

Forensic Research Thesis
Moral Disengagement in Gang versus Non-Gang Delinquents

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Abstract

This thesis explores moral disengagement and the proposed concept of discriminant moral disengagement (DMD) in gang versus non-gang delinquents in England. Chapter One introduces moral disengagement and how it pertains to gangs in the United Kingdom, then sets out the aims and the content of this thesis. A systematic review of violence-targeted interventions for gang youth utilising a moral-component is presented. The review exposes the lack of consistent language in the area and the failure of successful violence interventions with moral components to be specialised for a gang population or applied in England, despite increased interest in moral disengagement as a topic (Chapter Two).

The next two chapters present research findings from an empirical study of moral disengagement in gang versus non-gang delinquents. Chapter Three examines general moral disengagement across these two populations as well as DMD towards outgroups. DMD refers to the proposed process whereby cognitive discrimination is applied to moral disengagement in certain scenarios or towards particular populations, a process which has been alluded to but never named or specifically studied within this context before. Results confirmed Alleyne and Wood's findings that moral disengagement was not significantly related to gang membership; however, exploratory results indicated that DMD towards outgroups is significantly related to gang membership (2010). The next section examines gang versus non-gang attitudes towards women and DMD towards females (Chapter Four). Gang members were not found to differ significantly from non-gang delinquents on either scale, but possible/affiliate gang members were. Both

Chapters Three and Four discuss their findings, implications, limitations, and future directions for research.

This is followed up by a psychometric critique of gang membership measures with a focus on the Eurogang Youth Survey and the Eurogang Definition Instrument, highlighting the difficulties of critiquing such measures beyond the definitional debate within gang research (Weerman et al., 2009; Weerman et al., 2010).

Chapter Six offers a conclusion, summarising each section's main points, their cumulative meaning, and potential impact.

Authorship Declaration

Elements of this thesis were presented as an oral presentation at Eurogang 2017 (East Lansing, MI, USA, 28th June 2017) and as a Lunchtime Seminar at the Institute of Mental Health (Nottingham, 21st September 2017). I also referenced my research throughout my lectures at Richmond, the American International University in London.

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Chapter One: Preface

1.1. Introduction

Moral disengagement (MD) was defined by Albert Bandura as “cognitive restructuring of inhumane conduct into benign or worthy [behaviour]” (Bandura, 2002, p. 101). It is comprised of eight components, each with their own related but unique mechanisms for dissociating from self-sanctions, and often responsibility: moral justification (claiming a moral purpose for behaviour), euphemistic labelling (using less severe language to sanitise actions and outcomes), advantageous comparison (minimising behaviour by comparing it to more severe behaviour), diffusion of responsibility (negating individual accountability by placing responsibility on the “whole”), displacement of responsibility (placing responsibility on an authority figure), distortion of consequences (transforming the perception of consequences, generally to minimise or disregard their impact), attribution of blame (placing blame on another party), and dehumanisation (objectifying the victim, thus nullifying the application of moral standards and empathy to them). MD has been tied to facilitating antisocial behaviour, and even violence, in previously law-abiding persons, making it an interesting and relevant process for the psychological study of offenders (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, & Pastorelli, 1996; Gini, Pozzoli & Hymel, 2013). Bandura described a schematisation of the psychosocial mechanisms through which moral self-sanctions are selectively disengaged from antisocial behaviour, such as aggression and violence. The schematisation highlights three points during the exercise of moral agency in which the disengagement could occur: the behaviour locus, the agency locus, and the outcome locus. Moral justification, advantageous comparison, and euphemistic labelling work at the behaviour locus, which transforms the individual’s view of the

antisocial behaviour itself. Displacement and diffusion of responsibility both operate at the agency locus, transforming the individual's perception of their accountability for the antisocial behaviour. Lastly, distortion of consequences, attribution of blame, and dehumanisation all work at the outcome locus by transforming the individual's perception of their antisocial behaviour's outcome, either regarding its impact or the victim. These transformations allow moral disengagement to facilitate antisocial behaviour by overcoming self-sanctions (Bandura, 2007). Might MD relate to how and why young people offend, or offend more seriously? Given their high rates of delinquent behaviour, this questions links naturally to the turbulent concept of youth gangs (Melde & Esbensen, 2013; Melde, Esbensen & Carson, 2016; Pyrooz & Decker, 2013). The following chapter outlines existing research on gangs in England and moral disengagement in gangs to introduce the aims, objectives, and contents of this current research thesis.

1.1.2. Gangs in the United Kingdom

There is no universally agreed upon definition for what constitutes a gang, but arguably the most widely used definition in research is the Eurogang definition: "a durable street-oriented youth group whose involvement in illegal activity is part of their group identity" (Weerman et al., 2010, p.1). This definition has been used internationally, including with UK samples (Alleyne & Wood, 2010; Medina, Aldridge, Shute & Ross, 2013; Niebieszczanski, Harkins, Judson, Smith & Dixon, 2015).

Despite definitional disputes, the existence of gangs in the UK is no longer as controversial: they are now recognised by both researchers and the English government as an established phenomenon linked both rightly, and wrongly, to

various societal issues across different regions of the country (Densley, 2013; Densley & Jones, 2016; Densley & Mason, 2011; Home Office, 2017; Maitra, 2016). Through research certain patterns have become apparent in these gangs, for instance, gangs are broadly recognised as a youth phenomenon both in the US and the UK. Youths aged 12 to 18 years are most at risk for joining gangs, though their membership may continue into adulthood (Alleyne, 2010; Alleyne & Wood, 2012; Bullock & Tilley, 2002; Rizzo, 2003; Shropshire & McFarquhar, 2002; Spergel, 1995). UK gang members are predominantly male, and reflect the ethnic makeup of their neighbourhoods (Bullock & Tilley, 2002; Bennett & Holloway, 2004; Rizzo, 2003). About a third of UK gangs are ethnically mixed, and those that are not tend to be predominantly white (Bennett & Holloway, 2004; Sharp, Aldridge, & Medina, 2006; Shropshire & McFarquhar, 2002; Stelfox, 1998).

Gang members are significantly more likely than non-gang members to commit crimes, especially crimes against others (Aldridge & Medina, 2008; Alleyne & Wood, 2010; Barnes, Beaver & Miller, 2010; Bennett & Holloway, 2004; Sharp, Aldridge & Medina, 2006; Tita & Ridgeway, 2007). The current literature has yet to establish the root of the relationship between gang membership and delinquency; nonetheless, gang membership increases proclivity to offend beyond associating with antisocial peers, suggesting that there are unique mechanisms that make gang offending distinct from other forms of group offending (Alleyne & Wood, 2010; Battin, Hill, Abbott, Catalano & Hawkins, 1998; Klein, Weerman, & Thornberry, 2006; Niebieszczanski et al., 2015). Historically, most gang research has been sociological or criminological, with psychological research only truly starting to emerge in the last decade or so (Alleyne, 2010; Niebieszczanski et al., 2015). Given

the findings above, and recognition that youth have been found to set aside their morals in order to gain acceptance from a group or other benefits, the role of moral disengagement within gangs is a natural starting point for such exploratory research (Alleyne & Wood, 2010; Emler & Reicher, 1995; Harris, Turner, Garrett & Atkinson, 2011; Niebieszczanski et al., 2015).

1.1.3. Moral disengagement in gangs

A meta-analysis on the moral judgment of juvenile delinquents found that developmentally delayed moral judgment is strongly associated with juvenile delinquency, even when socioeconomic status, gender, age and intelligence are controlled for. This association was stronger for males than for females, who tended to show a medium rather than strong effect size (Stams et al., 2006). A later study found that moral reasoning is negatively correlated with delinquency, but only for males (Beerthuizen, Brugman & Basinger, 2013). Further to this, Chen and Howitt (2007) found that although moral development does not differentiate between offender types, it did successfully help to differentiate between offending and non-offending youths. Being that moral development is often stunted in delinquents, it follows that youths in gangs (with their increased likelihood of criminal activity) would also lag behind in moral development.

Whether it is a developmental lag, a greater adeptness at disengaging self-sanctions such as shame and anxiety, or a combination, MD's relationship to gang membership is currently inconclusive. In one study, Alleyne and Wood studied MD in a London sample, comparing gang and non-gang youths, adjusting for age, gender and ethnicity. They found that MD did not have a significant effect on gang involvement; however, certain mechanisms of MD were more common amongst

gang members than their peers (2010). In contrast, another UK-based study found that gang offenders (members who had reported offending with their gang) had higher rates of MD and were more likely than non-gang offenders to engage in all mechanisms of MD (Niebieszczanski et al., 2015). It is possible that the different settings (school versus custodial) or groupings used by the researchers resulted in these discrepancies, but without further research the ambiguity remains. Either way, gang members were consistently associated with certain mechanisms of MD more than their non-gang counterparts (Alleyne & Wood, 2010; Niebieszczanski et al., 2015).

Further exploration of MD within gangs by Alleyne and colleagues confirmed that gang members are more likely than non-gang members to engage in violence and endorse MD strategies. Using a sample drawn from areas with high gang activity in London, researchers found that dehumanisation has a mediating effect on the relationship between gang membership and violent behaviour (Alleyne, Fernandes & Pritchard, 2014). The effect of the dehumanisation component of MD suggests that gang members' perceptions of others is key to the MD which, partially, explains how they engage in violence.

In another study, significant differences in the performance of delinquents and the control group were detected regarding theory of mind, empathetic understanding, and moral reasoning, with delinquents scoring lower than the control group. A positive association was also found between theory of mind, empathetic understanding and moral reasoning; these associations may help to explain how delinquents, and specifically gang members, can more readily employ MD (Spenser, Betts & Das Gupta, 2015). Further research indicates that lower

moral development facilitates aggression and/or antisocial behaviour (Lardén, Melin, Holst & Långström, 2006; Palmer, 2005). Lardén and colleagues' findings denote that these sources merit further study, identifying moral judgment and cognitive distortions as key targets for the treatment of delinquency, while empathy may be less important as a treatment focus (2006). Although this work provides an outline of moral functioning in delinquents and loosely of young gang members, Alleyne and Wood specifically indicate that more research regarding the psychological processes underlying gang activities is necessary before any meaningful conclusions can be drawn (2010; 2012).

One area that has not been explored at all with gang members is the concept of discriminant moral disengagement. Discriminant moral disengagement, a still largely unexplored concept empirically despite being theoretically twinned to selective moral disengagement, is when MD varies based on specific situations or targets (Bandura, 1990; Bandura, 2002). It was coined in Dyberg and Egan's 2015 study, which found that those who use sex workers have similar levels of general MD to non-users, but heightened levels of MD specifically towards sex workers, appearing to apply cognitive discrimination to MD. This concept has yet to be explored explicitly in other studies, but may apply to gang members' neutralising cognitions towards common victims, such as outgroups and females (Alleyne & Wood, 2010; Barriga & Gibbs, 1996; Barriga, Landau, Stinson, Liao & Gibbs, 2000; De La Rue & Espilage, 2014; Home Office, 2016; Harris et al., 2011; Klein & Maxson, 2006; Mares, 2001; Sykes & Matza, 1957; Ulloa, Dyson & Wynes, 2012; Vasquez, Wenborne, Peers, Alleyne, & Ellis, 2015). The term 'selective moral disengagement' has been used before, sometimes vaguely, and discussed

theoretically in how moral disengagement can be activated selectively to facilitate antisocial behaviour by otherwise “moral” individuals, but has not been measured as an independent and targeted phenomenon (Bandura, 1990; Bandura, 2002; Bandura, 2007; Bandura, 2012). Discriminant moral disengagement is theoretically matched to selective moral disengagement, and as such it is worth noting that while the measure of the construct and some of the language around it is new, the theoretical basis itself is not. For the purposes of this thesis, the term discriminant moral disengagement (DMD) will continue to be used to facilitate continuity and distinguish the explicit measuring of targeted process rather than the more ambiguous concept still related to the measure of general moral disengagement. Looking at more intricate moral processes can help shape prevention and intervention programmes for gang members, a current focus in English and Welsh crime policy (Home Office, 2016; Home Office, 2017).

1.2. Aims and Objectives

This research aimed to study the process of moral disengagement in gang versus non-gang delinquents whilst exploring the “sub-concept” of discriminant moral disengagement. Examining these topics was intended to inform policy and intervention work concerning youth gangs in England. These aims were pursued through the set of research activities outlined below in 1.3.

1.3. Contents

The present research thesis was completed as a component of the Professional (Practitioner) Doctorate in Forensic Psychology (DForenPsy) programme at the University of Nottingham. Following the current chapter providing a brief preface to the thesis, chapter two contains a systematic review of the literature on moral

interventions for aggressive and violent behaviour in youth gang members. This review provides the basis for moral research's relevance to prevention and intervention work with young people involved in such behaviour, known risk factors for future offending behaviour even if the behaviour is sub-criminal (Borum, Bartel & Forth, 2002).

Chapter three comprises an empirical study which surveyed gang and non-gang delinquents on their levels of general moral disengagement and discriminant moral disengagement towards outgroups. Previous research has established that young offenders morally disengage and that the same is true of young gang members (Alleyne & Wood, 2010; Niebieszczanski et al., 2015). This piece of research seeks to identify whether the mechanism manifests in the same manner across gang and non-gang young offenders, particularly when the moral disengagement is directed at outgroups. This topic is thought to be particularly relevant to intervention work focused on engagement with moral reasoning and victim empathy.

Chapter four expands on this with a second empirical study examining gang versus non-gang delinquents' attitudes towards women and the possibility of discriminant moral disengagement directed towards females. Given the recent policy shift in England and Wales towards protecting females from gang members and the discrepancies between research and policy's portrayal of female roles within and around gangs, this topic is very relevant to the view of both male and female gang members within England.

Finally, chapter five consists of a critique of how gang membership is measured with a particular focus on the Eurogang Youth Survey and the Eurogang

Definition Instrument (Weerman et al., 2009; Weerman et al., 2010). This chapter highlights the difficulties of critiquing measures beyond the definitional debate.

Chapter six concludes this thesis with an overview and discussion of the components' findings, focusing on the implications and future directions of this research.

