that came from their frustration of being bored, uneducated and jobless made their girlfriends draw away from

them out of fear. Therefore, the consequences of the initial exclusion, affected all stakeholders including parents, girlfriends and themselves. As a result of being excluded, the youths were more likely to be shunned by mainstream society.

According to the findings of the research, the role of practical life issues in lining the disengagement pathway is persuasive. The research elaborated on the negative effects of academic exclusions and its relation to further exclusion from mainstream society. The removal from a constructive educational setting makes high-risk youths more attached to their delinquent cohorts, and it is like a spiral of exclusion disengagement (Cox, 2011; Kids Count, 2006; Operario, Tschann, Flores & Bridges, 2006), as they gain power and group status from other at-risk youths who praise their negative behaviours, which is a crucial factor in yielding criminal and delinquent behaviours, which often to lead to educational disparity. The concerns surrounding educational progression for this particular demographic group will be discussed next.

5.1.2 Educational Concerns

The ability to overcome educational barriers is essential in mobilising high-risk and disengaged young Black men, by giving them a chance to gain qualifications or even gain employment and not have to claim benefits or turn to crime in the future. However, this study found that the target population had obstacles which hindered their educational progression, such as family structure (*a rise in single-parent households*), low parental education, poverty, and access to resources (*such as computers*), which exacerbate the educational disparities of this particular demographic group (Lloyd, Tienda & Zajacova, 2001; Teachman, Paasch, Day & Carver, 1997). It is these disparities that then contribute to the exclusion of large numbers of Black male students from the privileges enjoyed by non-minority youth.

Poor youth are more prone to scholastic underperformance because they have lowered educational attainment and ambitions than youth reared in affluent families (Lloyd, Tienda & Zajacova, 2001). In this context, findings from this study showed that many Black youths had no interest in education-related work such as study, class participation and exams because they had not been taught the value of education and had no success/achievement goals for the future, such as progression onto college or apprenticeship schemes, due to the fact that many felt blighted by low levels of education and low teacher expectations (Kuykendall, 1989; Paasch, Day & Carver, 1997). A youth refers to the nature of educational barriers and preconceptions from teachers which were experienced during secondary education and caused lethargy towards learning:

"I lived in Tottenham when I was at school and the neighbourhood was not that great and the quality of the school I went to was bad as well, I think it's a combination of a bad learning environment and also low teacher expectations that affected my level of education, I didn't even leave with GCSE's" (Group 2, Male #3)

In line with previous research by Boyes-Watson (2001) and Roca (2006) on negative relationship trends, low teacher expectations in turn encourage young men to become disinterested in education and learning and could, therefore, prolong the vicious circle of negative relationships. Perhaps the sports programmes help turn this into a virtuous circle through engaging interest in educational potential, and supporting belief in personal ability and the value of education for themselves, so that scholastic underperformance can be reversed and engagement in youth disengagement and violence reduced (Agnew, 2001; Bernburg, 2002; Merton, 1938; National Research Council and Institution of Medicine, 2002).

This statement was supported by results from this study which show good signs of improvement in rates of delinquent behaviour patterns following programme involvement, with less than 50% stealing cars (34%); sniffing glue (49%); using narcotic drugs (24%) and selling narcotic drugs (20%). A programme manager on one of the sports programmes also supported the link between crime reduction and educational attainment by indicating that:

"It's possible to reduce crime rates by raising the education potential of these young Black men, high levels of education in both academia and general life skills alters these youths preferences in indirect ways, which may affect decisions to engage in crime, for example education increases their patience and aversion" (Interview, #9)

The underachievement of young Black men has become a growing problem within the UK. In literature it was reported that only 25% of Afro-Caribbean boys gain five good GCSE results in comparison to 51% of the population as a whole (BBC, 2004a; Stephenson, 2007). The Guardian (2010) adds weight to this indicating that in 2008 the Department for Education reported that only 27% of Black boys achieved five or more A*- C grades at GCSE level. As a result of such low levels of educational attainment, many find it hard to move onto higher education routes such as college and university, with research suggesting that those who

manage to progress to university do not perform as well as their White counterparts (Harper & Harris, 2012; Perry & Francis, 2010; Tackey, Barnes & Khambhaita, 2011). As result crime becomes an alternative option that many undertake in order to achieve their goals *(i.e. acquiring material things).* It could be argued that education and the routines that it endorses is too long a process therefore crime is a quick way to gain monetary success, thus inducing self-fulfilling prophecy tendencies, for example, young Black men turn away from educational routes and begin to commit more crimes and form an idenity with the role (criminal) and its associated values, attitudes and beliefs (Dwyer, 2001; Merton, 1938). Such classification *(e.g. low academic performances)* could be supported further by Robert Merton's anomie/strain theory. Central to the anomie theory is the fact that *"individuals are more likely to pursue monetary success using whatever route necessary, including crime"* (Agnew, 2003, p.171), and in doing so many young Black men are affected by a "snowball" effect of official labelling, arrest and imprisonment, thus becoming subject to the varied negative consequences associated with the criminal choices and monetary successes they pursue (Bernburg & Krohen, 2003; Kirk & Sampson, 2013).

This study draws attention to the educational "crisis" and loss of direction faced by the Black community, but also provides evidence as to how sport within a programme setting has been successfully used as a catalyst to positively grow and develop at-risk youth. Some youths explained how participating in sport has helped them develop self-discipline, team working skills and adopt self-control when under extreme pressure, such as playing in the Muay Tai [a combat sport from Thailand] finals within the club. These situations require the young athlete to cope effectively under pressure and at the same time achieve optimum performance. Additionally, a significant number of youths expressed the importance of learning functional skills such as interview practice, college and job searching, budgeting and work-based training as a part of the career programme run at the sports academies.

The ethos of education emerged strongly as a sub-theme of educational concerns in interviews with coaches and leaders. It relates to the fact that racial and ethnic disparities in educational attainment imply lifelong differences in the youths' socio-economic standing, and underscores the urgency of equalising opportunity to reverse the troubling trends that continue to generate margins amongst this particular demographic group and others populations (Teachman, Paasch, Day & Carver, 1998). In particular, this study showed that Black youth are being neglected by the educational system, as they are not able to fully understand the purpose and ethos of education for their lives. For example, one of the sports

coaches acknowledged the need to look at the fact that the 'one size fits all approach' of the current system does not work, and neglects those most at risk.

A youth mentor discussed the need for the Government to be more pro-active when dealing with multi-complex solutions towards educational progressions by explaining that:

> *"The ethos of education for the disadvantaged needs to be changed, the government needs to look at organisations such as this to learn how to input creativity and freedom in solutions" (Interview, #1)*

Within an educational context and in accordance with research by the Youth Justice Board (2010), the percentage of Whites and Asians are generally over represented in relation to their population shares, whilst Blacks and in particular Afro-Caribbean's are underrepresented (Lloyd, Tienda & Zajacova, 2001). However, the importance of merit-based rewards as necessary criteria within the structuring system of colleges and universities must be recognised. It is equally important to note that the legacy and the various ills associated with growing up in segregated urban environments forecloses equal educational opportunity to students whose family circumstances cannot purchase or maintain the necessities associated with quality primary, secondary and further education experiences. While education is theoretically free within the UK, the extra costs associated with sending children and adolescents to school and college remain relatively high, especially for low income families (Horgan, 2007).

Against a backdrop of rising inequality, diversity and positive learning experiences become ever more difficult. The results within this study support research by Lloyd, Tienda and Zajacova (2001), which highlight that policies and referral organisations that work to promote positive social experiences, opportunities and access to resources for at-risk youth must continue to be injected into the educational pipeline at all schooling levels.

The ultimate injustice is foreclosing educational opportunities and avenues in which positive social exchanges can occur *(via social bonding and bridging)*, whereby the fate of young Black men is sealed and another generation lost to the mass echoes of disadvantage, despondency and desperation (Jasper, 2012). Social bonding and bridging will be the next theme discussed.

5.1.3 Social Bonding and Bridging

A fundamental concept of social capital is empowerment; through which disengaged youth can gain access to power and resources to assist them back into the community (Dale, 2005). Problems associated with social capital outcomes for young Black youth emerged from the interviews and focus group discussions, and the ramifications were explained by a sports director:

> *"It can be said that the social capital available to young people influences how well they learn, the possibility of attending university, whether will get into crime, and the likelihood that they will do street drugs. This country overlooks young people, except when they get into trouble. " (Interview, #10)*

This study shows that sport activities play a major role in promoting sport-related benefits for the youths, with many young men expressing improvements in their skills and social bonding through participating in various sporting activities. Similarly, Putman's work on social capital (2000) recognises the importance of bridging social capital and the strength of sport to initiate and maintain social integration for marginalised individuals, for example, creating a sense of unity where sport related skills (*e.g.,. kick-ups in football*) can be developed (Lavis & Stoddart, 1999). However, it should be noted that when dealing with such groups sensitivity towards the needs of the excluded group must be injected, in this way individuals within this study began to bridge on certain dimensions such as team bonding which is especially important for success (Putman, 2000).

Many of the youth came to the sports programmes with greater emotional distress levels than those from more privileged backgrounds, with the heightened emotional distress levels having an impact on their inability to have positive social relationships with significant others (*such as partners, educators, parents*). This could be further supported by Hirschi (1969) and the General Theory of Crime which draws a connection between the creation of stronger social bonding networks and fewer deviant behaviour outcomes. Furthermore, and in accordance with work by Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) on social control theories, an individuals' criminal behaviour patterns can be better explained through the causal relationship from impulsive personality, low self-control, damaged social bonds, criminal opportunity, to law-breaking and deviant acts. These could to some extent be viewed as antecedents of at-risk youth behaviours. In this particular study all of the sports programmes provided an array of opportunities for at-risk youths to bond together and allowed them to

form stronger social norms, thus explaining a key strength of the programmes. Some sports coaches referred to social bonding as a key strength of the programme. The Muay Tai coach believed that sport provided a particularly useful resource for developing positive friendships, given the scant opportunities available for positive friendship opportunities on the "street".

He went on to say:

> *"It's our ability to promote bonding between youths. We don't look at their past, just leave everything outside the door and when they come in they're like together in one, the club brings them together and creates a sense of unity amongst them all"* (Interview, #8)

The coach perceived the "street culture" as being one where at-risk youths were regularly exposed to negative forms of social bonding and where impetus rested on running around participating in street crime and drug trading, all of which was certainly not conducive to the development of achievement and discipline. Therefore, the sports programmes provided a pathway for youths from similar backgrounds to come together, and it provided an effective analogy for them to learn general life skills, as sport is something they could associate with and were already passionate about.

Coaches offered evidence of how they aimed to treat at-risk youths' lack of social skills and attachment, such as the lack of cooperating with others, poor communication, projectile aggression and self-control issues. All three organisations implemented various sports and martial art classes, healthy eating workshops, and other experiences. Various intervention studies that focus on violence amongst young men (Prothrow-Stith, Spivak & Hausman, 1987; Wilson *et al.*, 2003), put a strong emphasis on sport intervention alongside social skills training intervention approaches, which have been shown to provide an effective platform to aid changes in at-risk youths violent and aggressive behaviour patterns. Kalogerakis's (2003) argument provides further support for these claims indicating that sport-related intervention programmes that facilitate face-to-face interaction both within and outside of the sport activities are effective in promoting social skill development through varied learning outcomes.

All three sports programmes increased positive relationships among stakeholders and strengthened social bonds (*create/maintain new group norms and identity*). This relates to work by Howell and Hawkins (1998) who indicated that in order to generate strong bonds and counteract the influence of gang affiliation, programmes must look at the group

identification processes and group norms as youth tend to have a stronger group membership due to their age. In particular, for many of these emotionally damaged, disaffected and alienated youth these are important formative years (Cox, 2011; Kids Count, 2008; Scott, 2007). Gangs can spontaneously meet their psychological needs and help affirm their own identity, sexuality and the sort of adult they want to be. However, and in accordance with research by Scott (2007), once the embryonic young gangs that these youth belonged to began to mimic more established 'hard core' gangs and accept certain structural features such as gang initiation processes, they were more likely to be able to break into and be included in the larger criminal subculture.

The process of altering group identification in the findings of this study was similar to that reported by Brown (2000) and McLeish and Oxoby (2008), who suggested that varying salient identities can significantly affect behaviour at any moment in time. Therefore, within this study, the researcher contends that although delinquent peer groups are the most salient factors in explaining youth crime and deviant practices, once the at-risk youth got involved in and committed to an alternative group, such as the boxing group or the basketball team, and began to take on the norms/identity that the sport embraced (*such as routine, co-operation, positive leadership*), they learnt to decrease their antisocial behaviours by associating with non-risk peers in the group, and forming bonds with non-risk peers and the coaches through civic engagement and integration (Coleman, 1988; Walseth, 2004; 2008).

There is a huge, largely unexplored potential for the formation of positive self-identity and social inclusion for disengaged youth in attending community sports projects. It is thought that these are likely to be maximised with sport and physical activity projects due to factors discussed such as the development of positive leadership and teambuilding skills, and in those activities where disengaged at-risk youth and other members of the community can interact on an equal footing.

In accordance with social development theories in juvenile delinquency (Ayers *et al.*, 1999; Hartwell, 2000), positive social experiences through effective bonding and bridging, plus the increased sense of internal moral codes and personal consciousness that come from continued positive interactions is thought to decrease the urge to engage in antisocial behaviour patterns (Walseth, 2008), thus, aiding personal development. This theme will be discussed within the next section.

5.1.4 Personal Development

The young men's lives were punctuated with anger and aggression caused by an absence of positive Black male role models and a lack of progressive opportunities within their communities. A loss of direction was common amongst many participants. By attending the sporting programmes at the clubs, the youth found a new sense of direction, and regular attendance gave them an escape from the harsh reality of gang membership.

The integrative properties of the sports activities on offer to the young men were apparent from the research findings; the sports coaches and volunteers ensured that the participants got involved in the activities by internalising the sports benefits. It was evident from focus group discussions with the youth that this had been achieved:

> *"Since coming to KidGloves I quit smoking and started taking part in their midnight basketball classes instead"* (Male #1, group 2)

> *"The sport programme promotes sport as being important for intrinsic reasons of enjoyment, but also for a range of external reasons such as health, the economy, socialisation, achievement, national pride and so on. I really believe these are helping my personal development, as now I'm a part of something"* (Male #3, group 2)

In addition to the sport related benefits such as improved health and well-being, internal participation motivation was a key factor and a high majority of the young men demonstrated intrinsic motivation (*e.g., sport participants are interested in the sport itself and in having an opportunity to increase their knowledge base towards an accomplishment*). Deci and Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory posits that individuals can move along a continuum from amotivation, to external motivation, to internal motivation. Findings within this study support Deci and Ryan's (1985) views on the relationship between sport participation and motivation. Results show intrinsic motivation as commonplace amongst the young men and that it helped focus their enduring efforts and resilience to participate in the whole sport programme from start to finish. This played a significant role in promoting engagements away from gang habitation (Miller & Rollnick, 2002; Wood & Alleyne, 2010).

Additionally, the young men on the programmes offered evidence of how reduced deviant labelling had increased their self-image and contributed to positive personal development pathways, by making reference to how sport coaches and mentors provided continuous

encouragement and positive reinforcement and feedback during sessions, which contributed to the development of positive self-identity, leadership and character development.

One youth clarified this:

> *"It's just consistent encouragement, they say [the sports coaches], come on you can do it, you can win, do it for the team. Feedback is always a part of our development in Muay Tai classes and competitions"* (Male #2, group 2)

In particular, at the FFP, competitive sporting events such as football matches and martial art fights exposed the youth to leadership, and were used as a method of nurturing leadership potential, where the youths improved their leadership ability through being around other leaders, such as the coaches. More importantly however, was the role of competition, where the youths were made aware of their leadership abilities through being given a leadership role in a competitive situation, such as being nominated as a football captain.

One youth expanded on this and explained:

> *"By being nominated as Captain I was showing everyone that I could lead the guys on the pitch, it's a great feeling, really great" (Male #3, Group1).*

The suggestion here is that the innate ability to lead and develop personal attributes was encouraged by sport providing the mechanism to activate it.

In this regard, FFP and KG helped the youths positively re-evaluate themselves by helping them overcome their lowered self-image by direct positive stimulus and also by promoting leadership opportunities between the participants, and fostering positive interactions with educators and parents which helped decrease the effects of labelling. These findings support Ferguson and Snipes (1996) by indicating that integrative sports programmes need to not only look at ways of resolving existing tension between old and new beliefs that youths might have of themselves, but also look at ways of promoting adherence to healthier lifestyles, personal satisfaction and positive anticipation about future choices.

It is clear from this study that many of the disaffected and alienated youth began to establish some degree of order, clarity, and stability within their personal frame of reference through continued engagement in the sports programmes. The development of intrinsic motivation

enabled them to overcome feelings of inferiority, anger and aggression caused by the strains within their lives (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Featherstone & Deflem, 2003; Merton, 1938; Murphy & Robinson, 2008). This in turn facilitated attitudinal modification for the youths enrolled on the sports programme, which is a key element incorporated within many intervention programmes targeted at high-risk urban communities (Institute for Children, Poverty and Homelessness, 2011). This leads the reader to the next discussion theme, attitudinal change.

5.1.5 Attitudinal Change

The on-going stigmatisation, criminalisation and even demonisation of at-risk young Black men makes it extremely difficult to ignite change amongst this particular demographic, with a large amount still facing prejudice based on their race in a wide variety of venues (Birzer & Smith-Mahdi, 2006; Broman, Mavadatt & Hsu, 2000; Gibbons *et al.*, 2012). Many youths within this study felt that continued discrimination against ex-prisoners from minority backgrounds was a major reason why so many found it hard to invoke change in their lives once leaving the Juvenile Justice System. One youth who spent a few years in Feltham Young Offender's Institution illustrated this within a focus group discussion:

> *"The discrimination is less visible in urban areas cos [because] of the larger concentrations of young Black men who are ex-prisoners, like every next man has just come out of pen [jail], but the negative attitudes amongst those from the comfortable, leafy parts [suburbs] is horrid"* (Group 1, Male #2)

Another went onto to say:

> *"It just chips away at you bit by bit. Even if we [Black youths] are just sitting on the street corner doing nothing, people feel intimidated by us [Black youth], and cos [because] the media puts on reports about how bad we are, that just justifies their [White people] belief about us [Black male youth] being criminals and everyone panics"* (Group 1, Male #5)

It appeared that the majority of youth had experienced some sort of discrimination based on their race and previous delinquency acts. Its seemed that at the heart of the creation of moral panics (MPs) amongst mainstream society about Black youth in Black communities were the media reports and negative rumours that had been magnified and distorted as a

means of whipping up moral fear to create news headlines (Altheide, 2002; Garland, 2008). Within this context the framework of MPs is useful in understanding how predisposed beliefs within wider society mean that young Black men whose cultures and attitudes may differ from the mainstream are pigeonholed as 'deviant', and as a consequence these individuals are repeatedly in the spotlight and targeted.

Another aspect that is apparent and was raised consistently within focus group sessions is the effect of self-fulfilling prophecies on these young men, in which the label of 'criminal' assigned to them within society triggers the process that traps them into a criminal lifestyle (Downes & Rock ,2003; Dwyer, 2001; Muchie, 2004). According to intervention research by Bernburg and Krohn (2003) many at-risk youth have had a history of being labelled as deviant and failing students within school and college, which has had a profound impact on their social standing, as many will have negative perceptions of themselves (Codrington & Fairchild, 2012), which, in turn, influences lower performance in academic work and makes it harder for them to break away from their delinquent groups or street gangs and integrate into mainstream society (Haralambos & Holborn, 2007; HM Government, 2011).

This sense of negativity that surrounded many of the young men can be further explained by labelling theorists such as Becker (1963) and Jones (2001) who explain that delinquent youths' risky behaviours are more likely to occur because of their distorted perceptions of life. Becker (1963) goes on to argue that, if young men consistently receive negative forms of feedback from educators, parents and authority figures, then they eventually internalise the negativity attached to them by others and the self-injecting attitudes (Haralambos & Holborn, 2007; Kaplan & Lin, 2000; Moore, 1991).

In accordance with labelling theory within the literature, Scimecca (1977) stated that as an outcome of labelling and prejudice among out-groups (mainstream society), a modification of self-image occurs whereby a self-fulfilling prophecy is enacted and Black youths become the label (a criminal) ascribed to them, whereby negative self-belief becomes internalised.

This study draws attention to the impact of this and the mind-set that it creates:

> *"It's like teachers expect us to be aggressive, so we are, and like the police expect us to go jail, so we do. It's so stupid now looking back on it cos [because] we literally play into their hands. It's this self-fulfilling prophecy, like we become what expect of us…we become a criminal"* (Group 3, Male #2)

Another youth explained how easy it becomes for Black youth to submit to the self-fulfilling prophecy within the learning setting:

> *"We [Black youth] like continue to fall behind in school and college, we [Black youth] get defensive and start making negative links with education and learning. It's the self-fulfilling prophecy we [Black youth] become what they [White educators] expect of us"* (Group 3, Male #1)

Agnew (2006) argued that although the 'criminal and delinquent' label might have originally been intended to sway young Black men away from participation in violence and other delinquencies it actually produces the opposite (Agnew, 2004; Burke, 2005). Haralambos and Holborn (2007) add to this by stating that by labelling individuals, in this case young Black men, as 'deviant' a master status is created which pushes forth the negative characteristics normally associated with the label and therefore encourages further deviance. Although labelling theory cannot explain all criminal behaviour, it is clear that it can provide some useful information and help explain previous crime and delinquent behaviours amongst the target group within this study. Although critics indicate that labelling does not automatically induce deviant practices, that individuals have self-choice, they ignore some of the key findings raised within this study, which show that certain cultural, social and economic factors may provoke criminal practices (Agnew, 2004; Burke, 2005; Holborn& Haralambos, 2008; Widom, 1989), and that an adaptation to marginalisation, family problems and deprivation can aid criminal subcultures and deviance amongst young Black men.