Chapter Two: Systematic Review

Abstract

This systematic review establishes the quantity and quality of evidence regarding the efficacy of interventions with a moral component/base for reducing violent behaviour in gang-involved youth. In addition, it examines the results to identify areas which require further exploration to establish the usefulness of morality as a mechanism of change within prevention and behaviour-targeted work. The review found that there were few documented programmes using moral components to target violent behaviour in gang youth. Despite the success of morality-based interventions for general delinquent violence and antisocial behaviour, most reviewed programmes seemed to include moral components as an afterthought rather than by purposeful design. This gap in gang work is discussed with a view to encouraging future programmes to build on the apparent success of morally-based delinquent programmes and the growing literature base around morality, moral disengagement, and gangs.

2.1. Introduction

Gang membership is positively correlated with delinquency and violence, both of which are very costly issues for society (Alleyne, Fernandes & Pritchard, 2014; Melde & Esbensen, 2013; Pyrooz, Turanovic, Decker & Wu, 2015). Previous studies have established the link between various dimensions of morality and antisocial behaviour, finding higher levels of moral disengagement in offenders compared to the general public, and possibly, in gang versus non-gang youth (Alleyne & Wood, 2010; Alleyne & Wood, 2012; Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, & Pastorelli, 1996; Emler & Reicher, 1995; Shulman, Cauffman, Piquero, & Fagan, 2011). Correspondingly, decreases in reported moral disengagement both speeds declines in self-reported antisocial behaviour (even when controlling for callous-unemotional traits) and is associated with a decreased likelihood of offending (Shulman, Cauffman, Piquero & Fagan, 2011). Targeting moral disengagement, or its components, has been raised as a theoretically sound investment to tackle delinquency, either as an enhancement to existing interventions, or as an intervention in its own right (Alleyne, 2010; Bandura, Underwood, & Fromson, 1975; Dhingra, Debowska, Sharratt, Hyland & Kola-Palmer, 2014; Gibbs, 1993; Lardén, Melin, Holst & Långström, 2005; Palmer, 2007). There are a wide range of “gang interventions” and reviews examining their efficacy across various domains; however, despite growing interest in the psychological processes underlying gangs, such as moral disengagement, no review of interventions specifically targeting relevant processes exists (Cooper & Ward, 2008; Davies, Warnes & Hofman, 2017; Esbensen, 2000; Fisher, Montgomery & Gardner, 2008; Gilbert & Newbold, 2006; Hodgkinson et al., 2009; Huey, Lewine & Rubenson, 2016; Klein & Maxson, 2006;

O'Connor & Waddell, 2015; Wong, Gravel, Bouchard, Descormiers, Morselli, 2016; Wong, Gravel, Bouchard, Morselli & Descormiers, 2012).

Amongst existing programmes, comprehensive interventions (utilising combined strategies to target gang membership and offending, including violence) are currently considered the most effective approach to gang prevention and intervention, and are increasingly subjected to empirical evaluations (Densley, 2011; Hodgkinson et al., 2009). However, these evaluations and comparisons fail to examine or discuss any moral components of the programmes, possibly due to the lack of a consistent stance or language regarding the use of morality in gang intervention work. Some programmes may actively target moral cognition without recognising it, using alternative or broader phrases such as "character education", which may well encompass moral aspects.

Aggression Replacement Training [ART] explicitly aims to develop moral reasoning and is regarded as an effective intervention for promoting prosocial behaviour in chronically aggressive and violent youth. ART was trialled with gang members with promising, albeit underreported, results (Goldstein & Glick, 1994; OJJDP, 2018). Equipping Youth to Help One Another [EQUIP] also has an explicit moral component, but despite its efficacy in improving sociomoral reasoning, and to a lesser extent, in reducing recidivism, in violent juveniles, EQUIP has never been trialled with a gang specific population (Gibbs, 1993; van Stam et al., 2014). Given the above, it is reasonable to surmise that interventions with moral components may be useful for preventing/addressing violent behaviour in juvenile gang members and merit review.

The following review firstly seeks to establish the quantity and quality of evidence on the efficacy of interventions with a moral component or base for reducing violent behaviour in gang-involved youth. Second, it examines the evidence to identify areas which require further exploration in order to establish the usefulness of morality as a mechanism within prevention and behaviour-targeted work. Violent behaviour was chosen as an outcome measure as it causes a clear and quantifiable harm. Violence reduction is also a consistent focus of criminal justice policy in England and Wales (The Home Office, 2016; The Home Office, 2018).

2.2. Method

See Appendix 2.A for the systematic review protocol.

2.2.1. Inclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria were set out through use of a PICO (Population, Intervention, Comparison, Outcome) framework (see Table 2.1). In order to capture a population relevant to the research questions addressed in this thesis, males under eighteen (those at highest risk for joining a gang) were targeted, with clinical samples excluded. Samples including youth over the age of eighteen were included if the majority of participants were aged eighteen or younger. Due to the lack of consistent language and terminology across fields for violence reduction work, particularly with regards to incorporating morality-based work into interventions, intervention terms were purposely broad with a more targeted outcome to moderate the relevance of search results.

Table 2.1. PICO criteria

P (Population)	Non-clinical samples, gang-involved males aged up to 18 years old
I (Intervention)	Morality-based interventions, including empathy-targeted interventions. Any length or type*
C (Comparison)	None needed
O (Outcome)/Dependent variable	Violent behaviour
Time period	2010-2018**
Study types	Any with an (individual) outcome measure
Publication types	Theses (published and unpublished), published journal papers, freely available research; all subject to meeting a quality criteria to ensure that findings can reasonably be seen as honestly and correctly reported
Geographic area	Occident countries with common law legal systems (Huntington, 1996)
Language	English

*Purposeful inclusion of a moral component was determined by whether a publication explicitly referred to a process or phrase including the word "moral" within their intervention description

**While originally set to include any papers from 1945 to present to capture any studies within the modern age of psychology, due to gang research's prominence in other fields as well as the changing nature of definitions and concepts in the field, a more recent date was needed. Howell published a comprehensive review of gang interventions' efficacy in 2010 responding to Klein and Maxson's 2006 review, which married to Wong and colleague's 2012 review of evaluation studies should capture any earlier publications which merit inclusion

Language and geographic area were limited to ensure reasonable cultural consistency (particularly regarding morality and antisocial behaviour) and allow for more meaningful comparisons. Included studies (see Figure 2.1) were also quality assessed, as outlined below.

2.2.2. Literature search

Scoping searches were carried out between July 2017-March 2018. Changes were made to focus the search question on a more specific population and

outcome, as well as including terms to examine intervention rather than descriptive studies.

An electronic literature search was conducted April to May 2018 with the following databases: OVID, EBSCO, ASSIA, ProQuest Criminology Collection (NCJRS, Criminal Justice Database, Theses and Dissertations) and Web of Science (see Appendix 2.B for a sample search strategy). This resulted in a total of 9,785 results which were managed using Mendeley (Version 1.19; 2018). Mendeley identified 178 sets of duplicates, which once removed left 7,810 results. An additional 4,154 were eliminated for being written prior to 2010 as existing systematic reviews of gang interventions would have already filtered out key studies for consideration, and the changing nature of “gang” definitions had to be considered. Titles and abstracts were then reviewed for additional duplicates, relevance and eligibility, leaving seventy one results. A second rater was consulted at this stage to reduce bias regarding study relevance. All disputes were settled in discussion and did not require further refereeing.

The remaining 16 studies were compared to the set inclusion criteria (see 2.2.2.) to confirm their eligibility. To reduce risk of bias the second-rater was again consulted at this stage. Ultimately, two studies from the search were included.

This search was augmented by a manual review of reference lists from relevant reviews and recommendations from gang researchers and practitioners. This added a further six results, for a total of eight results. See Figure 2.1 for a summary of the literature search and exclusion results.

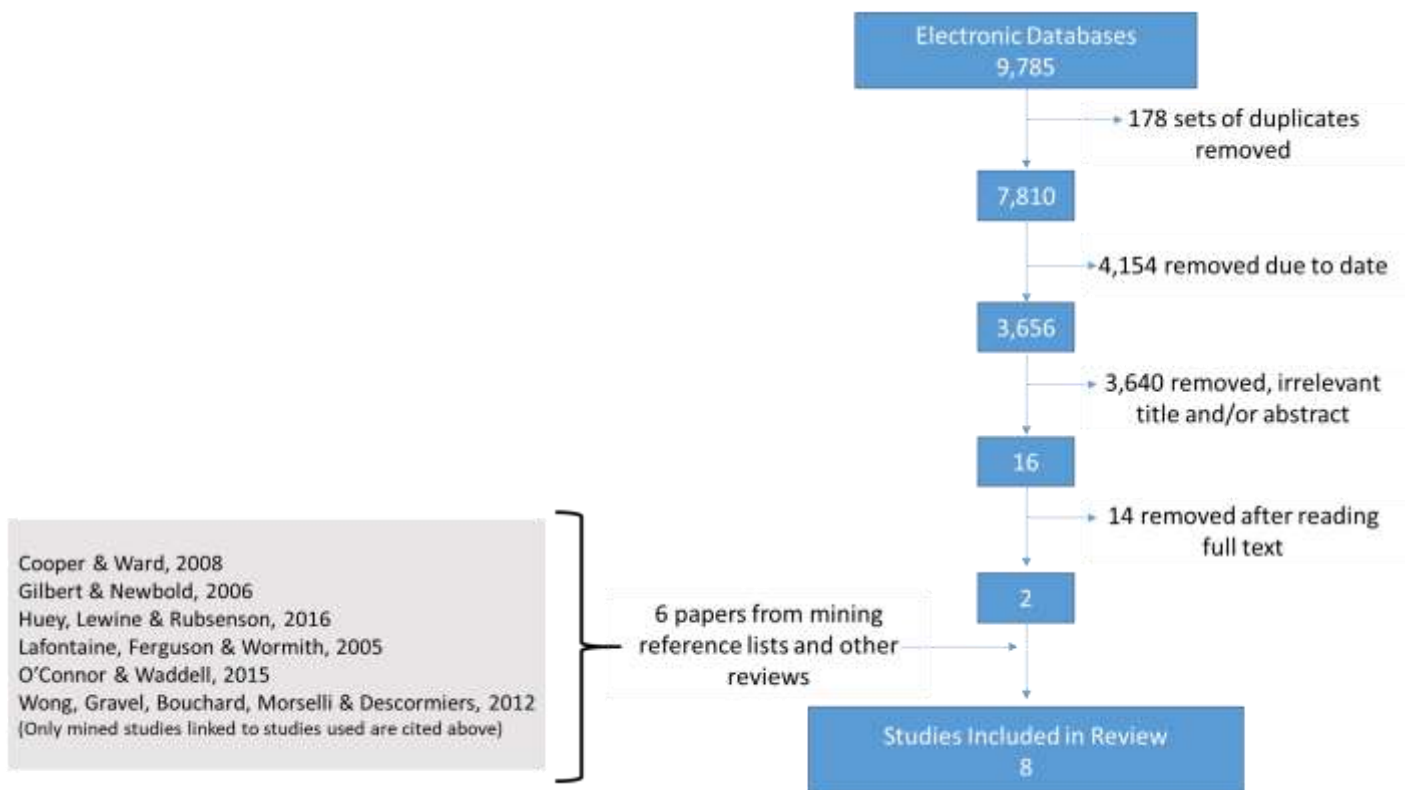


Figure 2.1. Literature search results

Figure 2.1 and section 2.2.1. describe the outcomes of the literature search and subsequent filtering process resulting in the eight studies ultimately included in this review. Literature excluded at the title/abstract review stage were often excluded on the basis of being descriptive rather than outcome-oriented. Based on researcher familiarity with gang prevention/intervention, some studies were also excluded on the basis of being known policing and policy interventions, as in addition to generally lacking moral components, many such interventions measure outcomes geographically (for example, using crime rates within a certain area) rather than individually, and thus fail to strictly establish the efficacy of their intervention specifically for gang youth (as opposed to adults and non-gang offenders for example). Operation Ceasefire is an example of such an intervention

(e.g. Braga, Hureau & Papachristos, 2014). Other common reasons for exclusion were a substance use rather than violence focus (e.g. Dusenbury et al., 2010) or relying upon a professional sample rather than youth (e.g. Barrow, 2011 or Wesely, Dzoba, Miller & Rasche, 2017).

Studies excluded at the full text review stage were often removed due to insufficient information being obtainable about study content or outcomes (e.g. Goldstein & Glick, 1994 and Spooner, Pyrooz, Webb, & Fox, 2017). Examples of such missing content include lacking a clear moral component (e.g. Spergel, Wa & Sosa, 2005b,c)), lacking gang participants/measures (e.g. Armstrong, 2003), or lacking a violent-based outcome measure (e.g. Hughes, Griner, Guarino, Drabik-Medeiros, & Williams, 2012). Some outcome measures, such as general delinquency, had to be excluded on the basis that it was impossible to differentiate violent delinquency from non-violent delinquency in such outcomes.

2.2.3. Quality and risk of bias assessment

In order to ensure that studies were of reasonable quality for inclusion and that any risk present could be accounted for, included studies were rated using an instrument developed by the researcher based on the Maryland Scale of Scientific Methods and Cochrane Collaboration's guide to assessing risk of bias, informed by recommendations from Densley as well as Flay and colleagues (Densley, 2011; Flay et al., 2005; Higgins et al., 2011; Madaleno & Waights, 2014; Sherman et al., 1998). This was particularly important as the studies drew from multiple fields, which may have had different standards with regards to what level of bias is acceptable within a study. The outcomes of this assessment are depicted in Table 2.3. Strong ratings indicate a stronger design (less chance of bias, better quality)

while weak ratings indicate a weaker design (higher chance of bias, weaker quality). Ratings were calculated by assigning each item on the assessment tool as strong (2), moderate (1) or weak (0) based on pre-determined criteria. Total scores for both bias and quality were then averaged based on the number of items they were scored on. There was some variation in the number of items each study was scored on in order to account for differences in study design and execution (risk items 12 ± 1 , quality items 19 ± 1).