However, the study does provide a valid solution to evoking change. The research provides evidence that the development of intrinsic motivation to do sport was a major factor in encouraging behaviour and attitudinal change amongst the young men within this study (Miller & Rollnic, 2002). In particular, individuals began to have a desire to change, and therefore benefited from the intervention programme, as the youths connected to a source of intrinsic motivation through the differing activity endeavours, in terms of something within themselves that made them want to invoke changes.

One youth explained:

> *"I am interested in boxing and motivated to do it, the drive comes from within me now rather than others and it's this internal drive that I use on other aspects of my life now*

too. I wanted to change for myself and achieve success within the ring [boxing ring]"
(Group 2, Male #1)

Birzer and Smith-Mahdi (2006) propose that social exclusion and disengagement interferes with the view of self as capable, and therefore youth avoid situations they perceive will result in failure. The sporting organisations (Fight For Peace; From Boyhood to Manhood Foundation; KidGloves) broke that cycle by allowing the youth to challenge this view in a safe environment, by testing their stamina, mental toughness and abilities at their own pace, thus providing positive feedback, and increasing volition to engage in attitude modifications.

Once attitudinal changes began to transpire amongst the youth, the role of sport in terms of its educative potential could begin to have a real impact on this particular cohort. Results within this study have shown that many of the young Black men started to accept the wrongs associated with their previous practices *(such as involvement in criminal practices, anti-social behaviours and negative stance on lifestyle choices)*, and thus became more open to wanting to change and taking positive steps forwards with their lives. The role of sport within the context of this study will be discussed next.

5.1.6 The Role of Sport

This study found that the programmes synergistically combine different types of programme activities to achieve various outcomes. For example, within all three organisations both sport-related and summer camp activities are implemented to bring at-risk youth to the programme. Then through continuous sport-related activities and educational endeavours it is expected that participants gain a positive sense of self and acquire transferable skills.

One youth commented on the positive impact of sport:

"You know sport has had a positive impact on my life so far, like I've improved and now know how to deal with my personal stress and anxiety; I have more self-esteem. I just feel so included here, these are my boys [my family]" (Group 3, Male #2)

Through sport team activities and competition the youths began to internalise the new group identity of the sports team or activity and abide by the formatted norms.

Another youth from group #1 illustrated this within focus group discussion:

"Like in team games we learn how to be loyal to the group [the team members] and how to have stamina to finish the activity. As it is not just for us [the individual] but for the team, it's all a part of the fun." (Group 1, Male #3)

These findings indicate that certain types of activities can produce similar qualities and this coincides with research on the YMCA Youth Centre by Mercier and colleagues (2000). Mercier *et al.* (2000) found that specific activities such as: (a) sport and physical activity programmes and (b) education and basic skills workshops created various programme attributes including self-worth within a non-judgmental environment, freedom to experiment under adequate supervision, and flexibility to learn. In particular, researchers found that freestyle and mixed sports through the formation of a flexible approach to learning generated positive outcomes and were used as an alternative to street crime including heavy involvement in gangs and drug trading (Bullock & Tilley, 2002; Mercier, *et al.*, 2000).

Therefore this suggests that the same social outcome could be created by distinct attributes as a product of different activity types. With reference to the findings of this study, it could be implied that identifying attributes and certain qualities that could be generated through the synergistic mixture of distinct activity types should be at the forefront of the design and evaluation stages of sport based multi-services programmes within the UK.

It was clear from the findings that all three sports programmes had an overarching objective of decreasing high levels of criminality and delinquency and breaking down the barriers associated with their root causes by reducing obstacles (*such as location, money and activity type*) preventing the target demographic from participating in the activities on offer, as many sports coaches indicated the importance of providing the target participants with sporting opportunities that were the most appealing to them.

One sports coach mentioned:

"They won't come to a project like ours if we did say something like dance, as it would be seen as feminine and would not appeal to them at all. But they come and we retain them week on week because we pride ourselves in providing sport based activities that are relevant to them, things like boxing, football and basketball go down well" (Interview, #2)

Another youth mentor added to this and stated the significance of providing sporting intervention activities as early as possible:

> "Our mobile outreach sessions are great because we offer them in anti-social behaviour hotspots and then we introduce them to the centre we have here. We target areas where there are low aspirations, high levels of unemployment and patterns of substance and alcohol misuse. Our aim is to catch them before crime takes hold of their lives. If we engage them young, they then are encouraged to channel their energies in a positive direction, to take pride in themselves and in their communities" (Interview, #1)

In London, football has an increasing media profile and takes a central position in many of the youths' lives from a young *age (lunch and break time activities at school and in extracurricular sports clubs)* (Skelton, 2000). The fact that FBTM used football as a hook to engage the young men onto the programme can be justified in terms of the customer-centric approach. According to Andersen (1995), perspectives that are customer-centred and person-centred focus on the interests of the target audience. Therefore, findings from this study show that an understanding of the youths 'needs and wants' was an important factor in their initial involvement and sustained engagement in the programme, alongside consideration of the youths' characteristics *(individual and group-related)* as discussed in the previous section, because at-risk youth populations rarely show an interest in participating in intervention methods.

A sports coach described the importance of a person-centred approach:

> "As the main coach here I ensure that the activities are purposeful for these at risk youth" (Interview, #8)

Studies conducted by Gatz *et al.*, (2002); Jamieson and Ross (2007) and Utting (1996) indicate that by the organised sports programmes effectively meeting the internal needs such as self-confidence, empowerment, as well as, emotional and spiritual aspects of at-risk youth groups, then the likelihood of negative outcomes such as involvement in criminal activities and joining gangs to receive basic needs of love, supervision, guidance and protection are significantly reduced (Crabbe, 2000; Esperanza, 2010).

By joining the sporting programme, the at-risk youth filled a void or satisfied a need in their lives at that present time, as supported by Esperanza (2010). Reviewing data from those who worked with the young Black men on the three sports programmes within this study, it became apparent that many thought that there were external and internal components missing from these young people's lives (Gatz *et al.*, 2002), therefore the attractiveness and allure of the gang lifestyle can be better understood (Esperanza, 2010), and the argument for sport as a catalyst to reduce crime becomes ever more realistic.

The integral role of sport in these young men's lives in terms of developing innate leadership abilities also became evident through interview and focus group discussions.

One Sports Volunteer expressed:

> *"Sport when used in the correct context, for example, as an intervention strategy can and does have the ability to actually identify and then develop the hidden leader within these young men. I think that they are all born with an inner leader" (Interview, #12)*

The suggestion here is that this innate ability (of being a leader) and development of personal attributes could remain latent without sport providing the mechanism to activate it. The young men explained how the exposure to leadership roles helped nurture their own leadership potential, in which the young men improved their own leadership skills through regular contact with other leaders through the sports programmes, such as the coaches and mentors. It was considered that this innate ability, however limited, could be maximised through this interaction process.

The sporting programmes offer a great competitive platform for many of these young men, who due to limited opportunities had never been given the chance to take a positive leadership role. The young men were able to connect with their innate leadership abilities through various roles given to them by the coaches in competitive situations, such as being the captain in cross borough football matches or being paired up as a training partner with a fighter prior to Muay Tai regional competitions. Such opportunities allowed the young men to both discover and nurture that innate leadership ability through sport and thereby realise their potential as a leader (Argent, 2005).

One youth also indicated that other skills were maximised that feed into leadership such as:

"Enhanced confidence, better interaction with others and more communication skills, these are also a strength of the sports programme here". (Group 2, Male #4)

He went on to say:

"I was a follower before coming to KidGloves Academy, but the daily training schedule was high impact, so I slowly began to develop some leadership potential. It's my belief that even followers could develop leadership, regardless of their natural ability" (Group 2, Male #4)

It was believed that leadership potential possessed by the young men might not be realised to its fullest extent without sport, as through sport and its tailored nature, certain roles became ingrained.

As mentioned previously, at-risk youths avoid situations that they perceive will result in failure (Birzer & Smith-Mahdi, 2006). However, through sports participation the young men were able to learn to manage loss more effectively and take ownership of their own failures both in sport and life, to learn from them and rise above them to constructively improve subsequent performances. Some youths explained that the sports programme taught them coping strategies which meant they could cope with a win and a loss.
One coach expanded on this by stating:

"These guys are extremely competitive and this compounds their need to develop coping skills, if a highly competitive person lost, it might be more damaging than if a less competitive person experience that same loss" (Interview, #8)

This study strengthens the belief that sport aids self-analysis (Doty, 2006; Holmes, 2007), as findings support the view that through sporting engagements the youths were pushed to admit certain faults. Many were highly motivated to win, therefore, through the programme they learnt how to take full responsibility for their mistakes, rather than apportion blame to others, something that the "street life" did not facilitate.

One Youth mentor identified a benefit of sport within this context:

"They put themselves on the line, they assess their mistakes and realise their errors, it's the active improvement stage in the next match on the pitch or the next fight in the ring that's the result. The coaches here successfully develop these skills in the young men" (Interview, #1)

5.2 Summary of discussion

This chapter has presented and discussed the key findings of the research, which showed overwhelming support for the way in which the 'educative role of sport' can provide a pathway for high-risk and disengaged young Black men, because of a belief that sport can override disadvantage and provide a vision of opportunity for at-risk youths by providing stability and enrichment opportunities which are complementary to learning and development. A summary of the study, conclusions, limitations, and recommendations for further research will now be presented.

CHAPTER SIX

CONLCUSION, LIMITATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes the study by providing a summary of the research and a review of the extent to which the investigation has achieved its aims and objectives. The implications of the findings and the significance of the study in relation to sport-based intervention programmes are offered, in terms of their relevance for youth, educators and youth offending teams. Recommendations are made for future investigations into the utility of such programmes.

6.1.1 Overview of findings

The present study examines the utility of sport as an educative tool for socially disengaged Black male youth in London. The central aim of this study was to find out how sport can be used to engage that particular demographic and evaluate the potential of sport-related intervention programmes. This study investigated three sport-related intervention programmes and, as a result of the research, aimed to derive normative ways to use sport-related social intervention programmes and to enhance progressive youth outcomes.

The results of this study indicate that not all sport-related intervention activities are effective at preventing at-risk youths from involvement in violent behaviours. The most successful sport-related intervention programmes offered a flexible approach to learning and combined one type of programme activities *(for example, sport)* with others *(for example, education and other experiences)* synergistically to achieve success outcomes.

With regard to the use of sport in sport-related prevention programmes, this study suggests that sport could be effectively manipulated to reduce constraints (for *example, reduce labelling*), develop a positive sense of self (for *example, as a medium for providing a social*

setting to empower at-risk youths and develop leadership skills), and to develop positive social relationships *(for example, as a medium for bridging various gaps between stakeholders)*. Additionally, it can help improve social skills *(for example, by providing a natural social space to learn and acquire positive social skills)*, and create new, positive group norms and identities *(e.g., by providing alternatives for antisocial group norms and identity)*.

Overall, this study suggests that sport as an element of multiple-services programmes could be effectively and efficiently combined with other activities to generate the salient attributes necessary to alleviate the identified risk factors that affect these youths within mainstream society. Within the context of this particular study, it should be noted that sport seems to be crucial as the trigger which initiates engagement in the programmes to begin with, later leading to skills development, bonding, attitude and behaviour change.

6.1.2 Critical evaluation of findings

The Department of Culture, Media and Sport, DCMS (1999) supports the ability of sport and physical activity to be utilised as a tool to re-engage disaffected youth, as outlined below:

> *"art and sport can not only make a valuable contribution to delivering key outcomes of lower long-term unemployment, less crime, better health and better qualifications, but can also help to develop the individual pride, community spirit and capacity for responsibility that enable communities to run regeneration programmes themselves"* (Department of Culture, Media and Sport, DCMS, 1999. p.2).

While not disputing the fact that there is an element of truth in what the above statement reflects, alongside the fact that the majority of research supports the benefits and opportunities that sport creates (Coakley, 2002; Danish, 2002; Shields & Bredemeier, 1995), this issue surrounding the precise ability of sport and physical activity endeavours to re-engage disaffected youth populations is not clear cut and considerable discussions surround the optimum conditions required for success within sport-intervention programmes, and how

positive impacts can be determined. It is essential that these elements are reviewed in order to acknowledge the true impact of this study.

Although the majority of academics support the potential benefits that young people can gain through participation in sport and physical activity (Coalter, 1988; Long & Sanderson, 2001; Morris *et al*, 2003), they have also found that whilst assertions regarding the benefits of sport qualify, these are accompanied by other development features that need to be taken into account. Some of the common features to be acknowledged when making reference to the positive impacts of sport-based intervention programmes include the development of social bonding (Shields & Bredemier, 1995), increases in personal empowerment (Coakley, 2002) and the promotion of moral development and character (Danish, 2002).

This research supports the aforementioned academics and adds strength to their individual strands of research. However, it must be noted that sport within all of the intervention programmes was the key ingredient to the success outcomes being achieved, as the variance that sport encompasses, in terms of its structured nature, ability to accept all, providing optimum physical challenge alongside scope for mental toughness and vigour are aspects not easily found in many other activities. In this sense, the organic nature of sport must not be unvalued. As previously mentioned, this study clearly aligns with previous research by providing support that the intervention aspect of these programme types can either be reviewed in relation to other elements of a young person's life (Cameron & MacDougall, 2000), or the fact that activities are usually tailored to the needs of the young audiences (Andrews & Andrews, 2003).

This study reflects the notion that sport can be an effective tool to reach disengaged youth populations and can be utilised as a valuable, powerful vehicle for the prevention of crime and delinquency. However, the findings clearly acknowledge that within contemporary youth culture, sport in itself is not enough. Even if sport may well be the catalyst for opportunities of change and facilitation of personal and social development for disaffected young people, change may not always be guaranteed. Given the above discussion, there is evidence that the present study may contribute to future sport-related intervention research and practices, and the development of further programmes for this purpose.

In summary, the current research strongly supports the educative role of sport in terms of how the application of theory and evidence based approaches to sport-related intervention assist some disengaged youth populations. More specifically, this study contributes to reducing at-risk youth violence in various contexts by explaining when and how sport can be utilised as a valuable, powerful vehicle for youth engagement and crime prevention when delivered synergistically with other programme activities (Coalter, 1988; Long & Sanderson, 2001; Morris *et al*, 2003).

6.1.3 Review of aims and objectives

The previous chapters have established the appropriateness of the research methods employed in this study in achieving the stated aims and research objectives. In relation to this study, the findings strongly support the educative role of sport for socially disengaged young Black men, as demonstrated by both educators and youth within interview and focus group discussions. Therefore, it is fair to conjecture that the intervention programmes are successful as they fostered self-leadership, confidence and personal development amongst this particular demographic group. The majority of young men within this study enjoyed participating in the sport programmes and regarded engagement as an important step towards social inclusion and re-engagement into mainstream society. However, critical balance would require the researcher to note that those involved are likely to enjoy the programmes and find them beneficial - that is why they have continued to attend. Those who dropped out of the programmes will not have been involved in this research.

It was also found that many positive reflections about the programmes' effectiveness and mechanisms were attributed to the sports coaches and volunteers' interactions with the youth, in which continual praise was injected and a flexible approach to learning (the use of freestyle and mixed sports) generated positive outcomes. As has been identified in other research (Bullock & Tilley, 2002; Mercier *et al.*, 2000), such outcomes can provide an alternative to "street" crime including heavy involvement in gangs and drug trading. Although the ramifications of these findings are diverse in terms of real life benefits, the implications are considered below and will only focus on the young men as this was the central aim of the study.

6.1.4 Implications and significance of the study

This study was undertaken as a result of the widespread "crisis" of social disengagement amongst young Black men and a disproportionate involvement in criminality, which has been identified both within academic literature (Blake & Darling, 1994; Noguera, 2003; Oliver, 2006; Rich & Grey, 2005; Williamson, 1997) and mainstream media (BBC, 2003; 2011). Family structure *(a rise in single-parent households)*, parental education, exposure to substance abuse from a young age, poverty, adoption of self-defeating behaviours, and lack of access to resources *(such as computers and enrichment opportunities)*, have also exacerbated the educational disparities of this particular demographic group (Amara *et al.*, 2004; Noguera, 2003; Paglia & Room, 1999; Teachman, Paasch, Day & Carver, 1997; United Nations, 2002)

6.1.4.1 Implications for at-risk and socially disengaged young Black men

The implications for high-risk and socially disengaged young Black men are two-fold. Firstly, this research provides evidence that educational disparity amongst Black youth is widespread, yet still of minor importance to many mainstream organisations as funding and endorsements for organisations that promote intervention and input creativity and freedom into solutions are not readily available. The most significant implication of this research for educators and youth offending teams therefore lies in its ability to offer insight into areas of weakness in terms of the current delivery system, and opine necessary routes of development, for example, alternative means of education such as sport that at-risk young Black men would actually respond to, and the kind of practical experience that would enact change and would increase transferable skill development.

Secondly, this study could provide insight for decision makers at a national level and senior staff members within pupil referral units and youth offending teams when considering the development of realistic intervention strategies for high-risk and disengaged youth that are not classroom based. The implications of this research for educators and the juvenile community are clear, and there is potential scope for further empirical activity on the

educative role of sport for youth disengagement to be carried out. The implications for future research and recommendations will now be presented.

6.1.4.2 Implications for future research

This research inevitably presents new issues which go beyond the objectives of the immediate study and identifies the opportunities for further study in order to gain a more in-depth understanding of the findings presented.

The first area for further research would be to replicate this study at a national level over an extended duration and with more sporting organisations/clubs. Replication would allow the researcher to look at a larger degree of programme outcomes and would allow the researcher a wider time frame of analysis. By involving more organisations the researcher would also be able to identify any significant differences in the educative potential of sport based on geographical locations. The second area of possible further research could be to conduct in-depth observations at each organisation. This would allow other researchers to gain a deeper understanding of the quality of the education on offer through the use of sport and physical activity with socially disengaged Black male youth.

A possible further research area could be to interview those youth who dropped out of the sports programmes to find out why they dropped out, and what could be done to prevent dropout in the future, as it is these individuals that are most in need of engagement pathways, and alternative strategies to sway them away from criminal lifestyles. The limitations, followed by the recommendations for this particular study will be outlined in the next section. .

6.1.5 Limitations

Although measures were taken to control external validity and reliability during this study, it must be noted that there were some limitations, due to the complicated nature of a mixed methods research project (Onwuegbuzie & Johnson, 2006). Firstly, the researcher could not

carry out more focus group discussions with the youth, due to the limited number of days and times that the participants were available to participate in focus group discussions, whilst at the organisation. In this case, the researcher could only conduct focus group discussions with youth purposively chosen to take part in the study on the days that they were at the organisations, and during time slots that were most convenient for them.

In addition, this study was conducted in different inner city boroughs around London, and the results of the analysis might show differences in other towns, cities and rural areas. This means that the phenomena of youth crime and social disengagement amongst at-risk youth populations, and the educative role of sport in terms of its value and power as a vehicle for the prevention of crime and delinquency could show different patterns in other areas. Hence, there is a limit to the generalisability of the findings.

Future research, therefore, needs to examine the extent to which these findings in urban areas would apply to other, non-metropolitan areas within this country. Such limitations have indicated that the results, implications and significance from this study should be carefully applied to other research settings, and more thoroughly examined in multiple locations (urban and non-metropolitan sites).

The recommendations for this study will now be outlined.

6.1.6   Recommendations

For the present study recommendations will focus on ways of improving current sport-related intervention programmes for at-risk and socially disengaged youth.

6.1.6.1 Offer sporting activities that are relevant to the target population

In England, football has an increasing media profile and takes a central position in many young men's lives from a young age (*for example, lunch and break time activities at school and in extracurricular sports clubs)* (Skelton, 2000). Therefore, this particular sport could be better used within an intervention programme context to hook at-risk and socially disengaged youth populations who already have interest and existing confidence in playing football. Once the young people are involved in the sports activity, programme implementers could introduce other intervention activities (teach basic functional skills, job skills, family planning

and contraception) in order to facilitate a multi-agency approach to tackling anti-social behaviours amongst at-risk youth populations.

6.1.6.2 Conduct sporting activities in locations and during times when anti-social behaviours frequently occur

In tackling the widespread crisis of violence and continued social disengagement amongst youth populations, it is vital that creative sports and physical activity endeavours are implemented in areas that suffer from the high levels of crime and deprivation, and delivered on critical days (*for example, Saturday nights*) and at relevant time periods when the need is higher (*for example, midnight hours*). By filling a gap during the highest risk period of the week when anti-social and at-risk behaviour is more likely to take place, and when other youth services or programmes are not readily available (*for example, close early or are not open at all on the weekends*), the value and power of sport-based intervention can be extremely productive and life changing (Spaaij, 2013).

6.2 Concluding comments

Findings within this study show support for the way in which the 'educative role' can provide a pathway for socially disengaged youth from the Black community, because of a belief that sport can override disadvantage and provide a vision for opportunity for at-risk youth by providing stability and enrichment which are complementary to learning and development.