The instrument is included as Appendix 2.C and considers factors such as research design, gang membership measurement, participant demographics, comparison group presence and demographics, moral component of intervention, and outcome measures. As inclusion criteria had already screened for a reasonable level of quality in the included studies, the quality assessment did not disqualify any studies but rather informed the discussion and consideration of their limitations. Section 2.3.2. offers a more in-depth discussion of assessment outcomes.

2.2.4. Data extraction

A data extraction form was constructed to facilitate effective data extraction, building on information noted during the inclusion/exclusion process (Appendix 2.D). The form was based on the PICO framework summarised in Table 2.1 but also allowed space for additional notes and considerations, such as whether a community or custody-based sample was studied.

2.2.5. Synthesis

Quantitative data was narratively synthesised to examine the characteristics of studies, and thus their quantity and quality. An additional narrative synthesis explores the efficacy of interventions from included studies to inform a discussion

on the usefulness of morality in violence-focused gang work, and future areas for consideration.

2.3. Results

Of the eight studies included in the review, two reported on the same intervention evaluation, and are thus grouped together in discussion as GREAT II (Esbensen, Osgood, Peterson, Taylor & Carson, 2013; Esbensen, Peterson, Taylor & Osgood, 2012). The following studies were included: Bloomington-Normal Comprehensive Gang Program (Bloomington), Environmental Youth Corps (EYC), Gang Resistance Education and Training (GREAT II), Growing Against Gangs and Violence (GAGV), Gang Prevention/Intervention Through Targeted Outreach (GPTTO/GITTO), Gang Rescue and Support Project (GRASP), and the San Antonio Comprehensive Community-Wide Approach to Gang Prevention/Gang Rehabilitation, Assessment and Service Program (San Antonio) (Arbreton & McClanahan, 2002; Densley, Adley, Zhu & Lambine, 2017; Esbensen et al., 2012; Esbensen et al., 2013; Hritz & Gabow, 1997; Peters, 1996; Spergel, Wa & Sosa, 2005a,d).

Bloomington(-Normal) was one of five sites in which Spergel and colleagues' Comprehensive Gang Program Model was trialled by local organisations, and the only one where the comparison group was drawn from matched twin cities rather than within the study city itself. Carried out from the mid to late 1990s in parallel with the four other sites' programmes and evaluations, Bloomington aimed to utilise an interagency approach with three interrelated components: programme elements, strategies, and implementation principles. The programme elements outlined the structures and processes needed to implement the Model, while the strategy

addressed outcomes through community mobilisation, social intervention, social intervention, provision of social opportunities, suppression/social control, and organisational change/development. Implementation principles then guided agencies in putting the Model and evaluations into action. Bloomington compared targeted youth (those judged by staff to be gang members or at high risk of gang involvement) to youth matched from another set of twin cities within Illinois. Ultimately, it was not found to successfully follow the Model which may well have contributed to the lack of significant results in this study (Spergel et al., 2005a).

Despite there being five sites for Spergel and colleague's evaluation of the Comprehensive Model, each site varied slightly in their implementation. As such, only two of the studies are included in this review as having recognisable moral components in their designs, and they are considered separately. Bloomington was deemed to have a moral component because the programme's "street team, particularly the street worker, must reach out physically, psychologically, socially, and morally to assist gang youth" (Spergel et al., 2005a, pp.1.44). The other evaluation included is San Antonio. San Antonio follows the same basic principles as Bloomington, but its experimental and comparison populations were sampled from different areas within the same city. San Antonio (Texas) was also judged to have a moral component based on the instructions to their street teams, which in this implementation were asked to work while protecting the community's established values and interest(s) (Spergel et al., 2005d). The other three evaluations despite their similarities had no clear moral component(s) (Spergel et al., 2005b,c,e). Both of the included Spergel studies looked at self-reported delinquency with a violence sub-scale as well as violent arrests to measure violence-based outcomes.

EYC was conducted in Mobile, Alabama, one of three sites commissioned to evaluate the efficacy of boot camps in reducing juvenile delinquency in the early 1990s. EYC was eligible for review because it reported the gang membership of its participants despite generally focusing on non-violent delinquents likely to reoffend.

EYC served as a diversionary programme. Eligible youth were randomly assigned to EYC or to be sentenced as normal (probation or custody). The boot camp promoted moral values through life skills work and mentoring, which was deemed to be a moral component. Whether, when and how participants reoffended was used as the outcome measure, with only the first act of recidivism considered. Re-offences were categorised, with violent offences as one of the sub-types (Peters, 1996).

GREAT II was a revision of GREAT, arguably the most well-known gang prevention programme. GREAT was designed to be delivered in classrooms by law enforcement officials to reduce participants' chance of joining a gang, risk of offending (particularly violent offending), and negative attitudes towards law enforcement. The first major revision of GREAT occurred as a response to its initial evaluations, and recognised moral disengagement as a risk factor to be addressed as part of the programme. The evaluation of GREAT II produced several papers using the same dataset and evaluation team, two of which are included in this review. The evaluation involved 31 schools across seven US cities. In each school, classes were randomly assigned to experimental or control groups and data was collected in waves to allow for a longitudinal design. One of the included papers focuses on Wave 1, while the other focuses on later Waves (Esbensen et al., 2012; Esbensen et al., 2013).

GAGV, the only UK (and only non-US) programme included, was founded in 2008 and based on GREAT with some adjustments tailored to youth needs within a UK-context. For example, some elements of the GREAT curriculum were already embedded in the UK national curriculum, and did not require repetition. GAGV also relied less on law enforcement to facilitate the programme, with their own facilitators assisting law enforcement in delivering the programme or sometimes replacing them altogether. Area specialists were also employed for certain subjects, such as domestic violence, to aid in handling disclosures. Additionally, GAGV offered supplemental material in particular areas, such as sexual exploitation and violence and cyberbullying.

The GAGV curriculum had to be adjusted to be delivered in a more condensed form than usual for the evaluation and was delivered in multiple London boroughs. Like the GREAT evaluation, GAGV randomly assigned classes to experimental or control groups within the evaluation schools and had multiple waves of data (though less overall than GREAT II). By their team's own admission, GAGV's generalisability was somewhat stunted by the differences between London and other areas of the UK, though it is still notable given the proclivity of gang activity within the capital (Densley et al., 2017).

GPTTO and GITTO were programmes created by the Boys & Girls Clubs of America (BGCA) with funding (like many of the US programmes) from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) to trial a Comprehensive Community-Wide Model (see Spergel's evaluations above). Both GPTTO and GITTO aimed to engage "hard-to-reach" youth, with GPTTO aimed to help youth stay out of gangs and GITTO aimed to help youth disengage from them. Both used targeted

recruitment and case management, with comparisons matched to participants from within their communities by professionals. GPTTO mainstreamed participants into BGCA activities with additional support that aimed to avoid “labelling” them, whilst GITTO functioned separately to BGCA in order to manage the risk and needs of their participants. BGCA worked with other agencies to implement the components of the Comprehensive Model, with some of the clubs involved explicitly seeking to teach participants about mainstream society’s norms, values, and morals (Arbreton & McClanahan, 2002).

The final included study, GRASP, was also the shortest paper included, consisting of only two pages; it is also arguably the most unique programme. GRASP, based in Denver, Colorado, is a mainly peer-run intervention paralleling aspects of Kohlberg’s Just Community, in some ways similar to the promising programmes outlined by Gibbs in his chapter (Gibbs, 1993; Hritz & Gabow, 1997). The GRASP group is completely voluntary and gives youth an opportunity to take on leadership and mentoring roles as they progress, developing problem-solving skills, leadership, self-esteem and emotional regulation in peer-facilitated groups assisted by an Adult Advisory Group. The paper included has no comparison group but shares the preliminary findings from a sample of GRASP youth completing self-administered surveys before and after their engagement with the program.

2.3.1. Study characteristics

Of the included studies, four came from journals while the other four were government-published reports. Based on the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) definitions, four of the included papers had experimental designs (randomised controlled trials; EYC, GAGV, GREAT II), three have quasi-

experimental designs (Bloomington, GPTTO/GITTO, San Antonio), and the remaining study was a longitudinal within group comparison (GRASP) (NICE, 2018). Three programmes were prevention-focused (GAGV, GPTTO, GREAT) and five were intervention focused (Bloomington, EYC, GITTO, GRASP, San Antonio), although there was some overlap between the two focuses. All studies were based in the United States of America with the exception of GAGV, which was piloted in England. Some key study characteristics are summarised in Table 2.2.

All programmes except EYC had both male and female participants, though most participants in all programmes except GREAT II were male. Prevention programmes tended to have younger participants and were all community-based. Most intervention programmes were community-based, with the exception of EYC, which drew on a diversion population resulting in a partly-custodial control sample.

All studies reported gender in some format and all but one (GRASP) reported the ethnicity of participants. All studies referred to the age of participants, although some provided ranges or general terms such as “youth” rather than exact values for participant ages. All studies included a description of how many gang-involved youth were included in the study, with most using self-nomination to determine membership (others using professional records/judgments).

There was considerable variation in how moral components were phrased and incorporated throughout the studies. Three included components to address moral disengagement (GAGV and GREAT II), while the others sought to promote mainstream morality and/or challenge gang morality. Three papers specifically referred to a form of the word “moral” (excluding moral disengagement) and four referred to “values” in a moral context.

Table 2.2. Key study characteristics

Intervention	Study	Sample (N, age, gender, setting)	Moral component	Outcome measure
Bloomington	Spergel, Wa & Sosa, 2005a	N= 134 (68.3% gang _i , 79.8% gang _c) 12-20 (about 70% of intervention group aged 12-16) Mixed, 81.2% male _i , 50.6% male _c Community	Moral "reach out"	Violent arrests and self-reported delinquency with a violent subset (Arrest records and self-report survey)
EYC	Peters, 1996	N=160 (41% gang _i , 49% gang _c) 18 or younger All male Diversion	Promotes moral values	Violent offences, first re-offence if applicable, (Court records)
GAGV	Densley, Adler, Zhu & Lambine, 2017	N=198 (5.7% gang) 12-14 Mixed (58.6% male) Community	Addresses moral disengagement	Violent offending (Subset of questions on self-report delinquency scale)
GPTTO and GITTO	Arbreton & McClanahan, 2002	N=566; 236 prevention and 66 intervention (33% gang _p , 25% gang _{pc} , 63% gang _i , 41% gang _{ic}) 9-18 Mixed, 62% male _p , 62% male _{pc} , 82% male _i , 61% male _{ic} Community	Aspects of moral education	Carrying a weapon, delinquent behaviour (Interview/survey)
GRASP	Hritz & Gabow, 1997	N=37 (all in or experiencing pressure to join gang) Youth (under 18 implied, school aged) Mostly male Community	Challenges gang values	Violence related injuries (Self-administered survey)
GREAT (II)	Esbensen, Peterson, Taylor & Osgood, 2012	N=3,820 (172-177) M _{age} =11.48 Mixed, 50% male Community	Addresses moral disengagement	Violent offending (Self-report delinquency inventory)
	Esbensen, Osgood, Peterson, Taylor & Carson, 2013	As above	As above	As above
San Antonio/ GRAASP	Spergel, Wa & Sosa, 2005d	N=230 (current gang= 50 _i , 47 _c previous=38 _i ,72 _c) 12-24 (most under 18) Mixed, 194 males Community	Protect community values	Violent arrests and self-reported delinquency with a violent subset (Arrest records and self-report survey)

*Demographics are reported in the format that studies presented them in

**The 'i' and 'c' subscripts signify intervention versus control populations

2.3.2. Quality assessment

A second-rater was consulted for all judgments on the potential bias regarding the presence of a moral component for every study, and for the complete quality/risk of bias assessment of four studies (50%). There were no disagreements regarding whether or not moral components were present in the papers. There was substantial agreement between raters regarding the assessments as a whole, with any disagreements resolved in discussion resulting in a Cohen's Kappa of one for overall bias and quality scores (perfect agreement). No studies achieved a strong average score for both bias and quality.

Higher (or stronger) scores indicated a lower risk of bias. EYC scored the lowest for risk of bias with a strong score, three studies scored as having moderate risk of bias, and four scored as having heightened moderate risk of bias. The most problematic area for bias was papers' failure to report attrition effectively.

Higher (stronger) scores also indicated a higher level of quality according to the criteria set out by the review. EYC and GAGV scored the highest with strong-moderate scores; no studies achieved a strong quality score. This is likely due to the niche nature of the review, resulting in varied language and standards for papers, most of which were not written for a psychology-focused audience. Most other studies achieved a moderate quality rating, with one (GRASP) receiving a weak-moderate score. It is worth noting that GRASP's paper was a fraction of the length of the other included papers, and thus its score suffered

from not providing as much content as the other papers. Full results are summarised in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3. Bias and quality assessment ratings

Study	Bias	Quality	KBias	KQuality	High Scores	Low Scores
1. Bloomington-Normal	1.42	1.42	.844	.587	Intervention (Bias), Research design and Selection (Quality)	Research design (Bias), Attrition (Quality)
2. EYC	1.82	1.61	1.00	1.00	Research design and Attrition (Bias and Quality), Intervention and Outcome (Bias) Comparability (Quality)	Representativeness (Bias), Targeted outcome (Quality)
3. GAGV	1.33	1.74	.855	.862	Intervention (Bias and Quality), Research design (Quality)	Attrition (Bias and Quality)
4. GPPTO and GITTO	1.15	1.45	.636	.913	Intervention (Bias), Research design and Selection (Quality)	Research design (Bias), Outcome measure (Quality)
5. GRASP	1.09	1.06	.732	.824	Selection (Bias and Quality), Intervention (Bias)	Attrition (Bias and Quality), Research design (Bias)

6-7. GREAT (II)	2012	1.33	1.47	.852	.907	Intervention (Bias), Research design (Quality)	Attrition (Bias and Quality)
	2013	1.42	1.53	1.00	1.00	Intervention (Bias), Research design (Quality)	Attrition (Quality)
8. San Antonio/GRAASP		1.42	1.35	.844	1.00	Intervention and Outcome (Bias), Research design and Comparability (Quality)	Selection (Bias) and Attrition (Quality)

2.3.3. Intervention effects

Violent arrests/offending were the most commonly used violence-related outcome measures, with six studies measuring such behaviour; the other two used carrying a weapon and violence-related injuries. Seven of the studies used a self-report measure in some format, and three used official records (for two of them as supplements to self-report data).