CHAPTER SEVEN

REFERENCES

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: QUANTITATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE (BLANK COPY)

UNIVERSITY OF HERTFORDSHIRE
FACULTY OF HEALTH & HUMAN SCIENCES
School of Life Sciences

SUBJECT BRIEFING DOCUMENT

Researcher: Lena Hatchett
Project Supervisor: Alison Cain

The Educative role of Sport for Socially Disengaged Young Black Men in London

Introduction

This research investigates the role of sport in educating and reaching out to at-risk Black male youths in London and thus seeks to understand whether 'sport builds character' principles can effectively be used to provide an alternative model for education for Black male youth in London who are disengaged from mainstream society. Research suggests that mainstream education is failing to reach this demographic sufficiently, contributing to a situation where gun and knife homicides in the Capital are significantly higher amongst young Black men than in any other demographic and that, furthermore, the highest percentage of knife-related homicides are committed by youths from this particular demographic group. Significantly, this study intends to identify the potential of sports participation to combat the ominous array of social and economic hardships that readily affects many of today's young Black males

Recent sport-related intervention studies endorse the central idea that a type of sport activity or a combination of sport activities can effectively be used to access special populations who are hardly reached by more general forms of social interventions (Crabbe, 2000; Hartman, 2002). Few studies, however, have provided empirical evidence on how sport based activities as a type of intervention strategy (for example - Access to young Black men in an urban location with midnight basketball) could provide an educative framework for at-risk youth populations when combined with other strands of social intervention programmes (such as one-to-one mentoring, youth offending workshops, NEET training, lone parent services). This urges researchers to look into the educative role of sport (build character, provide a moral education and to provide a means of social control) and positive attributes of sport activities (friendship formation, social cohesiveness and inclusion), yet there is very little empirical data to support the efficacy of such concepts.

This research study thus seeks to to investigate the educative role of sport; specifically, as a means of developing transferable skills, character, moral values or any other such qualities for young men within the Black community.

Burden Estimate

It has been estimated that each questionnaire will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Participation is voluntary. Should any participant feel the need to withdraw from the project (or any information they have provided), they may do so without question at any time before the data is analysed.

Personal Data

Questionnaire data will be used to support the findings derived from the focus group sessions which comprises the main body of research within this particular study. It will not be possible for participants to be identified personally. All material collected will be kept confidential, and stored in a secure manner. Questionnaires will be kept in a lockable filling cabinet.

When the study has been concluded, questionnaire data will be shredded after the examination period. The research project will be submitted for marking to the School of Life Sciences and deposited in the University Library.

Thank you for your help with this study. It would not be possible to continue investigative research without your cooperation and goodwill. I expect to have the results analysed by January 2012, and if you are curious about my findings and would like to receive a summary of the results of this research when it is completed then please let me know.

If you have questions or require further clarification with regards to the project details, then please do not hesitate to contact me at L.M.Hatchett@herts.ac.uk or my project supervisor Alison Cain a.cain@herts.ac.uk

QUESTIONNAIRE

Q.1. Gender: **Male** ☐   **Female** ☐

Q.2. What organisation do you currently work or volunteer at?
……………………………………………………………………………………………

Q.3. What is your role within that organisation?
....

Q.4. Please indicate which age groups you predominately work or volunteer with from the list below:

Under 18's ☐	19-21 ☐	22-24 ☐	25-27 ☐
28 – 30 ☐	31 – 33 ☐	34 – 36 ☐	37 + ☐

Q.5. The type of programme you currently facilitate in *(check all that are appropriate)*:

Sport based intervention programmes   ☐

Mentoring schemes   ☐

Lone parent programmes   ☐

Not in education or employment *(*NEET's)   ☐

Youth offender programmes   ☐

Other (please specify)………………………...   ☐

Q.6. How often did youth that you currently work with participate in delinquent behaviour patterns prior to starting the program at your organisation. (Check only one response for each statement).

	Frequently	*Sometimes*	*Seldom*	*Never*
Driven a car without a license				
Skipped school or college				
''Run away'' from home				
Taken things worth more than £10				

Used force to get money from another person				
Taken a car without owner's permission				
Used a firearm				
Bought beer, wine, or liquor				
Drank beer, wine, or liquor				
Brought narcotic drugs (heroin, reefers, or pills)				
Sold narcotic drugs (heroin, reefers, or pills)				
Used narcotic drugs (heroin, reefers, or pills)				
Sniffed glue				
Been summoned to court				
Been incarnated				
Taken part high risk sexual behaviours				
Had negative sexual health outcomes				

Q.7. What changes if any have you noticed in the youths delinquent behaviour patterns since they have been a part of the programme at your organisation. (Check only one response for each statement).

	Frequently	*Sometimes*	*Seldom*	*Never*
Driven a car without a license				
Skipped school or college				
''Run away'' from home				
Taken things worth more than £10				
Used force to get money from another person				
Taken a car without owner's permission				
Used a firearm				
Bought beer, wine, or liquor				
Drank beer, wine, or liquor				
Brought narcotic drugs (heroin, reefers, or pills)				
Sold narcotic drugs (heroin, reefers, or pills)				
Used narcotic drugs (heroin, reefers, or pills)				
Sniffed glue				
Been summoned to court				

Been incarnated				
Taken part high risk sexual behaviours				
Had negative sexual health outcomes				

Q.8. Below is a list of some things every neighbourhood is concerned about. How do you feel about these things in the neighbourhood where your organisation is located?

	It's Very Poor	*Needs Some Improvement*	*Is Pretty Good*	*Don't Know*
a) Recreational facilities				
b) Police protection				
c) Condition of pavements				
d) Condition of roads				
e) Rubbish collection				
f) Cleanliness and appearance				
g) Quality of schools and colleges				
h) Sewers				
i) Crowded conditions				
j) Street lights				
k) Bus and tram services				
l) Train services				
m) Parking facilities				
n) Churches				
o) Public lavatory facilities				
p) Shopping facilities				

Q.9. Are any of the following a problem within the neighbourhood where your organisation is located?

	Yes	*No*	*Don't Know*
a) Too much noise			
b) Too much drinking			
c) Too much fighting			
d) Poor study conditions			
e) Drug use (heroin, pills ect.)			
f) Speeding cars			
g) Gangs			
h) High amount of teenage pregnancies			
i) Unemployment			
j) Stealing			

Q.10. How would you rate London in regard to the following:

	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good
a) Race relations				
b) Housing				
c) Recreation				
d) Police officers				
e) Place to bring up kids				
f) Welfare services				
g) City/Local government				
h) Black leaders				
i) Job opportunities				
j) Public school/college teachers				
k) Public schools/colleges				
l) Moral and religious climate				
m) Universities				
n) Sports				

Q.11. In your opinion how important is each of the following items in helping the Black male youths that you work with to "get ahead" in life?

	Very Important	Fairly Important	Not too Important	Don't Know
a) Pleasant personality				
b) Family background				
c) Good clothes				
d) Good looks				
e) Athletic ability				
f) Ability				
g) High ideals				
h) Proper morals				
i) Friendlessness				
j) High grades in school/college				
k) Luck				
l) Personal ambitions				

Q.12. Among the following, who do the Black male youths participating in the programs at your organisation usually, turn to for advice and general guidance (Check as many as appropriate)?

Sources of Advice and Guidance	Tick the source(s) that apply
a) Mother	
b) Personal friend(s) of the same age	
c) Both parents	

d) School/college personnel	
e) Farther	
f) Other relatives	
g) Older friend(s)	
h) Religious leaders within the community	
i) Sports leaders/mentors within the community	

Q.13. Below is a list of statements dealing with Blacks and Whites. As you read each statement could you check whether you *strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree or don't know* about each statement. (Check only one response for each statement).

	Strongly Agree	*Agree*	*Disagree*	*Strongly Disagree*	*Don't Know*
1. The more Blacks are separated from Whites the better					
2. I am a very strong believer of ''Black Power''					
3. I would participate in a riot					
4. Sometimes Blacks ought to carry guns when protesting					
5. Riots do not accomplish anything					
6. "Upper Class" Blacks are usually not to be trusted					
7. Black Britons should be proud to fight for their rights					
8. White people can usually be trusted					
9. I blame Whites for racism, social and economic injustice amongst the Black community in London					
10. I blame Blacks for racism, social and economic injustice amongst Blacks in London					
11. I blame police brutality for racism, social and					

	Strongly Approve	Approve	No Opinion	Oppose	Strongly Oppose
economic injustice amongst Black communities in London					
12. Non-violence is always the best approach for Blacks to use					
13. I blame poor economic and social conditions of Blacks as a cause of delinquent behaviours amongst Black youths in London					
14. I blame bad race relations for the cause of delinquent behaviour patterns amongst Black youths in London					
15. If things don't get better for Black youths in London, there will be riots					

Q.14. Below is a list of organisations and approaches that focus on Black and Ethnic populations. Please check what you think about each of them in the appropriate column.

	Strongly Approve	Approve	No Opinion	Oppose	Strongly Oppose
a) Christian Leadership Conference					
b) Educational Programs to change prejudice and discrimination					
c) Rastafarian Movement					
d) Brixton Black Panthers					
e) Non-violence					
f) Racial Equality Councils					
g) Court cases to changes racism					
h) Street demonstrations and protests marches					
i) Economic boycott and strikes					
j) Rent strikes					
k) Bi-racial Committees					
l) School and College boycotts and strikes					

m) Black Power					
n) Riots					
o) Nation of Islam					

END OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY

APPENDIX 2: QUALITATIVE SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE

<u>**Semi-structured Interview Guide**</u>

Section one: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION (5 mins)

Can you define your gender please?

Please specify the organisation where you currently work?

How old are you?

Can you please tell me which age groups you predominately work with, under eighteens, nineteen to twenty-one, twenty-two to twenty-four, twenty-five to twenty-seven, twenty-eight to thirty, thirty-one to thirty-three, thirty-four to thirty-six or with people over thirty-seven years of age?

Can you please tell me the type of programmes that you currently facilitate in sport based intervention programmes, mentoring schemes, lone parent programmes, NEET projects, youth offender programmes or other types of programmes?

Section two: PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES OF BRITISH BLACK YOUTH (15 mins)

What do you think are some of the main problems facing the British Black community today?

(Sub question)

What other problems do you current think exist?

What is your perception of Black youth crime in the United Kingdom?

How would you define Black masculinity on the streets of London?

(Sub question)

What key things does this phenomenon embrace then?

(Sub question)

What key things does this phenomenon reject?

Do you feel the media portray Black male youths in a negative light or is the negative portrayal of

Black youths justified?

(Sub question)

So it is not just a recent thing you think it's (the negative portrayal of Black youth) been around for

quite a while?

Celebrities, for example sportsmen and musical artists seem to be common role models in Black

communities. Do these role models send negative messages to Black male youths? Is there a cry

out for more Black role models that have achieved success academically?

(Sub question)

So do you think there is a need for more Black role models that have achieved academically then?

(Sub question)

Can you give me examples of ideal role models for Black youths?

(Sub question)

At the moment however, there seems to be very few Black male role models that have achieved

success academically?

(Sub questions)

Would it be necessary for the media and learning institutions such as, schools, colleges and universities to promote more positive Black male role models like the ones you mentioned?

Why do you feel so many Black male youths underachieve in school and college? Is failure expected of them and are they pushed towards achievement via sport?

Does the lack of a father figure play a part in future involvement in criminal activity amongst Black youths?

Statistics show that a disproportionate amount of crime is committed by those further down the social class spectrum, to what extent do you think this is true?

(Sub question)

So is it an economic issue?

Section three: ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR PATTERNS (15 mins)

What do you believe triggers Black youths engagement in Anti-Social Behaviour patterns (ASB) within the London area?

If you were Minister of Criminal Services within the United Kingdom, what is the single most important change you'd make, in terms of solutions to these problems?