Most of the interventions were not effective in decreasing violence, but reported success in other areas, such as increasing prosocial behaviour. Overall efficacy is summarised in Table 2.4.

The failure to reduce violence may be due to the efficacy or design of the programmes, mediating effects of non-violence-related goals, or the outcome measures used. For example, EYC's design was somewhat problematic in that it targeted non-violent youths, and so by definition any violent offence following the intervention would be an increase. Additionally, it only looked at the first act of recidivism following the programme. Like all programmes, participants would

have been under increased scrutiny having taken part in a study, potentially putting them at higher risk of detection than prior to the intervention. Whether an increase or decrease in violence is detected, studies using official records are unable to measure undetected/sub-arrest violence that may have occurred. Self-report data can counteract this by capturing behaviour that has gone undetected by law enforcement, but is also naturally vulnerable to participant bias.

It is worth noting that GREAT II was found to reduce self-reported violent offending in the long-term, but not at a statistically significant level; as did GPTTO and GITTO. Violence increased in both the intervention and comparison groups for GAGV, but increased less for GAGV youth. These might be considered as partial successes if more forgiving criteria are applied.

Table 2.4. Programme efficacies

Intervention	Study	Outcome measure	Effective?
1. Bloomington	Spergel, Wa & Sosa, 2005a	Violent arrests and self-reported delinquency with a violent subset (Arrest records and self-report survey)	No
2. EYC	Peters, 1996	Violent offences, first re-offence if applicable, (Court records)	No
3. GAGV	Densley, Adler, Zhu & Lambine, 2017	Violent offending (Subset of questions on self-report delinquency scale)	Partial
4. GPTTO and GITTO	Arbreton & McClanahan, 2002	Carrying a weapon, delinquent behaviour (Interview/survey)	No*
5. GRASP	Hritz & Gabow, 1997	Violence related injuries (Self-administered survey)	Yes
6-7. GREAT (II)	Esbensen, Peterson, Taylor & Osgood, 2012	Violent offending (Self-report delinquency inventory)	No
	Esbensen, Osgood, Peterson, Taylor & Carson, 2013	As above	No*
8. San Antonio/GRAASP	Spergel, Wa & Sosa, 2005d	Violent arrests and self-reported delinquency with a violent subset (Arrest records and self-report survey)	No

GRASP was the only intervention to report success through a decrease in violence-related injuries. The significance of this is limited by several factors including the study design, small sample size, and even lack of specific outcome data beyond directionality. While GRASP's results were encouraging, the authors themselves raise the need for a larger more in-depth evaluation of the programme to be conducted. Future studies may also attempt a more direct measure of violence, or present a clear definition of what constitutes a violence-related injury (for example, whether the participant had to partake in the violence for the injury to be counted or if the outcome might be a measure of victimisation).

Overall, several factors may have contributed to the reviewed studies' impact, or lack thereof, on violent behaviour. Nonetheless, the fact remains that only one study reported successful reductions, with another three papers arguably reporting partial successes with promising but not significant trends.

2.3.4. Research question summary

The first goal of the review was to establish the quantity and quality of evidence on the efficacy of interventions with a moral component or base for reducing violent behaviour in youth gang contexts. While promising evidence exists for moral interventions to target violence in general delinquent populations, the evidence is sparse for gang youth. It appears that despite morality being discussed in relation to youth gangs in the past, there are few detailed evaluations of an intervention with moral components, and none of a moral-based intervention. Those programmes with moral components tend to mention the components in passing rather than elaborating on or exploring them. They may use moral-paralleling language and look at strategies which address moral disengagement through promoting empathy and perspective-taking for example, but no common language exists, and thus such interventions must be thoroughly reviewed within the specific research manuscripts.

Quality presents additional issues, as some interventions with strong moral overtones have been applied but underreported, such as GRASP, or ART whose gang trial was too vague to be included in this review (Goldstein & Glick, 1994). While a common language and more discussion might help to enhance the quality of such papers, they are unlikely to appear unless someone takes the first steps into that still uncharted territory. Given the limited emphasis on morality

in the included studies despite their moral components, their efficacy actually reveals very little about the impact moral programmes might have on violent behaviour.

The review also aimed to examine existing the evidence to identify areas which require further exploration in order to establish the usefulness of morality as a mechanism within prevention and behaviour-targeted work. While the included programmes included moral components, they did not present the theoretical basis behind such components, only naming them and at most providing brief descriptions. For instance, GREAT II, included attitudinal measures with clear links to morality and moral disengagement (such as lying neutralisations and empathy), but the mechanisms underlying these outcomes were not explored in any depth (Esbensen et al, 2012; Esbensen et al., 2013). As such, there is still a gap not just within, but between moral intervention literature and gang interventions.

2.4. Discussion

It is apparent that only a limited literature exists regarding gang prevention and intervention with moral components, which is somewhat unexpected given that it was proposed decades ago. Gibbs's chapter in *The Gang Intervention Handbook* (1993) remains the best example of a theoretical discussion on how morally-informed programmes may successfully be applied to gangs, yet the chapter (and even the book) are not cited in a single included study. This is likely because none of the papers set out to implement a moral intervention, but following Gibbs's chapter and the promising pilot of ART with gang youth, the question remains: why has no one piloted and written about

such a programme? Particularly given the interest in moral disengagement in gang research over recent years, and with major interventions such as GREAT II and GAGV acknowledging moral disengagement, it is odd that no one has more actively sought to target the phenomenon or the concept at its core (Alleyne & Wood, 2010; Alleyne, Fernandes & Pritchard, 2014; Niebieszczanski, Harkins, Judson, Smith & Dixon, 2015; Wood, Alleyne, Mozova & James, 2015). As such, further analysis is needed regarding the efficacy of moral components, specifically within these programs. The efficacy of the components could be weighed against results for non-gang programmes with strong moral components/bases and Gibbs's discussion of what components are needed for an effective moral intervention to inform a programme design (Gibbs, 1993). This point will be elaborated upon in 2.4.2.

The quantity of moral-related programme literature outside of the United States is less surprising, given that many other countries are reluctant to recognise gang problems, particularly over an extended period of time. Within England for example, despite the presence of gang-like groups and sensational headlines, there was a reluctance to officially recognise gangs until the time leading up to and following the 2011 Riots. Early work by now prominent UK gang researchers such as Alleyne, Densley, and Harding were conducted under a degree of academic suspicion with the prevailing view of the time being that media's portrayal of English gang culture was more akin to a moral panic than a reality (Alleyne, 2010; The Centre for Social Justice, 2009; Cox, 2010; Densley, 2011; Densley & Mason, 2011; Hallsworth & Young, 2008; Harding, 2012). This sat within a wider debate over whether the antisocial youth groups from other

areas of the world truly qualified as gangs, or if gangs were a US-specific phenomenon (Cox, 2010; Marshall, Webb & Tilley, 2005; Weerman et al., 2009). Even those who accepted the existence of English gangs queried: what is the magnitude of their presence and impact? Was the “gang” label conducive to addressing the issues related to these youth groups, or a way of stigmatising non-criminal adolescent behaviour (Bullock & Tilley, 2002; Hallsworth & Young, 2008; Pitts, 2008; Stelfox, 1998)? Following the 2011 Riots criminal justice policy recognised and targeted gangs in the UK, making them a priority before zeitgeist again began to question their existence, almost driving the issue back into ambiguity before a spike in knife crime forced continued attention to the issue (Harding, 2014; Harding, 2018; Home Office, 2011; Home Office, 2015; Home Office, 2016; Home Office, 2018; Whittaker, Cheston, Tyrell, Higgins, Felix-Baptiste & Havard, 2018). Several debates remain around gangs in England, but overall there is an agreement that antisocial youth groups sharing particular qualities constitute a social issue worth addressing in policy, research and practice (Home Office, 2017; Maitra, 2016; Whittaker et al., 2018).

Given the inconsistent recognition and investment in addressing gangs, it is unsurprising that the United Kingdom and other countries have very few programmes (even currently) compared to the United States who has recognised their gang issue for a significantly longer amount of time. The US has recently had a wealth of outcome studies and evidence reviews for gang prevention and intervention (such as Howell, 2010 and Huey et al., 2016), still none of which have explored moral components within interventions. It may be that morality’s potential controversy, in political, religious, and cultural variance for example,

has made it less popular in gang work despite the success of ART and EQUIP with general delinquent populations (Goldstein & Glick, 1994; OJJDP, 2018; van Stam et al., 2014). Gangs in the US are often dominated by ethnic minorities, which may make a primarily Caucasian research base uneasy about pursuing morality-based interventions. Alternatively, moral interventions may just not have been championed or fashionable enough to have attracted adequate funding yet. Either way, the low quantity of moral programmes inherently decreases the chance of high quality evaluations being produced or published from a morally-focused stance. Non-morally-focussed studies will be of lower quality in a morally-focused review by design. This creates a rich space for discussion on the need for and future possibilities around morally informed gang interventions.

2.4.1. Challenges and limitations

Several of the challenges of this review were already touched upon in earlier discussion, such as the gap between moral intervention and gang literature and the lack of consistent language regarding moral interventions, components and outcomes. This limited the review in that a broader search was needed to capture relevant papers, but also captured several irrelevant studies which had to be eliminated through careful deliberation of result contents seeking to identify moral components. Due to the inconsistent language, some more ambiguous but relevant morally-informed studies may have been missed out because of the stricter inclusion/exclusion criteria set to balance out the broad search's varied results. Exploratory and discursive papers without reported outcomes for example were excluded, but may have had stronger moral focuses than the reviewed studies.

While the majority of the reviewed programmes did not significantly reduce violence, the weight of this finding is limited by each programme having a moral component, but not focus. It is possible that as Gibbs argues in his chapter, a more complete moral approach is necessary to effectively target antisocial behaviour, which none of the programmes will have achieved through their components (Gibbs, 1993). Additionally, there is no way to differentiate which aspects of the reviewed programmes were responsible for any changes that did and did not occur; so a moral component's impact may have been moderated by another component or vice versa, limiting each other's impact.

2.4.2. Future recommendations

The included studies often scored well on the quality of their research design, but not as well on the bias portion of their design, indicating a need for blind allocation to be applied more regularly (see Table 2.3.). On the other hand, intervention tended to score highly on bias (indicating low risk of bias), indicating that the interventions had an identifiable moral component and comparable exposure for the control group (where applicable). Given the high agreement between raters regarding the presence of a moral component ($\kappa=1.00$), the gap in the reviewed literature is not for a moral component but a way of linking the moral component to the outcome.

In general, it is recommended that future evaluations attempt to better isolate which components of a programme are beneficial and/or detrimental. Such micro-evaluations would be particularly useful in revising programmes, creating an opportunity to improve and not just update prevention and intervention programmes.

From a moral standpoint, it is recommended that the gap between moral-based violence prevention and gang work is bridged, both in updated discursive formats but particularly in the design, implementation and evaluation of gang-focused programmes. It seems strange to continue to explore the moral culture and mechanisms of moral disengagement in youth gangs without seeking to address them.

2.5. Conclusion

Overall, though the review was able to identify studies with moral components, these components often did not appear to be purposefully moral. The review identified that there is a lack of explicitly moral gang-targeted prevention and intervention work which has been written about, and as such the quality of the discussion is also inherently limited. Given the increased focus on morality in various forms, particularly moral disengagement, amongst gang youths, an increased exploration of moral components in prevention and intervention work is merited. Promising results from moral-based delinquent programmes suggest that moral-based work is a worthy investment in tackling gang violence and furthering our understanding of what works.

Chapter Three: Empirical Study A
Moral Disengagement and Discriminant Moral Disengagement towards
Outgroups in Gang versus Non-Gang Delinquents

Abstract

Moral disengagement in gangs has gained an increasing amount of interest as researchers seek to understand and tackle the psychology behind gang violence. The first UK study to examine this was Alleyne and Wood's 2010 study, which found that gang membership was not significantly linked to moral disengagement, despite moral disengagement being heightened in offender populations (gang and non-gang) in other studies. The current study confirmed this finding in a sample of delinquent youths and explored a new proposed process: discriminant moral disengagement towards outgroups. Discriminant moral disengagement occurs when cognitive discrimination is applied to moral disengagement, allowing individuals to discriminately morally disengage towards certain targets or situations, such as outgroups (Dyberg & Egan, 2015). Exploratory findings suggest that discriminant moral disengagement towards outgroups is significantly related to gang membership. Implications and future directions are discussed.

3.1. Introduction

As touched upon in Chapter One, gang activity is of social significance because of the association gangs have with antisocial behaviour and harm: Malcolm Klein wrote "*there is a gang-specific (almost by definition) interaction between gang crime or violence and gang cohesion; each affects the other*" (2014, p. 703). Gang membership is thought to interact with an individual's proclivity for crime, amplifying or activating the latter (Bendixen, Endresen & Olweus, 2006; Egan & Beadman, 2011; Klein, Weerman & Thornberry, 2006; Wood & Gannon, 2013). Research shows that violent crime is more prevalent amongst gang youth than other young people (Alleyne, Fernandes & Pritchard, 2014; Alleyne & Wood, 2010, 2013; Battin et al., 1998; Thornberry et al., 2003). Even compared to non-gang offenders, gang-involved youth are affiliated with groups that engage in more crime (Alleyne, Wood, Mozova & James, 2015). The combined research suggests that there may be a gang-specific dynamic that enhances antisocial behaviour beyond other antisocial peer groups.

One process examined as a potential culprit for such a dynamic is moral disengagement (MD). Moral disengagement has been found to influence antisocial behaviour directly, and by disinhibiting aggression, reduces pro-social behaviour and reducing guilt (Bandura, 1999; Bandura, 2002; Dhingra, Debowska, Sharratt, Hyland & Kola-Palmer, 2014). It is both associated with and predictive of offending in adolescents, even after adjusting for callous-unemotional traits as a potential confound (Dhingra et al., 2014; Shulman, Cauffman, Piquero & Fagan, 2011). This finding compliments the above studies, given that being a gang member is predictive of higher levels of MD even after

controlling for age, gender, witnessing violence, victimisation, and psychopathy (Dhingra et al., 2014).