So far, what solutions if any have you seen to any of these problems, at a local, national or international level?

Section four: THE SPORTS PROGRAMME (15 mins)

What types of sporting activities your organisation specialise in?

What are the goals of this particular sport intervention programme?

Is there really a need for sport intervention programmes that particularly target Black males youths within the London area?

What insights or understanding if any did you as a sports coach develop as a result of engaging youth in this type of programme?

(Sub question)

In your opinion, what were the strengths of this programme?

(Sub question)

In your opinion, what were the weaknesses of this programme?

Do you believe that this intervention programme changed the attitude of those youth who participated in it?

(Sub question)

Can you give me examples of ways in which the program promoted this mode of change amongst some youth that participated in it?

To what extent do you think this sports intervention program has helped Black male youth avoid getting involved in gangs?

(Sub question)

So you feel programs such as these that use sport in an educative sense should be more widely

provided?

In terms of skill sets, what particular skills do you think young people generally gain after

involvement in the intervention programme?

(Sub question)

What are some of the biggest changes that you see in the young people after they've been

involved in the programme for some time, in particular personality and character wise?

In your opinion, does sport have an educative role in breaking this criminal activity cycle that is

disengaging so many Black youth within London?

Section five: THANK INTERVIEWEE (5 mins)

Thank you for contributing so richly to this interview

INTERVIEW ENDED

APPENDIX 3: QUALITATIVE FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

Focus Group Guide

Aims

- To examine the utility of sport-related intervention programmes in terms of their educative properties for socially disengaged young Black men in London.

- To develop a theoretically informed understanding of how and why young Black men in London have become socially disengaged from mainstream society.

- Analyse the mechanisms that enable sport-related intervention programmes to achieve success.

Introduction (3 Mins)

Welcome and thank all for attending; brief introduction and background to project and myself, structure of focus groups, distribute subject briefing, explain confidentiality and anonymity. Ask for consent (verbally) for use of recording equipment.

Internal motives for participation (10 Mins)

Opening conversation will aim to clarify member's motives for participating in the sports programme. What they aim to accomplish from the getting involved with the programme. Sport and fitness gains? Social cohesion gains? Distraction away from street crime? Prompts include interest in sport, friendships and need for change in behaviour.

Perception and attitudes of British Black youth (10 Mins)

Introductory question to the subject area. Gain understanding of the groups' views towards issues facing Black youth in London and provide a focus for the following questions. Prompts include racism, gang culture and underachievement.

Anti-social behaviour (10 Mins)

Prompted discussion will request views on what triggers anti-social behaviour amongst young Black men. Prompts include boredom, lack of respect, no role models, peer pressure, need for money.

The sports programme (10 mins)

Concluding conversation will ask for views on the strengths of the sports programme and how the programme has helped develop certain skill sets. How do the participants feel that their feelings and actions towards criminality and violence have changed? Has sport helped? Prompts include teamwork skills, confidence, self-leadership, strengths of the programme, programme structure.

Conclude (2 Mins)

Ask for any final views, debrief, summarise, show appreciation for participants' time.

APPENDIX 4: EXAMPLE QUALITATIVE SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT (INTERVIEW #8)

Interview Transcript: #8

Date: 19.02.2010

Time: 3.45pm to 4.45pm

Job Role: Sports Coach

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Interviewer: Hiya, how are you?

Interviewee: I'm okay today

Interviewer: Good I'm glad. Thank you for taking the time to allow me to conduct this interview with you today. Okay let's get started.

Interviewer: Can you define your gender please?

Interviewee: Male

Interviewer: Please specify the organisation where you currently work?

Interviewee: Fight for Peace Academy

Interviewer: What is your particular role within this academy?

Interviewee: I am a sports coach here, more specifically a boxing Muy Tai and coach

Interviewer: And how old are you?

Interviewee: I am 32

Interviewer: Okay, can you please tell me which age groups you predominately work with, under eighteens, eighteen to twenty, twenty-one to twenty-three, twenty-four to twenty six, twenty-six to twenty-eight, twenty-nine to thirty-one, thirty-one to thirty-four or with people over thirty years of age?

Interviewee: Mainly youths, so covering the age brackets eighteen through to twenty-three.

Interviewer: Okay great thanks for that. So can you please tell me the type of programmes that you currently facilitate in sport based intervention programmes, mentoring schemes, lone parent programmes, NEET projects or youth offender programmes?

Interviewee: Well I facilitate all the sport based intervention projects we run here, but I also get involved in mentoring the youths and also the NEET programmes and youth offender programmes that the academy currently offers.

PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES OF BRITISH BLACK YOUTH

Interviewer: Let's go onto talking about "the perceptions and attitudes of British Black youth" now shall we. Ok let's start off with what you think are some of the problems facing the British Black community today?

Interviewee: I think the first thing is the lack of identify and I also think that has a lot to do with family breakdown. Whereas before like in our parents' generation, I'm first generation British in my family and when I was growing up you had your grandparents and everyone around. Now the youngsters just have just their mum or in some cases they have nobody at all.

Interviewer: Okay, what other problems do you current think exist?

Interviewee: This one size fits all approach of the current system is rubbish and it neglects those most at risk, it does not work, the youth we work with have been

disadvantaged their whole life, you can't put them in a classroom and expect a miracle to happen. It's a massive problem. They [Black male youths] need work to really understand the purpose and ethos of education for their life, like the questions they are asking is 'why should I learn academics'? 'what will it do for me'? 'how will my life be changed'?. Unless these youth, the ones that we work with from the poorest households are identified and helped using an approach that they will adhere to, they'll be lost by our nation as citizens who can contribute to our society, it's sad but this is happening already across London

Interviewer: What is your perception of Black youth crime in the United Kingdom?

Interviewee: Crime is an issue for Black youth within the United Kingdom, of course it is. Drugs are one of the major devils that hook these young men into the cycle of criminality. You see once they are hooked onto cannabis and start earning money selling it to others, they cannot remember any of their childhood pains and the cash they make is a major incentive for them to keep selling it. Therefore they are exposed to harder drugs, more criminal acts and larger gangs, it's just a negative cycle that repeats and repeats until they end up in jail or dead.

Interviewer: What do you mean by childhood pains?

Interviewee: I mean that they suppress any abuse, parental neglect, absent fathers things like that

Interviewer: Right okay. So how would you define Black masculinity on the streets of London?

Interviewee: Define, well masculine identity on the streets is totally wrong nowadays and I would define it as a backwards type of masculinity, as it does not embrace traditional patriarchal standards of manhood as a protector, disciplinarian or

provider. Therefore, in my opinion the masculinity on the streets of London is not masculinity at all

Interviewer: So what key things does this phenomenon embrace then?

Interviewee: It embraces aggression, negative attitudinal dispostions and criminality

Interviewer: And what key things does this phenomenon reject?

Interviewee: It rejects more than it embraces that's for sure. I'd say nine times out of ten, Black masculinity on the streets of London rejects educational achievement and progression, it rejects office hours of nine to five and a legitimate means of working, and it rejects dual parent families and stability

Interviewer: Do you feel the media portray Black male youths in a negative light or is the negative portrayal of Black youths justified?

Interviewee: The media are one of the main culprits as to why the youth behave how they do. The media injects this negative spin onto any new report or documentary they do about young Black men. Therefore, people, like the general public get a false image about young Black men and they see them as deviant. No, it's not justified at all.

Interviewer: So it is not just a recent thing you think it's (the negative portrayal of Black youth) been around for quite a while?

Interviewee: No it's been going on for a while now, a good decade or so I'd say. But more recently it's become worse. I really think that as the reports within the media intensify, the young men just get angrier and angrier and eventually they will riot or something along those lines just to air their frustration

Interviewer: Celebrities, for example sportsmen and musical artists seem to be common role models in Black communities. Do these role models send negative messages to Black male youths? Is there a cry out for more Black role models that have achieved success academically?

Interviewee: Not all of them, you cannot tarnish everyone with the same brush. I'd say most of the sportsmen and women do not promote negativity to the Black community if anything they promote the hard work ethic which is what we want the youngsters to emulate. Rappers on the other hand however, I think do more bad than good. Their lyrics promote sex, drugs and crime and they send the message that you can make money quickly through illegitimate means and not through academic endeavours.

Interviewer: So do you think there is a need for more Black role models that have achieved academically then?

Interviewee: Yes definitely there is great need

Interviewer: Can you give me examples of ideal role models for Black youths?

Interviewee: Well Barack Obama is the most obvious one, then you have David Adjaye who is an award-winning architect and of course formula one driver Lewis Hamilton

Interviewer: At the moment however, there seems to be very few Black male role models that have achieved success academically?

Interviewee: Yes there does, there are Black role models out there, but they are not widely promoted within the media or educational institutions like they should be

Interviewer: Would it be necessary for the media and learning institutions such as, schools, colleges and universities to promote more positive Black male role models like the ones you mentioned?

Interviewee: Yes of course, it would be brilliant. They should get some of the Black entrepreneurs like Charles Ejogowho was the founder of the Umbrolly umbrella vending machine, Jamal Edwards who launched his online music channel SBTV and Edwin Broni-Mensah who is a social entrepreneur and the founder of GiveMe Tap. Individuals like these should come into the local schools and colleges and speak within the young men. It would make a huge difference to their future ambitions I think

Interviewer: Why do you feel so many Black male youths underachieve in school and college? Is failure expected of them and are they pushed towards achievement via sport?

Interviewee: I wouldn't say failure is expected of them [Black youth], but I do believe that high levels of disrespect now exists within many educational institutions, the respect spectrum has become somewhat blurred. In schools and colleges there are real issues now, teachers are not comfortable and many feel powerless to discipline students.

Interviewer: Does the lack of a father figure play a part in future involvement in criminal activity amongst Black youths?

Interviewee: Yes I believe it does. Because they do not have a farther within the home many of the young Black boys we see come through are doors have not been able to get affection and affirmation of their manhood from a farther because he is absent. Therefore, they turn to youth gangs to fill that void, and then various forms of crime and prison usually follow

Interviewer:	Do you think that absent fathers within the household means that many Black boys needs are not properly socialised to take on a positive gender identity, which will increase their self-esteem and feelings of worth?

Interviewee:	Not having a farther around or a consistent male role model within the home environment means that many of these youngsters really struggle with self-confidence issues as they hold a poor vision of who they are, they cannot physically see a man around or emotionally connect with positive forms of masculinity within their own home because it's not there.

Interviewer:	Statistics show that a disproportionate amount of crime is committed by those further down the social class spectrum, to what extent do you think this is true?

Interviewee:	Unfortunately social class or should I say underclass has a major role to play in levels of criminality amongst Black youth in London. In terms of the class spectrum many young Black men feel that they are at the bottom

Interviewer:	So is it an economic issue?

Interviewee:	Economic, yes to a certain extent, as many of the young men feel that they have very few legitimate employment opportunities, that's why they turn to crime. But it's also educational, and what I mean by that is that many lack core cultural and social skills that will enable them to progress forwards within their lives and gain social mobility.