3.1.1. Gangs as groups

Understanding gang behaviour requires consideration of the individual gang members, the gang as a whole, and how the two interact. Numerous studies, ethnographies in particular, have examined gang “culture” and how collective beliefs, values and practices vary and conform across groups. The marriage of identity and cohesion within gangs forms a paradoxically collectivist culture, which has been found to override demographic categories such as race and ethnicity, even within the more racially homogenous gangs of the United States (Klein, 2002; Klein, 2014; Sanchez-Jankowski, 1991; Vigil, 2003). As such it is important to consider how group processes influence or enhance individual attitudes or behaviours, for instance how such group processes feed into individual views of other gangs, or outgroups (Vasquez, Lickel, & Hennigan, 2010; Wood & Gannon, 2013).

Gang membership is thought to be driven, in part, by experienced marginalisation which motivates youth to seek out belonging and safety in numbers, both of which can be found in the perceived protection offered by a gang, particularly in communities with prevalent gang cultures (Densley, Cai & Hilal, 2014; Klein, 2014; Melde, Taylor, & Esbensen, 2009). Within such a gang, research suggests that external threats (likely from outgroup gangs) and persistent contact with authority figures, such as law enforcement which are arguably another outgroup, can reinforce collective identity and group cohesion (Densley, Cai & Hilal, 2014; Fisher, Haslam, & Smith, 2010; Klein & Maxson,

2006; McAra & McVie, 2005; Short & Strodtbeck, 1965). Additionally, in-group and outgroup identification are important contributors to group-based aggression and vicarious retribution in non-gang and gang populations. A recent London-based study found that gang membership, identification with a gang, and perception of an outgroup's "entitativity" (i.e., how unified or bonded a group is) had a significant interaction affecting individual willingness to retaliate against an outgroup/outgroup associated individual (Vasquez, Wenborne, Peers, Alleyne & Ellis, 2015). A provoked individual will also be more aggressive towards an outgroup target (Pedersen, Bushman, Vasquez, & Miller, 2008). This suggests that gang members morally disengage towards members of other gangs, or outgroups, at least in the context explored by Vasquez and colleagues' studies.

Previous research has found that once a group has established a collective identity, the awareness of an outgroup (even without provocation) is enough to motivate a group (or gang) to defend its reputation (Emler & Reicher, 1995; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner, 1982). Outgroup threat has not been found to have a significant association with gang membership, and it may be that gang membership's perceived collective protection decreases perceived threat, but also that outgroup presence (or particular outgroup traits) are more important to in-group identity and decision-making than outgroup threat (Alleyne & Wood, 2010; Vasquez et al., 2015). For instance, Vasquez and colleague's study found that gang members who identified more strongly with their gang and perceived a rival group as high on entitativity were more willing to retaliate against outgroups generally. Entitativity was also a significant predictor of group-based

aggression after controlling for gender, in-group identification, and gang membership (2015).

An aspect of group identity which may contribute to gangs' aggression and MD is social dominance. Social dominance orientation has been tied to gang involvement in YOIs, and may explain the motivation behind a gang member's behaviour within the gang (Alleyne, Wood, Mozova & James, 2015). If gang members value social dominance they're likely to act in a way which reinforces or even enhances their place within the group, acting in line with group values such in-group/outgroup separation and blame. There has been some previous discussion of how a gang's MD interacts with these group dynamics, although no explicit measurement of if and how MD by gang members is directed at outgroups.

3.1.2. Discriminant moral disengagement towards outgroups

Mechanisms of moral disengagement occur generally, but some of them lend themselves to being directed at someone, potentially an outgroup, but always an other. For instance, mechanisms of blame. Gang youth were found to be more likely than non-gang youth to displace responsibility and attribute blame for example, both of which involve putting blame/responsibility for their actions onto someone else (Alleyne & Wood, 2010; Alleyne, Fernandes & Pritchard, 2014; Alleyne, Wood, Mozova & James, 2015). This includes blaming their victims for their actions, which Alleyne and Wood speculated may stem from a group culture that deems it acceptable to place blame on outgroups (such as rival gangs) but not your in-group (2010). Interestingly, none of Alleyne's above

studies found significant differences for diffusion of responsibility, a finding worth considering in the discussion of joint enterprise's justification.

Another mechanism of MD with theoretical relevance to outgroups is dehumanisation, which gang members are more likely than non-gang youth to engage in (Alleyne, Fernandes & Pritchard, 2014; Alleyne, Wood, Mozova & James, 2015). In a study examining which MD strategy might best explain the relationship between gang-membership and violence, dehumanisation was significantly identified as partially mediating the relationship. In other words, being a gang member is linked to engaging in dehumanisation, which partially explains their violent tendencies. Researchers argued that this fits well with social psychological literature examining the facilitative role of dehumanisation, which suggests that those we perceive as similar (or in our in-group) we empathise with, while stripping away similarities and human traits from outgroups to facilitate harm against them, particularly in intergroup conflict (Alleyne, Fernandes & Pritchard, 2014; Castano & Giner-Sorolla, 2006; Giner-Sorolla, Leidner, & Castano, 2012; Haslam 2006; Rudman & Mescher, 2012; Viki, Osgood, & Phillips, 2013).

Given the above, it is not unreasonable to ask whether gang members engage in MD specifically directed at outgroup members (or rival/other gangs). This will be examined in the following study by looking at discriminant moral disengagement (introduced in Chapter One) toward outgroups.

3.1.3. Research questions

The following empirical study sought to address the following research questions:

1. Can Alleyne and Woods's findings regarding young gang members and moral disengagement be replicated (2010)?
2. Do young gang members engage in discriminant moral disengagement towards outgroup members, and how might this help to explain gang crimes committed against these perceived others?

3.2. Methodology

The data for this study was collected concurrently with data for Chapter Four. Only the methodology relevant to the current study is described below, with that pertaining specifically to the second study described in Chapter Four. Following the methodology there is brief consideration of ethical issues, continued in Chapter Four.

3.2.1. Study design

This quantitative study examined the relationship between gang association and two forms of MD. The study used a MANOVA design in which MD and DMD towards outgroups are the outcomes and the predictor was gang association.

The levels of gang association are theoretically based. The grouping was based on Alleyne and Wood's groupings: non-gang youth, peripheral youth, and gang members (2010). The criteria for each group was based on the Eurogang Youth Survey (see below), and broken down according to the analysis used in Alleyne and Wood's 2010 study and feedback from the 2017 Eurogang workshop.

The analysis will focus on identifying relationships and discussing potential confounds. The use of a MANOVA will allow researchers to identify any interactions between various types and constructs of MD.

3.2.2. Participants

All study participants met the following criteria:

- Male
- Aged 13-18
- Fluent in English
- Known to a Youth Offending Team or Service in England
- Not identified as functioning below a mental age of 12

The study aimed to match gang and non-gang participants through demographic information, case manager referrals, age and index offence type, but ultimately found that this was impractical given that participants' scores often placed them in a different group from the one they were referred as. Instead, all participants were recruited through referrals made by case managers or other youth offending staff based on the more general criteria outlined above with the added caveat that group/gang members were of particular interest to the research questions. Information about the study, making a referral, and contacting the researcher was made available to all case managers at participating services through designated supervisors. Practitioners were asked to only refer young people they were confident had the capacity to give informed consent: if there was any doubt, they were advised not to make the referral.

An a priori power calculation suggested that a total sample size of 66 was desirable to achieve .95 power given a calculated effect size of .209 (based on Alleyne & Wood, 2010) and alpha level set at $p < .05$ (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009). Ultimately, a total of 47 participants completed the study, while three started the study but did not complete the protocol (generally due to a

change in the service holding their case and resulting lack of access). About 74.60% of young people approached agreed to participate, with only one participant withdrawing their consent during data collection. Approximately 15.87% of referrals did not attend their research appointments, and as such neither declined nor participated.¹ A post hoc power calculation was also conducted and is presented in 3.3.

According to the Eurogang definition and measure (EYS) thirteen participants were coded as having no gang association, fifteen were coded as possibly gang associated/affiliated, and nineteen were coded as gang members. Section 3.2.4.1.1. further outlines the significance of each label. Table 3.1 outlines the demographic information of the participants.

¹ Calculations for participation and attrition based on three services; numbers from the fourth service were not reported and were thus not incorporated.

Table 3.1. Participant demographics

Age	13	2.1% (1)	
	14	6.4% (3)	
	15	19.1% (9)	
	16	29.8% (14)	
	17	29.8% (14)	
	18	12.8% (6)	
Gang Membership	Eurogang/EYS Definition	No membership/affiliation	27.7% (13)
		Possible gang membership/affiliation/association	31.9%(15)
		Gang Member	40.4% (19)
	YOT Estimate	No membership/affiliation	55.3% (26)
		Suspected/Possible involvement, affiliation, or association	34.0% (16)
		Known gang member	10.6% (5)

N=47, see 3.2.4.1. for details regarding labels. For the two measures of gang membership (Eurogang and YOT Estimate) $\kappa=0.021$, $p>.05$, no agreement beyond chance

42 datasets were collected by the lead researcher and 5 by a research assistant based within a service.

Youth Offending Teams and Services for recruitment were identified through EYGV's priority localities. All localities identified by EYGV were approached via e-mail, but ultimately only 13.64% responded despite telephone follow-ups, with most declining; 9.09% the e-mails provided on government websites bounced back. As a result, additional services were contacted, and ultimately four participated. Three were city-based services and one was county-based. The services covered areas within the following regions: the East Midlands, Lincolnshire, London, and Yorkshire. Not all participants were local to the services referring them.

3.2.3. Ethical considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from University of Nottingham's School of Medicine (Ethics Reference No.: I12042016 SoM DFP). The major ethical considerations with regards to this study were consent and coerced compulsion, as some participants were not legally adult, and all were asked to participate through Youth Offending. Additional factors effecting capacity such as mental age were also considered. Capacity to consent is discussed below, with coerced compulsion considered in Chapter Four.

There were numerous issues impacting participants' potential capacity to consent in this study. The following outlines how issues of age were addressed, with brief discussions around executive functioning and literacy. Executive functioning captures differences in social skills, attention, mental age and learning difficulties.

3.2.3.1. Capacity to consent

In England and Wales, child protection laws recognise anyone under the age of 18 as a child. Some exceptions do exist depending on individual circumstances, for example, local authorities have a duty of care to youth in their care until the youths turn 21. On the other hand, young people enjoy considerably greater autonomy after turning 16, such as the freedom to leave home. Overall, it is agreed that laws exist to protect children and their rights, and as such in certain circumstances young people can be given responsibility before the age of 18. To work within ethical frameworks and respect both the autonomy and limitations of young people, particularly young offenders who may

arguably be considered a vulnerable and unique population, a combination of policies and guidance with regards to the law and ethical practice were consulted.

The issue of age was mainly addressed through the use of appropriate adults. 16-18 year olds have historically been able to give their own consent both in research studies of gangs, and for participation in interventions at Youth Offending and CAMHS. The law considers young people aged 16 and older to be competent of providing their own consent. Both the YJB and CAMHS use Gillick guidance and professional judgment for determining mental capacity. As such, whether or not a young person is deemed competent to provide their own consent will be determined by whether the Youth Offending Service responsible for them has deemed them capable (The National Autistic Society, 2016; NHS, 2016; Perry, Gilbody, Akers & Light, 2008; Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984; YJB, 2013).

All participants were referred to the study by their youth offending workers. Youth offending workers are identified by the English and Welsh government as being capable of acting as appropriate adults for children. Given their appropriate adult role and greater familiarity with the participant being referred, they were asked to make the first judgment about a participant's capacity to consent or assent to the study. Prior to making this decision, all YOT practitioners were given access to the study's ethics application, ethics approval, and background information, as well as given the means to contact the researcher with any questions. Practitioners were asked to only refer participants they deemed capable of consenting to the study. Practitioners were also instructed to remain neutral when raising the possibility of participation with

young people. A second judgment was made by the researcher (or in five cases, research assistant), as well as being continually monitored throughout data collection.

When possible and appropriate, practitioners were encouraged to involve parents in deciding a participant's capacity to consent. Practitioners already have established relationships with participants' families, so having them speak to parents' prevented unnecessary compromises to a participant and their family's confidentiality. In some cases, parents could not be consulted, such as for children in care, or for whose parents are not actively engaged with Youth Offending. If there was any doubt regarding a participant's willingness and ability to participate, and parents were not available, a second professional could be consulted. In addition to previous research relying on appropriate adults to provide permission in loco parentis, this avoids practical difficulties of contacting parents and having them attend appointments (Alleyne & Wood, 2010; NHS, 2016; The National Autistic Society, 2016; Perry, Gilbody, Akers & Light, 2008; YJB, 2013). Appropriate adults will not impede on participants' rights or consent, as participants still had the right to withdraw and ask questions, as well as ultimately decide themselves whether or not they would like to participate.

Executive functioning and literacy could be addressed through similar means with additional reasonable adjustments made to ensure participant understanding (such as reading forms aloud and introducing the participant to the researcher prior to their appointment).

An additional consideration in capacity to consent is whether or not participants are given adequate opportunity to give informed consent. This is

determined by the quantity and accessibility of the information provided to participants prior to their participation. The information sheet and consent forms for this study will be printed in clear, reasonably sized font, and can be printed in navy blue to make them easier to read (Appendices 3.C and D). All participants will have the option of having consent forms read aloud to them, to access the forms ahead of their participation appointment, and to ask questions prior to making a decision to participate or not. This is consistent with the tiered approach recommended by the Health Research Authority [HRA] (2017).

As the study aims to measure gang membership and participants may be reluctant to openly disclose knowledge of gangs, references to gangs were omitted from the information and consent sheet to avoid biasing questionnaire responses. The omission was methodologically justifiable to avoid biasing participants to try to portray themselves in a way which they might feel makes them more likely to be classified as gang or non-gang. If participants asked relevant questions they were openly informed that gang measures were included in the study, but otherwise they will not have explicitly received this information until the debrief (Appendix 3.F). It was deemed that this omission would not cause significant distress, as participants would receive the information prior to any data being included in the study and as such have the chance to withdraw if it presented a concern for them. Additionally, using different measures of gang memberships highlights that even if a participant is not placed into a desired category according to one definition, that classification is not absolute (British Psychological Society [BPS], 2004, 2009, 2014). No participants withdrew from

the study following their debrief, or expressed any discomfort or distress when informed about the gang component of the study.