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR PATTERNS

Interviewer:	Okay, we are now going to move onto talking about "Anti-social behaviour patterns". Okay let's start off with what you believe triggers Black youths engagement in Anti-Social Behaviour patterns (ASB) within the London area?

Interviewee: Family breakdown is a trigger to anti-social behaviour. A lot of these youth [Black male youth] here had neglectful parents and because of that many suffered with impaired psychological development and trauma and hurt. I'd say from a young very young age this propensity to be anti-social was triggered because of the stressors of the initial family breakdown that happened to them [young Black men]. It's then exacerbated by alcohol, drugs and pornography during adolescent years

Interviewer: If you were Minister of Criminal Services within the United Kingdom, what is the single most important change you'd make, in terms of solutions to these problems?

Interviewee: The change I'd make would be youth reformation

Interviewer: Can you please expand on this term please?

Interviewee: When I say youth reformation, I mean that when looking at strategies and solutions to the array of problems that currently exist, the government needs to attack youth crime from an angle of youth reformation and attempt to tackle the original problem that these young people face, such as the environment and circumstances that originally pushed them towards joining gangs and committing crime. Punitive punishments like prison will not end the cycle of crime.

Interviewer: So far, what solutions if any have you seen to any of these problems, at a local, national or international level?

Interviewee: I'd say at a local level, government has invested more money into intervention programmes at a grassroots level, which is good. Therefore, organisations like Fight for Peace have been able to tackle some of the issues surrounding street crime and anti-social behaviour continuation through education, guidance and youth empowerment.

THE SPORTS PROGRAMME

Interviewer:	Let's go onto talking about "the sports programme" now shall we. Ok let's start off with what types of sporting activities your organisation specialise in?
Interviewee:	Well we mainly offer Muy Tai boxing and Martial Arts here at the academy, but we also do team sports such as football and basketball on a weekly basis
Interviewer:	What are the goals of this particular sport intervention programme?
Interviewee:	Our goals are based on the five pillar approach. So to start with we provide boxing and martial arts as we believe that sport is a great inclusion and development tool. The education pillar focuses on learning opportunities and we do that through our pathways project which provides a tailored learning programme which is very different from traditional educational practices. We then have employability which is where we help the young people write CVs and job referrals. Youth support services which focus on one-to-one and group mentoring and guided support and outreach work. Our last goal is youth leadership which looks at empowering the youth, we have a youth council who are actively involved in the decision-making processes that happen within the academy.
Interviewer:	Is there really a need for sport intervention programmes that particularly target Black males youths within the London area?
Interviewee:	Yes there is a great need. Sport is the one activity that these young people can actually engage in, because used within the correct context it is relevant to them and their needs.
Interviewer:	What insights or understanding if any did you as a sports coach develop as a result of engaging youth in this type of programme?

Interviewee: I've grown as a person and I have gained a greater understanding as to why so many of these young Black men are disengaged and hate the world. It's been a learning curve for me too though.

Interviewer: In your opinion, what were the strengths of this programme?

Interviewee: It's our ability to promote bonding between youths. We don't look at their past, just leave everything outside the door and when they come in they're like together in one, the club brings them together and creates a sense of unity amongst them all

Interviewer: In your opinion, what were the weaknesses of this programme?

Interviewee: Funding, that's the main weakness we have, we want to do more, but we c cannot

Interviewer: Do you believe that this intervention programme changed the attitude of those youth who participated in it?

Interviewee: Yes, it has

Interviewer: Can you give me examples of ways in which the program promoted this mode of change amongst some youth that participated in it?

Interviewee: They are a lot calmer since being here at the academy and less aggressive, and I'd also point out that they want to achieve now, they want to progress academically and develop within the sport

Interviewer: To what extent do you think this sports intervention program has helped Black male youth avoid getting involved in gangs?

Interviewee: Organised sport for these youths [Black male youths] who are at risk of gang involvement is a key intervention strategy to reduce anti-social behaviour and the soaring crime rates amongst Black youths within areas like Hackney, Peckham, Bethnal Green and Bow - these are really socially deprived parts of London. We need to engage them [the Black male youth] and hook them [Black male youth] before the gang grabs their minds and hearts….[sigh]…the idea of the poor ghetto child who becomes a local hero is at the heart of the street culture, but through sport and the qualities we [Fight For Peace] teach I truly believe that the educators here can facilitate that hero status through glory and pride gained from sporting success, teamwork and perseverance

Interviewer: So you feel programs such as these that use sport in an educative sense should be more widely provided?

Interviewee: Yes I do

Interviewer: In terms of skill sets, what particular skills do you think young people generally gain after involvement in the intervention programme?

Interviewee: Well I'd say they show enhanced leadership and transferable skills after involvement

Interviewer: Right okay great. What are some of the biggest changes that you see in the young people after they've been involved in the programme for some time, in particular personality and character wise?

Interviewee: Well once they complete the programme but even during the programme they develop a softer edge, many actually laugh, which I know sounds silly, but seriously, for so many they have not laughed in years. In terms of their character development I'd say they become more moral and upstanding and they do not feel the need to lie and cheat society anymore, which is a great outcome

Interviewer: In your opinion, does sport have an educative role in breaking this criminal activity cycle that is disengaging so many Black youth within London?

Interviewee: Yes, sport helps them analyse themselves and admit their own faults. Once they realise the wrongs of their ways they can start to break away from crime and the support system that it provided them. Even simple things like teamwork, helping them develop leadership roles within the academy and by providing them with a health outlet; sport contributes to reducing criminality amongst at-risk youth groups.

Interviewee: And also I'd just like to add that as the main coach here I ensure that the activities are purposeful for these at risk youth.

Section five: THANK INTERVIEWEE

Interviewer: Okay great, thank you for contributing so richly to this interview

Interviewee: No thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my views

Interviewer: Okay take care, bye

Interviewee: Bye

INTERVIEW ENDED

APPENDIX 5: EXAMPLE FOCUS GROUP TRANSCRIPT (GROUP #1)

Focus Group Transcript: group #1

Date: 04.03.2010

Time: 6.30pm to 7.15pm

Group name: Fight for peace academy

Job Role: Sports Coach

Facilitator
Lena Hatchett
University of Hertfordshire

Participants
n=5 young Black men who actively engage in the sports intervention programme

Person	Discussion
Interviewer:	Okay, first of all thanks for coming out tonight. I know you could all be doing something else within your time, and I appreciate you coming out here and spending some time to help with this research project. This research is focused on you guys and I am interested to know how sport has helped young people who have been involved in crime and who are from society deprived backgrounds to change their lives around. The purpose of the discussion is to get your feedback on several topics related to the educative role of sport for youths just like yourselves. Specifically your thoughts on why you have been involved in violence and crime in the past and how the sport programmes offered here at the academy has helped you. Right, so the structure of this focus group discussion this evening is very simple. Really I am only covering four main topics, so it should not take us that long to get through everything. Okay so here is your subject briefing forms, these are just forms that outline the purpose of the study, and also provide you all with consent information and the contact details of both myself and my project supervisor encase you want to know anything else about the study. Most importantly however, this form highlights that you guys are all participating in this research on a voluntary basis and that you have the right to

	withdraw any information you provide me today at any stage of the investigation. I hope that's clear for everyone. So, before I get started I need to ask that you all give consent verbally for me to use a hand held recorder within this discussion. Is that ok with everyone?
Male #1:	Yes that is fine
Male #2:	That's not a problem
Male #3:	Yes that's cool with me
Male #4:	Yep that is fine
Male #5:	Yes I am cool with that
Interviewer:	Okay great. Thank you, so shall we get started then.
INTERNAL MOTIVES FOR PARTICIPATION	
Interviewer:	So let me ask you all a question. What made you take up Muy Tai boxing or any of the other sports they offer here at Fight For Peace and also get involved in the other educational activities here?
Male #3:	Boxing has always been part of my life, my uncle use to take me in my early teens and show me a few punches at the local gym by him in Tottenham [an area in London]. I'm interested in boxing and motivated to do it, it keeps my fitness up [it keeps him fit]. I came to Fight for Peace Academy because I wanted to improve, in my skills and that
Interviewer:	Any sport or fitness gains?
Male #1:	When I started a couple months ago I was so unfit and I lacked skill and technique on the basketball court. I was always interested in basketball but just didn't have the time to actively participate and get a routine going. A couple mates told me to

	come along one eve [evening] to a mid-night basketball session, so I did, absolutely loved it, signed up straight away. Slowly I've begun to learn about the true benefits of sport and the effectiveness of sport and exercise, like the physical fitness benefits but also how sport helps enhance your mental health too
Interviewer:	What about social cohesion gains?
Male #5:	Errr, well for me it was a way of meeting new people that were not involved in crime, and I liked the idea
Male #2:	Yeah me too, I needed to get away from the streets and this allowed me to do that
Interviewer:	So it was a distraction away from street crime?
Male #2:	Yes it definitely was
Male #5	Yes it was a massive distraction away from knives and guns for me anyway, and I'm so glad I took this route when I did
Interviewer:	So it took you away from that gang lifestyle then and all those negative patterns?
Male #2:	Yeah I believe it did
PERCEPTION AND ATTITUDES OF BRITISH BLACK YOUTH	
Interviewer:	So, have any of you ever experienced racism?
Male #1:	Yes every bloody day by the police mainly, err it just makes me mad even thinking about it
Male #5:	Nah my experiences of racism were when I was at college, the teachers just labelled and stereotyped me all the time. I eventually dropped out anyway
Male #3:	Yes me too. I'd say racism doesn't help the matter, it doesn't help us achieve academically at all, if anything it makes us fail. Like when we go into a college classroom we already know that

	people have stereotypes and prejudices against us. Other ethnic groups get racism of course but it's different for like Asians and stuff than it is for Black youth. Like for me I would always get anxious and feel stressed most days at college, I'd find it hard sometimes to fight against the system and increase my self-control and my self-belief so that I could keep my overall goals in mind and so that I could act appropriately, I dunno I really struggled to take effective notes and keep a study schedule, it's just that feeling of knowing that your stigmatised by others, stigmatised by educators, it interferes with your ability to maintain focus in lesson. I always had self-doubt when I'd give in assignments even if I knew I'd done my best
Male #2:	Yeah I know what you mean brov
Male #1:	They, like the White teachers, think we can't...you know, that we can't achieve. That's the bloody issue here
Male #2:	They are not even willing to give us the chance to try
Male #3	So of course if we [Black youth] don't get a chance, then we [Black youth] will just fail
Male #4:	They want us to, you know not get to them high-up positions in jobs and stuff, they [White teachers] keep us [Black youth] down with their ideas about us [Black youth]
Male #5:	Actually, I disagree, we keep ourselves down with this negative attitude and the belief that we [Black youth] wont achieve academically or that we [Black youth] can't get those jobs high up the ladder
Male #1:	Yeah but they think we can't be like them, like be the lawyers, the doctors or the architects of the world
Male #2:	I was always at the bottom of the class, they never moved me up

	a group even when my reading and writing improved, they [White teachers] like it that way
Male #3:	Then we [Black youth] just play into their hands, by doing what they think. It's that whole self-fulfilling prophecy thing
Male #1:	So like the false stuff about us [Black youth], the bad stuff, then becomes true init
Interviewer:	So do you all reckon that racism is a big problem facing Black youth today then?
All participants:	Yes
Male #2:	The discrimination is less visible in urban areas cos of the larger concentrations of young Black men who are ex-prisoners, like every next man has just come out of pen, but the negative attitudes amongst those from the comfortable, leafy parts is horrid
Male #5	It just chips away at you bit by bit. Even if we are just sitting on the street corner doing nothing, people feel intimidated by us, and cos the media puts on reports about how bad we are, that just justifies their belief about us being criminals and everyone panics
Interviewer:	What about gangs, is this an issue too? Have you been involved in one?
Male #5:	Yeah, I use to be the runner in my gang
Interviewer:	What's the runner?
Male #1:	He was basically the drugs runner for the bigger guys in the gang
Male #5:	I would do all the little errands that involved drugs and stuff
Male #3:	I was in a gang too, but they were like my family man, seriously I just loved those guys
Male #1:	Yeah it does get like that cos everyone else becomes the outsider, even your own family become outsiders and your gang, your crew become your only family