With regards to questionnaire content, the information sheet openly informs participants that they will be asked for views to measure attitudes and moral disengagement, and that some of the questions may touch on subjects that participants find sensitive (Appendix 3.C). Participants were advised that they could access support if they found the content challenging. They were also given opportunities to take breaks and ask questions throughout their participation. These safeguards helped to ensure that even if the nature of questions was unforeseen to participants, they were supported throughout (Bhutta, 2004; Boddy et al., 2010; HRA, 2017).

3.2.4. Measures

3.2.4.1. Gang membership

Gang membership was primarily measured through the EYS, which collects information that maps onto the Eurogang definition of gangs. As the study progressed, additional definitions were incorporated for comparative purposes: YOT estimated classification, self-nomination, and the English and Welsh legal definition. The reasoning behind, strengths, and limitations of each measure is briefly outlined below, with the overall weakness of any retroactive comparisons recognised. All classifications, regardless of definition, were determined based on information obtained in the questionnaire and were rated simultaneously. This resulted in some of the newer definitions having to be determined from questions not designed for that purpose, but was thought to be the least biased way of exploring differences in classification within the dataset while looking at different

definitional approaches. A more detailed review of gang membership measurement can be found in Chapter Five.

3.2.4.1.1. Eurogang Youth Survey [EYS] (Weerman et al., 2009)

The Eurogang Youth Survey is aimed at measuring gang involvement amongst youths and gathering relevant demographic information (see Chapter Five). While no comparative measures exist, the EYS was piloted on a sample of 2,388 12-18 year olds in school and detention settings. The pilot was carried out in six different countries, and while the default measure employs American societal norms, it contains guidance for adjusting the measure to be culturally appropriate. It has since been used successfully on UK samples, such as in Alleyne and Wood's 2010 study. While there are limitations to focusing on gang membership rather than gang embeddedness, measures of embeddedness tend to use language which demands that the participants explicitly admit their involvement in gangs. As not all participants will be in gangs, some may not want to explicitly admit their involvement even on a confidential basis, and some may not perceive that they are in a gang despite meeting the EYS definition, this study will focus on membership while recognising the inherent limitations of this categorical construct. Despite the EYS's restrictions, it is a respected measure and has been successfully used with UK samples (Alleyne & Wood, 2010; Niebieszczanski et al., 2015; Pyrooz, Sweeten & Piquero, 2013; Weerman et al., 2009). The scale is composed of 94 items which are either free-response, multiple choice, or Likert responses to a statement. Permission was obtained from Dr. Cheryl Maxson for use of the measure.

Gang members had to meet all components of the Eurogang definition, meaning they responded to items identifying: membership to a youth group (three or more people with the majority aged 12-25) that is durable (three months or more), street-oriented, and has illegal activity incorporated as part of their identity. Possible/affiliated members met most Eurogang criteria, but provided information which made the remaining criteria ambiguous. See Appendix 3.A for the coding sheet used to code for membership. Three groups were used rather than a gang/non-gang dichotomy because there is both theoretical and empirical support for the value of recognising that there are multiple levels of gang involvement (Alleyne & Wood, 2010; Curry, Decker & Egley Jr., 2002; Jansyn, 1966; Klein, 2014). If any of the criteria were not satisfied, the participant was coded as non-gang. To minimise bias, 40% of questionnaires were blind double rated to ensure objective inter-rater reliability. Discrepancies in ratings were all able to be resolved through discussion. A detailed discussion of EYS's validity and reliability can be found in Chapter Five.

3.2.4.1.2. Youth Offending classification

This measure was based on two components: information provided by case managers in referrals and whether a participant was identified as a gang member on their ASSETPlus (Youth Justice Board [YJB], 2015). This measure provides the professional judgment of a participant case manager and service regarding their involvement in gangs, capturing the views of individuals who have actually worked with participants.

It is worth noting that the quality of ASSETPlus completion and study referrals are both varied, and it in some cases the assessment may have

defaulted to a lower classification based on a lack of information. As any professional judgment, this classification relies on the skills of the professional making the judgment and those approving it (all ASSETPlus assessments must be approved by a practice specialist or manager before it can be finalised).

3.2.4.1.3. Self-Nomination

Self-nomination has a long tradition in gang-research, and is likely the most common measurement used, though there is some doubt as to its applicability on European populations (Bjerregaard, 2002; Decker, Pyrooz, Sweeten & Moule, 2014; Gatti, Haymoz & Schadee, 2011; Haymoz, 2010; Sharp et al., 2006). This classification was based on a series of items from the EYS that involved the participant identifying previous or current gang affiliation, without directly stating that they are a gang member. Even without such a direct admission, participants reluctant to be associated with gangs due to possible repercussions of such an association may have actively avoided self-nomination. Self-report generally is vulnerable to participant bias.

3.2.4.1.4. England and Wales Legal Definition

Given that this research is intended to inform policy, it made sense to explore how other measures of gang membership mapped onto the UK's legal definition of gangs: "A relatively durable, predominantly street-based group of young people who(1) see themselves (and are seen by others) as a discernible group, (2)engage in a range of criminal activity and violence, (3) identify with or lay claim over territory, (4) have some form of identifying structural feature, and (5) are in conflict with other, similar, gangs". (The Centre for Social Justice, 2009, p. 21). It is particularly difficult to measure whether participants are seen

by others as a group while maintaining confidentiality, and as such only Youth Offending's view of participants could be incorporated which were subject to variation depending on the detail of staff answers to demographics questions (Appendix 3.B).

3.2.4.2. Moral Disengagement Scale [MDS] (Detert et al., 2008)

Detert and colleagues adjusted Bandura's original MD scale for children and adolescents for application to adults. Despite the current sample being adolescent, Bandura's measure refers to peers at school, which may not be applicable to young people out of education. Young people who have been supervised by a youth offending team are 2.6 times more likely to be NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training); additionally, young people who have been permanently excluded from school are more likely to offend (Berridge, Brodie, Pitts, Porteous & Tarling, 2001; Delebarre, 2015). As all young people in the sample will have committed an offence, and therefore are more likely than other youths to be in alternative provisions or out of education, the adult measure arguably contains more relatable items for participants. Some wording was adjusted to suit a juvenile audience, but the meaning of all items remained unaltered. This scale contains subscales for the eight components of MD (see Chapter One). The scale is composed of 24 items ranked from strongly disagree to strongly agree. Each subscale contains 3 items. Professor Detert gave permission for the scale to be used and adjusted for the purposes of this research.

3.2.4.3. Discriminant Moral Disengagement towards Outgroups [DMD-OG]

Based on the MDS measure developed by Detert and colleagues, as well as existing research on gangs and outgroups, this measure was developed by researchers to measure discriminant moral disengagement towards an out group (DMDO), in this case another (or rival) gang/group (Detert et al., 2008; Vasquez et al., 2015). The original scale comprised 24 items, 3 items for each subscale of MD. However, following a reliability analysis, items 14 and 22 were removed, resulting in the euphemistic labelling and diffusion of responsibility subscales (respectively) being reduced to two items each, the full scale comprising 22 items.

3.2.5. Procedure

Participants were given an information sheet and had the study explained to them verbally at one of their Youth Offending appointments (Appendix 3.C). Participants were not told that the study would measure gang membership, as they may be reluctant to disclose any knowledge of gangs, but if they asked participants were openly informed that gang measures were included in the study.

All young people were asked to give informed consent for their participation (Appendix 3.D). Where necessary, YOT staff acted as appropriate adults. All referrals were screened by referring practitioners whose referral served as their acknowledgment of a participant's ability to consent. This ability was continually assessed throughout the data collection process by the researcher to ensure that Gillick guidelines and general evidence of capacity to consent was evident throughout a young person's participation (Gillick v West

Norfolk and Wisbech Area Health Authority; The National Autistic Society, 2016; The National Health Service (NHS), 2016; Perry, Gilbody, Akers, & Light, 2008; YJB, 2013). In addition to monitoring for signs that capacity or consent may have changed throughout data collection, the researcher also prompted participants throughout the process to encourage them to take breaks, ask questions, or pause their participation if they wanted to.

Prior to participants attending a research appointment, the researcher and case manager determined what administration method was most appropriate for the young person. Given the high proportion of young offenders with dyslexia, learning difficulties, and ADHD, it was thought to be easier to administer the measure according to identified personal needs (Harpin & Young, 2012; Prison Reform Trust, 2010; Sridevi, George, Sriveni & Rangaswamy, 2015; von Polier, Vloet & Herpertz-Dahlmann, 2012; Young & Thome, 2011). Any participant needs were noted on their demographics form (Appendix 3.B).

Once participants have given consent and indicated that they understand the information provided, they were asked regarding their preferred method of administration and given the study questionnaire to complete, or have read to them (Appendix 3.E). Reasonable adjustments were made according to participant needs (for example highlighting text in yellow to aid a dyslexic participant who wished to write their responses). About 72.3% of participants chose to have the survey administered orally, 21.3% elected written administration, and 6.4% used a combination of the two. The researcher administered all oral questionnaires (with the exception of four conducted by a research assistant) to avoid young people feeling that their confidentiality was

compromised by discussing answers with case managers. Most interviews were conducted without other staff present, with the exception of three studies where either the service or locale requested an additional professional be present for insurance reasons. Analyses will test if differences in administration had an impact on participants' responses.

Participants were given the option of taking a 10 minute break during data collection or to complete the questionnaire in multiple parts. No participants elected to take breaks, although several completed the questionnaire across multiple appointments (twelve in two sessions, one in three).

Most questionnaires were administered at Youth Offending offices. In cases where this was not possible, a private location was used as an alternative. These included: a community centre office, a visiting room at a Young Offender's Institute, and an allocated area within semi-independent living accommodation.

Once questionnaires were completed participants were debriefed and given information regarding how to contact the researcher should they have any questions or concerns. Participants also had the option of taking a debrief sheet to keep or to have it passed on to their case manager for safe-keeping (Appendix 3.F).

Some case managers were asked to provide follow-up questions or materials to their young people. In such cases, the materials were provided in sealed envelopes to ensure that the participant's anonymity remained intact.

Participants' names were removed from all materials once the questionnaires were completed to ensure confidentiality, with the exception of participants wishing to know the outcome of their questionnaires. In such cases,

names were coded and stored securely to be deleted as soon as results were securely passed on.

All paper questionnaires were stored securely. Electronic copies of the completed questionnaires were also created and stored securely.

3.3. Results

Measures were tested for reliability and validity. Cronbach's alpha was calculated for the full MDS scale ($\alpha=.838$) and sub-scales ($\alpha\geq.405$ for all scales except distortion of consequences whose $\alpha=.243$). Cronbach's alpha was also calculated for the updated DMD-OG scale ($\alpha=.898$) and subscales ($\alpha\geq.352$). The low alpha scores for subscales were not altogether unexpected given the small number of items in each subscale. Nonetheless the subscales will not be prominently considered below due to their subpar alpha scores.

Visual examination of histograms and calculated z-scores were used to examine the skewness and kurtosis for moral disengagement (.798 and 1.009 respectively) and discriminant moral disengagement towards outgroups (.902 and .021); all data was found to meet the assumption of normalcy. A Kolmogorov-Smirnov test confirmed that scores for both MD measures were normal ($D(47)=.072$, $p>.10$; $D(47)=.106$, $p>.10$). Levene's test demonstrated that the homogeneity of variance assumption is tenable for this data ($F(2,44)=1.908$, $p=.160$; $F(2,44)=.032$, $p=.969$). No outliers were identified with the interquartile range rule using a multiplier of 2.2 (Hoaglin & Iglewicz, 1987).

Pillai's trace is powerful test statistic in multivariate analyses, such as the MANOVA applied, and could be applied for a comparison of means despite the slight variance in group sizes as Box's test was nonsignificant for the data (Field,

2009). Using Pillai's trace there was a significant effect of gang membership on the levels of MD and DMDO reported, $V=.247$, $F(4,88)=3.094$, $p<.05$. Separate univariate analyses revealed a nonsignificant effect on MD ($F(2, 44)=2.494$, $p>.05$) but a significant effect on DMDO ($F(2,44)=6.272$, $p<.005$). Mean scores for each scale are reported in table 3.2. A post hoc power analysis was conducted using G*Power with a calculated effect size of .141 and alpha level set at $p < .05$ (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009). Post hoc analyses revealed the statistical power for this study was .822 with a calculated effect size of .141.

Table 3.2. Mean MD and MDO by group

Scale	Group	Mean (SD)
MD	Gang	2.803 (.326)
	Possible/Associate	2.747 (.307)
	Non-Gang	2.494 (.557)
DMDO	Gang	3.108 (.501)
	Possible/Associate	2.806 (.459)
	Non-Gang	2.465 (.561)

$N_{\text{gang}}=19$, $N_{\text{P/A}}=15$, $N_{\text{nongang}}=13$; scores range from 1-5 with higher scores indicating higher levels of MD.

Bonferroni, Gabriel and Games-Howell post hoc analyses all indicated that there were no significant differences between groups for MD, or between the possible/affiliate group and other groups for DMDO. However, they also all found significant differences between gang and non-gang participants for DMDO. Post hoc comparisons using the Bonferroni test indicated that the mean DMDO score for gang members was significantly higher than for non-gang members ($p<.005$).

ANOVA and post hoc analyses confirmed that method of administration, time taken and number of sessions did not have a significant impact on MD and DMDO scores.

3.3.1. Moral disengagement

Alleyne and Wood found that moral disengagement was not significantly related to gang membership, which is confirmed by the results of this study (2010). However, they also found that certain moral disengagement strategies were associated with gang membership: euphemistic labelling, attribution of blame and displacement of responsibility. This was not supported in the current study, where additional ANOVAs found that only moral justification was significantly related to gang membership ($F(2)=3.286$, $p<.05$); however, the weak alphas of subscales should be considered as a caveat for this finding. MD subscales' means and effects are summarised in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3. MD Subscales by Group

Subscale	Group	Mean (SD)	Effect
Advantageous Comparison	Gang	2.684 (.671)	$F(2,44)=2.541$, $p>.05$
	Possible/Associate	2.422 (.462)	
	Non-Gang	2.128 (.898)	
Attribution of Blame	Gang	2.982 (.716)	$F(2,44)=1.572$, $p>.05$
	Possible/Associate	3.044 (.628)	
	Non-Gang	2.615 (.718)	
Dehumanisation	Gang	2.123 (.474)	$F(2,44)=1.144$, $p>.05$
	Possible/Associate	2.378 (.486)	
	Non-Gang	2.180 (.555)	

Diffusion of Responsibility	Gang	3.123 (.611)	F(2,44)=.462, p>.05
	Possible/Associate	3.044 (.616)	
	Non-Gang	2.897 (.750)	
Displacement of Responsibility	Gang	3.070 (.699)	F(2,44)=1.825, p>.05
	Possible/Associate	2.689 (.527)	
	Non-Gang	2.692 (.763)	
Distortion of Consequences	Gang	2.241 (.366)	F(2,44)=2.728, p>.05
	Possible/Associate	2.400 (.382)	
	Non-Gang	2.128 (.374)	
Euphemistic Labelling	Gang	2.509 (.670)	F(2,44)=.773, p>.05
	Possible/Associate	2.756 (.750)	
	Non-Gang	2.436 (.786)	
Moral Justification	Gang	3.508 (.612)	F(2,44)=3.286, p<.05
	Possible/Associate	3.244 (.718)	
	Non-Gang	2.872 (.764)	

$N_{\text{gang}}=19$, $N_{\text{P/A}}=15$, $N_{\text{nongang}}=13$; scores range from 1-5 with higher scores indicating higher levels of MD.

Post hoc testing revealed significant differences between gang and non-gang members for moral justification, with $p \leq .05$ for Bonferroni, Gabriel's procedure and Games-Howell.

3.3.2. Discriminant moral disengagement towards outgroups

DMDO was significantly related to gang membership, with gang members having significantly higher DMDO than non-gang members. Subscales' means and effects are summarised in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4. DMDO Subscales by Group

Subscale	Group	Mean (SD)	Effect
Advantageous Comparison	Gang	3.614 (.669)	F(2,44)= 3.587, p<.05
	Possible/Associate	3.200 (.862)	
	Non-Gang	2.769 (1.142)	
Attribution of Blame	Gang	3.246 (.519)	F(2,44)= 5.129, p≤.01
	Possible/Associate	3.089 (.462)	
	Non-Gang	2.590 (.760)	
Dehumanisation	Gang	2.579 (.554)	F(2,44)= 3.259, p<.05
	Possible/Associate	2.578 (.584)	
	Non-Gang	2.103 (.583)	
Diffusion of Responsibility	Gang	3.184 (.731)	F(2,44)=.711, p>.05
	Possible/Associate	3.200 (.819)	
	Non-Gang	2.846 (1.144)	
Displacement of Responsibility	Gang	2.140 (.488)	F(2,44)= 3.443, p<.05
	Possible/Associate	1.978 (.295)	
	Non-Gang	1.744 (.434)	
Distortion of Consequences	Gang	3.491 (.679)	F(2,44)= 9.859, p<.001
	Possible/Associate	2.822 (.486)	
	Non-Gang	2.590 (.611)	
Euphemistic Labelling	Gang	3.526 (.841)	F(2,44)=4.476, p<.05
	Possible/Associate	2.833 (.817)	
	Non-Gang	2.731 (.857)	

Moral Justification	Gang	3.246 (.710)	F(2,44)= 3.118, p<.055
	Possible/Associate	2.889 (.773)	
	Non-Gang	2.564 (.832)	

N_{gang}=19, N_{P/A}=15, N_{nongang}=13; scores range from 1-5 with higher scores indicating higher levels of DMDO.

Post hoc testing revealed significant differences between gang and non-gang members for euphemistic labelling, attribution of blame, and distortion of consequence with $p \leq .05$ for Bonferroni, Gabriel's procedure and Games-Howell. For advantageous comparison, displacement of responsibility, and moral justification Bonferroni and Gabriel's procedure revealed significant differences between gang and non-gang members with $p \leq .05$, and the Games-Howell test was approaching significance. Additionally, differences between gang and possible/associate gang members were approaching significance for euphemistic labelling, and had significant differences for distortion of consequences at $p \leq .05$. Subscales must again be regarded with caution due to their low reliability scores.

3.3.3. MD and DMDO

MD and DMDO scores were significantly correlated to each other with $r = .720$ (two-tailed), $p < .001$. However, there was no significant agreement between MD and MDO scores, $\kappa = -0.003$, $p > .05$. This indicates that the scales as a whole have a positive correlation but are highly unlikely to be measuring the same construct, making DMDO distinct from MD.

3.4. Discussion

The results of the above study were consistent with Alleyne and Wood's 2010 study showing that MD is not significantly related to gang membership; however, Niebieszczanski and colleagues found a significant effect of street gang offending on level of moral disengagement (2015). The crucial difference between studies is that Niebieszczanski noted whether or not participants had offended with their gangs or not, whilst the current study and Alleyne's did not. It is likely that offending with a gang reflects another construct, possibly gang embeddedness, which impacts upon the relationship between gang membership and moral disengagement.

With regards to subscales, it is not altogether surprising that the current study's results differ from Alleyne and Wood's given that the significance of moral disengagement strategies as a function of gang membership has varied across several studies (Alleyne & Wood, 2010; Alleyne, Fernandes & Pritchard, 2014; Dhingra et al., 2014; Niebieszczanski et al., 2015). The consistent inconsistency leads one to deduce that subscales are not significantly linked to gang membership, but rather may appear to do so by chance. Given that all subscales are by definition smaller than the whole of the MD scales used, and often limited to fewer than five items, the reliability for such scales is variable and not particularly robust, another factor which may account for the variance of such results.

Nonetheless, gang members utilise general moral disengagement more than non-gang members (all participants in this sample being young offenders) and are more prone to violence than other offenders (Aldridge & Medina, 2008;

Alleyne & Wood, 2010; Alleyne, Fernandes & Pritchard, 2014; Barnes, Beaver & Miller, 2010; Bennett & Holloway, 2004; Sharp, Aldridge & Medina, 2006; Spenser, Betts & Das Gupta, 2015; Tita & Ridgeway, 2007). Might there be another underlying process which helps to explain this? While this concept is still speculative and the related research exploratory, the concept of discriminant moral disengagement was introduced in Chapter One with arguments for it being applied to outgroups laid out in 3.1. The scale developed for the purposes of this study to measure DMDO has good face and content value, as well as good internal reliability with $\alpha = .898$. On this scale, gang members on average scored significantly higher than non-gang members, implying that while general moral disengagement was constant across young offenders, those fitting the Eurogang definition of a street gang member were significantly more likely to direct their moral disengagement discriminately towards outgroups.

Shulman proposed two distinct pathways by which morally disengaged attitudes develop: (1) through frequent instances of disengaging internal sanctions by justifying misbehaviour; and (2) as a consequence of callous unemotional traits (Shulman et al., 2011). Dhingra and colleague's work supported both for gang members, and either may apply to MD in offending behaviour, but DMD seems more likely to result from social processes and group culture likely to influence the first pathway (Densley, Cai & Hilal, 2014; Dhingra et al., 2014; Shulman et al., 2011; Vasquez, Lickel, & Hennigan, 2010; Wood & Gannon, 2013). Understanding how moral disengagement, and its discriminant applications, develop could have a vital impact on prevention and intervention work targeting gangs, a project some would argue has yet to be successfully

undertaken (see Chapter Two). In another paper, Dhingra goes on to speculate that close-knit gang communities help to preserve moral disengagement, but that the process might be vulnerable if exposed to the cultural norms, values and behaviour of non-gang members (Boduszek, Dhingra & Hirschfield, 2015). While interventions exist tackling aspects of moral disengagement through moral education, victim empathy, and other related constructs, it is difficult to imagine that these interventions can be effectively designed without a deeper understanding of the very processes they are tackling. Examining DMD may be a step closer to achieving this.

3.4.1. Limitations and future directions

There are some limitations to the current study, such as the small sample size. Several factors likely contributed to this, for example staff factors may have included high workloads, low morale, low motivation, or unfamiliarity with research. Additionally, working remotely made it more difficult to recruit participants at some locations, and the sample population is notoriously difficult to engage (some reasons for this are outlined in YJB, 2006).

Additionally, self-report data is vulnerable to common method variance and bias, potentially aggravated by more serious offenders being reluctant to disclose information they may suspect would be used against them despite assurances of confidentiality. However, self-report is also arguably the best way to capture participants' experience, and even if biased, can reflect valuable information such as what decisions participants make in selecting how they present themselves.

For measures themselves, they are of course only theoretical and may differ from how participants act in practice. Vitally, as MD and DMDO were both measured when a participant had already been placed on an order, and likely months (or longer) since their index offence, it is not possible to distinguish with the given measures whether participants were morally disengaged prior to committing their offence, during their offence, or only after, just as it cannot distinguish for gang members whether they were morally disengaged before joining or as a result of joining. However, this limitation is justified in that measuring the studied constructs in practice raises serious issues of ethics and practicality.

Future studies might overcome some of these limitations through longitudinal designs which incorporate a larger period of time for recruitment, and the involvement of several agencies to facilitate tracking participants across their development.

As findings regarding DMDO are exploratory, future studies may also seek to gather more data to further test the DMDO's scale validity and reliability within England and even internationally. Likewise, future research could seek to replicate these findings and explore how they might be incorporated into youth justice work and policy.

3.5. Conclusion

The current study aimed to explore whether Alleyne and Wood's findings regarding moral disengagement and gang membership could be reproduced, whether delinquents engage in the newly introduced concept of discriminant moral disengagement towards outgroups, and to consider the implications of this. Analyses mirrored Alleyne and Wood's findings that gang membership was not significantly linked to MD, but contradicted findings regarding which MD strategies are linked to gang membership. DMDO was found to be significantly related to gang membership, an exploratory finding that future research should explore further with a view to inform gang interventions and policy. Future research might also use a longitudinal design to facilitate a better developmental understanding of the processes and inform prevention work.

Chapter Four: Empirical Study B
Attitudes and Discriminant Moral Disengagement towards Females in
Gang versus Non-Gang Delinquents

Abstract

The role of females in the context of gangs remains contested both within the UK and internationally. Traditionally, females have been viewed as victims of gangs, though more recently alternative and parallel roles have been identified. Nevertheless, females continue to face violence and exploitation within gang contexts, and a failure to understand the relationship between attitudes to gender and gangs has contributed to the ineffectiveness of targeting this phenomenon. To improve understanding around the phenomenon and inform future directions for addressing gangs and gender violence, the current study explored whether gang delinquents exhibit more traditional attitudes and higher levels of discriminant moral disengagement towards females than non-gang delinquents do. Gang membership did not significantly effect attitudes towards women or discriminant moral disengagement towards females; however, differences between possible/affiliate members and non-gang members were significant. The possible implications of these findings are discussed.

4.1. Introduction

In January 2016 the English and Welsh government updated their “Ending Gang and Youth Violence” programme by launching “Ending Gang Violence and Exploitation”. The new document reflected a shift in focus from pure violence prevention to supporting victims and preventing victimisation (Disley & Liddle, 2016; Home Office, 2016). One of the new targets was safeguarding gang-associated women and girls. This report is notable in that its wording is consistent with gang research at the time (recognising “county lines”, criminal exploitation, and that not all females who are gang-associated are vulnerable), so is arguably well ahead of the dialogue still being had within Local Authorities today (Home Office, 2016).² Research generated by the new initiatives have made promising steps towards recognising the limitations of existing research on girls and gangs, where research through male and professional lenses has painted a different pictures of gang-involved girls than studies involving the girls and young women themselves (Batchelor, 2009). This new work in many ways seeks to repair some of damage caused by failures across multiple levels of society to protect vulnerable youth and females.

The current study focuses on understanding the attitudes held towards females by male gang members, but first it is useful to understand why such attitudes may be of concern.

² County lines refers to a growing phenomenon whereby gangs and other organised crime groups criminally exploit young people, forcing them to travel across counties (or county lines) to traffic and sell drugs (National Crime Agency, 2017).

4.1.1. The role of females in and around gangs

The prevalence of female gang involvement in the UK is comparable to male involvement, particularly in younger age groups (Batchelor, 2009; Disley & Liddle, 2016). A complex web of factors impact why females may come into contact with gangs and how they do so. Gang-involved females often come from similarly chaotic and violent backgrounds to equivalent males, with one study finding that 71% of the girls involved in gangs reported physical abuse within their homes prior to or concurrent with their gang membership, and over half had had at least one parent arrested (Fleisher & Krienert, 2004). Another study found that structural and social factors, such as disorganised neighbourhoods were most predictive of female gang membership (Gomez Auyong, Smith & Ferguson, 2018).

Growing up around violence normalises its use as a form of communication and conflict resolution, as well as fostering an insecure environment whose inhabitants seek out protection, security, and ways to improve their sense of power and control (Chesney-Lind, 2013; Lenzi, Sharkey, Vieno, Mayworm, Dougherty, & Nylund-Gibson, 2015; Newbold & Dennehy, 2003; Totten, 2000; Ulloa, Dyson & Wynes, 2012). Joining a gang or associating with gang members may be a way to achieve this increased power, status, and respect, or coping with a dysfunctional environment (Newbold & Dennehy, 2003; Young, 2009). Gangs can offer young women a group of peers with shared experiences, a means of being understood, and the psychosocial support that services fail to provide them with; such networks can be paramount to developing a sense of identity (Batchelor, 2009; Joe & Chesney-Lind, 1995;

Miller, 2001 Young, 2009). Peterson and Panfil go as far as to argue that, within their proposed multiracial feminist perspective, gang involvement for females is not maladaptive, but resilient (2017). Paradoxically, gang association has also been found to heighten an individuals' risk of victimisation, despite the perceived protection.