Male #4	It's sad but because you feel like your underachieving in all other areas of your life, but your achieving success and money with your gang, you just stick with them, sick with what you know in it
Interviewer:	So do you reckon that underachievement in other areas is a problem for Black youth?
Male #5:	Yeah
Male #2:	Yep cos we couldn't achieve in school or college or in like a proper job, like a nine to five, then we just choose other avenues, you know
ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR	
Interviewer:	So was having no money a reason as to why you guys went towards crime then?
Male #4:	Well for me it was, cos basically when I was growing up I had nothing, I didn't have the latest anything, and I wanted stuff like everyone else
Male #1:	Nah, I moved towards crime cos I never had anyone to show me the right way
	You mean like a role model?
Male #1:	Yeah my dad just abandoned me as a kid so I just had a mixture of shock, confusion, shame, guilt and a bit of fear. All that stress and anger I had inside just came out through criminal acts
Male #5:	I just had no respect for anyone or anything. I wanted to destroy the world
Interviewer:	Right okay. What about peer pressure did that play a role in engagement in anti-social behaviour patterns?
Male #2:	Yeah it did for me, cos all my friends back then were doing bad stuff like stealing things, driving cars without a licence, selling drugs and going out with multiple girls. So I just wanted to be a part of the group and thought that by doing what they were doing I would be seen as cool

Interviewer:	Can you expand on that please?
Male #2:	If you pick up a book or say you're going to the library after college the guys make jokes and say that you're gay and stuff like that. I lost so much street respect, I was pretty much isolated from my own people and bullied for wanting to learn and wanting to be intelligent, they'd say you coconut and other horrible things. And then when I tried to make friends with the White guys, they rejected me. I was totally alienated from both the Blacks and the Whites, I felt like I was in no man's land, so I rejected academia and progression in my BTEC course at college and went back into the fold, back to the of the thuggish lifestyle with my fellow Black boys, I began drinking, smoking cigarettes and dating multiples girls, my life spiralled out of control, I felt pressured by my peers
Male #3:	I was really bored because I was excluded from school at eleven years old, so when my mum was out at work I would just get mixed up with the wrong groups. By the time I was seventeen I ended up Felthem prison
THE SPORTS PROGRAMME	
Interviewer:	What about this sports programme that you are all currently doing at Fight for Peace. How did that help you change your focus and direction?
Male #5:	The friendships I made here really helped
Male #4:	Yeah me too
Male #5:	Like when I first got here I knew no one then I started talking with like one of the other guys who was doing the MuayThai class and every week we chatted in the break and if we had an afternoon session then we'd talk at lunch as well, I felt like I could be myself with him and we have been friends ever since really, we are proper close
Interviewer:	What about self-leadership?

Male #1:	I gained leadership skills, yes definitely, we all get to be a team member and then a leader in the group as well. All these chances to practice different roles is beneficial for us, the leaders encourage us to bond with one another
Interviewer:	Did you notice any other changes?
Male #5	Since I started it's my attitude that's improved, it's changed totally. I got kicked out of college because of my bad attitude I couldn't sit calmly in classes and give it effort. Instead I'd start moaning and making sexual noises to disrupt the lecturer; calling the lecturers name and all...gosh I was badly behaved before
Interviewer:	So you noticed attitude improvements then yes?
Male #2:	Yes, but other people's attitudes towards us didn't really help the matter to start with really
Male #1:	Old people think we are irritating, but we are not always causing trouble, you know what I'm saying
Male #2:	Yeah even if we are just sitting on the street corner doing nothing, people feel intimidated by us
Male #3:	But we do look kind of thuggish...and we always walk in groups, so guess it is a bit intimidating
Male #1:	And our attitudes generally were bad before coming here right?
Male #4:	I guess, I mean I use to swear if someone asked me something I didn't like...bad man
Male #5:	But it's all changed now, our attitudes have changed, we like understand the importance of learning manners and respecting others now
Male #1:	A clean attitude will help us in all aspects of education, life and work
Male #3:	Our new attitude is helping us already, thanks to this organisation, I'm able to think more positive about myself

Male #1:	And it's the sport we do here that really teaches us the morals, team working skills which help our attitude improve
Male #2:	I'm happy with the progress I've made; you must give out a good attitude...that's my motto now
Interviewer:	Anything other positive impacts?
Male #1:	I've changed as a person since joining the academy, nowadays I care kinda like more about others and I'm on the youth council here, I'm like an ambassador at public meetings and stuff, it's wicked
Male #2:	It's the positive stuff that we've learnt from doing the sport here that's had the greatest impact on all of us I think
Male #3:	Like in the team games we learn how to be loyal to the group and how to have stamina to finish the activity. As it's not just for us but for the team, it's all a part of the fun
Male #4:	I've become less anxious and I'm not depressed anymore and I've got more self-esteem to do things that before I'd never even dream of doing
Male #3:	Like what brov?
Male #4:	Like….[laugh]…I went to the local library the other day, you know the one down by Asda, never would have done that before
Male #5:	True say, I mean like for me it's my sense of self-belonging that's improved, like I've got trust for the man dem here
Male #1:	I now focus on my achievements and I don't put personal blocks up like I was before
Male #4:	Actually I agree cos through doing the structured sport here week after week, like the boxing has really helped with my aggression.
Male #1:	Yeah I get what you're saying brov, like now you're at peace with yourself init
Male #2:	It's the positive emotions that I get, like happiness and satisfaction from winning and improving my technique and skills

	on the football pitch
Male #5:	The positive impact of sport is what we have all experienced at different levels since joining the academy
Interviewer:	Can you think of any other skills within a team setting?
Male #3:	Like in team games we learn how to be loyal to the group and how to have stamina to finish the activity. As it is not just for us but for the team, it's all a part of the fun
Interviewer:	What are your views on the goals of the programme, in terms of its strengths
Male #1:	Yes I think the goals for this programme are realistic
Male #2:	Like preventing youth crime, reintegration, poverty reduction and helping with social inclusion are all genuine goals that are very achievable
Male #3:	To achieve the goals and the outcomes they want Fight for Peace uses something called the five pillar rules, yeah
Male #4:	That model really helps us understand what they [the educators] are trying to accomplish with us [the youth] all, as they [the educators] have activities for each pillar, so like we [the youth] are involved at each step
Male #5:	Pillar one which is boxing, it's my favourite as I love being entered into competitions
Male #1:	Mines pillar three which is social action and outreach work; I really enjoy meeting with community groups we get involved with
Male #3:	We even sometimes get to go on work placements
Male #4:	Ohh yeah I went to volunteer at that fencing club in Newham, Newham Swords Fencing Club, that was well fun
Male #2:	So yeah I reckon the goals have been achieved and year after year more young people come here init, so I think whatever they

	are doing must be working [laugh]
Male #1:	I love the boxing and the martial arts too. But for me it's the youth leadership, that's pillar five I think, that's what really makes this academy stand out from the others in London. I enjoy being on the youth council and being an ambassador at public meetings
Interviewer:	And the programme structure does that help at all?
Male #5:	I get loads out of it, like guidance and a chance to change my lifestyle. If I'm down and bored at home I come to Fight For peace. The capoeira is a good workout for me, like if I'm in a bad mood I can come and release my anger, focus on winning that round, as soon as I get into the circle all I can see is that I want to be to the best I can be and my performances have improved week after week, I'm getting better at the aú [a cartwheel movement in capoeira] and also the macaco [similar movement to a back handspring]. But it's because of the structure here because winning in competitions and being the best you can be is engrained into the structure here, I now understand that performances get better because of the effort you put in, and that's what pillar one and two in the five pillar model is all about".
Interviewer:	Do you think you picked up any other skills whilst on the programme?
Male #1:	Leadership is the main one I can think of
Male #3:	By being nominated as Captain I was showing everyone that I could lead the guys on the pitch, it's a great feeling, really great
Lena:	Okay brilliant guys, thank you so mush. That brings us to the end of this focus group discussion. Do you have finial things you want to offer to the discussion this evening
All participants:	No
Interviewer:	Okay. Well if that's it then I would just like to remind you all that at any point you can omit things that you said within this focus groups session if you want to. I would just like to again thank you all for your time. Have a good evening. Take Care.

END OF FOCUS GROUP SESSION

APPENDIX 6: OPEN AND AXIAL CODING GRID

OPEN CODES

Word and/or Phrase	Total meaning units
Black role models **(c)**	110
Learnt skills **(d)**	110
Communication **(d)**	100
Friendship **(c)**	100
Community **(c)**	97
Respect **(e)**	96
Crime **(a)**	96
Members of a team **(c)**	96
Sport qualities **(f)**	96
The effectiveness of exercise **(f)**	95
Educational growth and development **(b)**	95
Enhanced mood states **(e)**	94
Empowerment **(e)**	92
Positive impact of sport **(f)**	87
Health and well-being **(d)**	80
Motivated to do sport **(e)**	80
Sport builds character **(d)**	77
Sport as an intervention strategy **(f)**	76
Attitudinal changes **(e)**	76
Rejected **(a)**	60
Promoting bonding between youths **(c)**	60
Ethos of education **(b)**	59
Alienated **(a)**	53
Misunderstood **(a)**	51
Successful studious behaviour **(e)**	50
Self-fulfilling prophecy **(e)**	49
Historic and cultural circumstances **(a)**	45
Family breakdown **(a)**	44
Racism **(a)**	44
Sports programmes **(f)**	44
Interracial harmonisation **(c)**	40
Winning and performance **(f)**	39
Social exclusion **(a)**	39
Building social capital **(c)**	39
Long-term unemployment **(a)**	39
Ethnic inequality **(a)**	39
Unplanned pregnancies **(a)**	38
Level of education **(b)**	38
Positive community networks **(c)**	34

AXIAL CODES

a = Practical life skills   **b** = Educational concerns   **c** = Social bonding

d = Personal development   **e** = Attitudinal change   **f** = Role of sport