Gang norms often normalise violence, creating an acceptance and expectation of violence (Miller, 1998; Molidor, 1996; Newbold & Dennehy, 2003; Ulloa, Dyson & Wynes, 2012). Violent rituals, such as initiations and the stress on loyalty within gangs, produce an environment that fosters acceptance of violent abuse while strongly discouraging individuals from sharing or reporting their experiences (Ulloa, Dyson & Wynes, 2012). This risk even extends to females who do not associate directly with gangs, but gain indirect association through substance use or family (Cepeda & Valdez, 2003; Disley & Liddle, 2016).

Even as girls' presence in and around gangs gained recognition more recently, their power and autonomy often continues to be questioned. The Centre for Social Justice's (CSJ) report, still a key document in English and Welsh gang policy, raises that girls who self-identify as gang members should possibly be viewed as affiliates instead. The report summarises four roles gang-affiliated girls are likely to fit into: (1) *the foot soldier*, performing low level tasks like setting up rival gangs; (2) *the carrier*, holding paraphernalia; (3) *the mother figure*, doing traditionally female tasks such as cooking and laundry; and (4) *the girlfriend*, "a predominantly sexual role" (CSJ, 2009). Despite the mention of girls having a role in prompting violence, such as the Shakilus Townsend murder, the report and its follow-up mainly present gang-associated females as "sexual

accessories” or ambitious, violent wannabes (CSJ, 2009; CSJ, 2014). This contrasts to other work which acknowledges female victimisation, but also depicts female gang members as having agency and authority in some scenarios (Batchelor, 2005; Batchelor, 2009; Deuchar, Harding, McLean & Densley, 2018; Harding, 2012; Harding, 2016). In Disley and Liddle’s study, some participants reported that women and girls can achieve senior roles in gangs, though the authors acknowledge that their data cannot confirm how widespread such a phenomenon is or is not (2016).

Traditional gender roles are often cited as determining the roles available to girls within and around gangs, as well as limiting their power and defining what is expected of them (Hunt & Joe-Laidler, 2001; Ulloa, Dyson & Wynes, 2012). Some researchers have argued that balancing these traditional roles with contradictory ones, such as taking an active part in gang activities, is part of what makes females in gangs vulnerable to violence (Fleisher & Krienert, 2004; Ulloa, Dyson & Wynes, 2012). Straying from these roles can result in extreme reactions from gangs to enforce the group’s hierarchy, power dynamics, norms and values (Cooper & Bowden, 2006; Cooper et al., 2006; Miller, 1998; Newbold & Dennehy, 2003; Totten, 2000; Ulloa, Dyson & Wynes, 2012). These values include the principle of loyalty and “no narking” (a.k.a. “no snitching”, i.e., no informing) which extends to not reporting gang-related victimisation (Newbold & Dennehy, 2003; Ulloa, Dyson & Wynes, 2012). Often such values are effectively euphemistic labelling for enforcing obedience in order to maintain a semi-stable dominance hierarchy or power distribution within the gang.

4.1.2. Female-targeted violence and exploitation by gangs

Though the role of girls within gangs remains contested, reports focused on the exploitation of gang-related girls often continue to doubt females' capacity to be autonomous gang members. There is some question whether this argument overlooks generic issues; that all gang involved youth, including boys, may be seen as exploited in some capacity; criminally, financially, or emotionally if not physically or sexually. Both genders are at a higher risk for physical and sexual violence if they associate with or join a gang. Sexually, girls are thought to be significantly more at risk, though there are inherent limitations to reporting the prevalence of taboo and illegal behaviour (Disley & Liddle 2016; House of Commons 2015; Miller, 1998; Miller & Decker, 2001; MOPAC and NHS England 2016; Schalet, Hunt & Joe-Laidler, 2003; Ulloa, Dyson & Wynes, 2012). Research is inconsistent with regards to whether gang-involved girls are more at risk of victimisation than non-gang-involved girls, but nonetheless points to exploitation being widespread amongst gang-associated girls (De La Rue et al., 2014; Disley and Liddle 2016; Pitts, 2008; Gomez Auyong, Smith & Ferguson, 2018). Nevertheless, any level of exploitation is significant and unacceptable.

English gangs are undeniably involved in both physical and sexual violence towards and exploitation of females. Beckett and colleagues, as well as Disley and Liddle, provide comprehensive overviews of how this manifests, with more recent work such as Storrod's research extending the exploration of this phenomenon to the realm of social media (Beckett et al., 2013; 2016; Storrod, 2016). Physical and sexual violence is reportedly rising amongst gang youth, though professionals recognise that this may be due to increased reporting

following a shift in policy focus. Equally, under-reporting remains an issue (Disley & Liddle, 2016).

In addition to the more easily quantifiable physical and sexual violence reported, some researchers have speculated that emotional violence, such as isolation and public shaming, also plays a serious role in the harmful power and control dynamics surrounding gangs (Cooper & Bowden, 2006; Newbold & Dennehy, 2003; Storrod, 2018; Storrod & Densley, 2017; Totten, 2000; Ulloa, Dyson & Wynes, 2012). Preliminary observations in Storrod's comparative work between London (England) and Camden (NJ, USA) gang activity on social media suggest that social media is much more integrated in English gang violence than American gang violence, with English gangs appearing more likely to post images and videos of individuals being assaulted and exploited (particularly sexually), using the forum to re-victimise their target in multiple, public ways (2018). Gangs may also become secondarily involved in other forms of violence, such as in refereeing inter-partner violence (Cepeda & Valdez, 2003; Oudekerk, Blachman-Demner, & Mulford, 2014; Ulloa, Dyson & Wynes, 2012).

As this area gains more attention and debates continue, one point is clear: regardless of the role of females within and around gangs, there are those being victimised, and society is largely failing to protect or support such victims (Beckett et al., 2013; Storrod, 2016; Whittaker et al., 2018). In seeking to more effectively address the phenomenon, it may therefore be beneficial to understand whether gang members perceive females differently from their non-gang counterparts. Do they hold more traditional views of females? Do they target females through discriminant moral disengagement (DMD)?

4.1.3. Gang perceptions of women in a modern context

The way females function within and around gangs, as well as how gangs treat them, must be considered within the context of the shared attitudes and norms a gang holds around women, power, and control, as well as how these females themselves view gangs (Densley, Davis & Mason, 2013; Disley & Liddle, 2016).

One area that has received attention is the degree to which gangs sexualise females, and through this sexualisation objectify them. Sexual objectification has been linked to decreased perceptions of suffering and moral concern towards victims, clearly linking to mechanisms of moral disengagement, such as dehumanisation (Loughnan, Haslam, Murnane, Vaes, Reynolds & Suitner; 2010; Loughnan, Pina, Vasquez & Puvia, 2013). This process can start early; for example, during a girl's initiation where she might be "sexed in" or at parties where female associates are lured in for male members' "entertainment". While dating a certain gang member and being loyal to him can earn a girl status, sex more often than not is seen as devaluing a female. Girls who are "sexed in" to gangs instead of "jumped in" (fighting) are reportedly even looked down upon by other girls (Cyr & Decker, 2003; Harding, 2014; Schalet et al., 2003; Ulloa, Dyson & Wynes, 2012). Females will also often be referred to by sexualised terms, further objectifying them. In parallel to the gang structures, this creates an atmosphere which facilitates those with more power within a gang feeling a degree of ownership over those with lower status.

Cepeda and Valdez argue that a girl's experience in and around Mexican-American gangs is completely shaped by their relationships with men (2003).

Their study highlighted how those associated with gang members either as affiliates, relatives, or close friends had gang expectations and the resulting risks imposed on them despite not necessarily being actively involved with gangs themselves. Interestingly, a contrast parallel to the Madonna-whore dichotomy described in Dyberg and Egan's research on moral disengagement by men who purchase sex services has appeared in some literature, with gang members described as viewing females either as "good girls" or "dirty girls/ hoodrats" (Cepeda & Valdez, 2003; 2015; Newbold and Dennehy, 2003). This may impact upon if and how discriminant moral disengagement applies to females around gangs.

A recent study by Vasquez and colleagues examined the relationship between sexual objectification (of girls), aggression, and gang affiliation in a sample of London secondary school students. They found that sexual objectification was correlated both with aggression towards girls and with gang membership. Sexual objectification continued to predict aggression towards girls after other factors were controlled for. Unexpectedly, they also found an interaction between gang membership and sexual objectification where objectification predicted aggression in those with low gang affiliation but not high gang affiliation. This held across both male and female participants (Vasquez, Osinnowo, Pina, Ball & Bell, 2016).

Other work has focused on underlying, gender-based power cultures and how they impact on attitudes and behaviour. For example, the presence of male-headed patriarchal subcultures are believed to support the use of abuse and intimidation within gang members' intimate relationships. Interestingly these

attitudes not only tie into the prevalence of such practices, but also foster widespread acceptance of them amongst both perpetrators and victims. Abuse and intimidation maintain the social hierarchy, which can mean some members accepting violent or aggressive behaviour (Ulloa, Dyson & Wynes, 2012). Males may take advantage of this beyond the scope of enforcement, with some participants in Totten's book indicating that they abused their female partners to try to dominate them in order to feel superior and masculine (2000). While a lot has changed since Totten's book was published, if traditional views and attitudes are maintained within gangs such behaviour may well be preserved.

Sexism continues to impact on equality even in mainstream society today. Ambivalent Sexism Theory distinguishes sexism into benevolent (subjectively favourable or advantageous, benefitting women who conform to conventional/traditional roles) and hostile (antipathy towards women often depicting them as seeking undeserved control or power) forms. These sexist attitudes can be displayed and accepted by both males and females. Despite its name, benevolent sexism has been found to hamper equality by rewarding and encouraging submissive and traditional roles, so benevolent sexism is positively correlated with hostile sexism (Barreto & Ellemers, 2005; Glick et al., 2000; Glick & Fiske, 2001). Sexist attitudes are associated with victim blaming, proclivity for aggression, and cyber aggression against females (Abrams, Viki, Masser & Bohner, 2003; Forbes, Adams-Curtis & White, 2004; Martinez-Pecino & Durán, 2016). A gang's endorsement of traditional female roles may be considered benevolent sexism, with enforcement of such roles indicating hostile sexism.

It might be that females are more likely to accept these attitudes and associated behaviours because they don't recognise them as problematic or abnormal. There is a pressure to submit to such distortions within gang culture in the name of "loyalty", a value which masks the culture of obedience needed to maintain power distributions within a gang. Professionals stress that many relationships in gangs (male and female) are coercive in nature, and that there is a worrying lack of understanding around consent amongst gang members and associates. Professionals in Disley and Liddle's study reported young people describing sexually violent behaviour in language which normalises it and separates it from incriminating labels such as rape and exploitation (2016). Within such a culture, victims themselves may minimise their experiences. These attitudes and their potential relationship to moral disengagement towards females may well be cause for concern and a valuable intervention target.

The current study aims to address the following question: Do young gang members engage in discriminant moral disengagement towards females, and how might this help to explain gang crimes committed against females? This question is supplemented by an examination of participant attitudes towards women to create a fuller picture of male English gang member's cognitions regarding females.

4.2. Methodology

The data for this study was collected concurrently with data for Chapter Three. Only the methodology relevant to the current study is described below, with reference where relevant to Chapter Three. Following the methodology there is brief consideration of ethical issues, building on 3.2.3.

4.2.1. Study design

This quantitative study examined the relationship between gang membership, attitudes towards women, and discriminant moral disengagement (DMD) towards females (DMDF). The study was a MANOVA design in which attitudes and DMDF were the outcomes and the predictor was gang association. The levels of gang membership are theoretically based, as described in 3.2.1. and 3.2.3.1.

The analysis focused on identifying relationships and discussing potential confounds. The use of a MANOVA allowed researchers to identify interactions between variables on multiple levels.

4.2.2. Participants

Participant criteria and demographics are described in 3.2.2., summarised in Table 3.1. One participant did not complete the DMDF scale, and as such was removed from the sample, leaving 46 participants. The removed participant was a non-gang member (by Eurogang definition), changing the number of participants in the non-gang group to twelve in this chapter.

4.2.3. Ethical considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from University of Nottingham's School of Medicine (Ethics Reference No.: I12042016 SoM DFP). The major ethical considerations with regards to this study were consent and coerced compulsion, as some participants were not legally adult, and all were asked to participate through Youth Offending. Additional factors effecting capacity such as mental age were also considered. Avoiding coerced compulsion is discussed below, with capacity to consent considered in Chapter Three.

4.2.3.1. Avoiding coerced compulsion

To avoid participants feeling coerced into participating by the study's association to Youth Offending, the researcher or research assistant administered all questionnaires. Participants were informed that their participation had no impact on their sentence or rights, and checks such as repetition, rephrasing and multi-method presentation were put in place to ensure that the participants understood this. Not using case managers for data collection was intended to help participant separate their experience with the study from their Youth Offending work.

Consent procedures also emphasised the independence of the study from participants' orders (Appendix 3.D). Participants were encouraged to voice concerns and ask questions throughout the data collection process if they arose.

The measures outlined in 3.2.3.1. also helped to empower participants and avoid coercion through their promotion of informed consent.

BPS guidance indicates that when gatekeepers are present, such as YOT practitioners in the current study, their consent should be sought, concurrently to the power dynamic between the gatekeeper and participant being considered (BPS, 2014). In this case, there is a palpable power discrepancy between participants and YOT practitioners, as practitioners can influence the support and outcomes a young person receives during their contact with the youth justice system. To counteract this power discrepancy, steps will be taken to empower participants' agency in the consent-giving process once access had been granted by the gatekeeper (Boddy et al., 2010). This includes presenting the consent process in a format tailored to individual preferences and needs (for example,

having the option to have the form read aloud), creating a dialogue around participation to ensure participant understanding, and highlighting to young people that the study is separate to their youth offending service and order: their decision to participate (or not) will not have an impact on their sentence, and that they may change their mind at any time.

If a member of YOT staff had to be present during data collection the researcher would request a member of staff other than the young person's case manager be present to reduce the risk of contamination and coercion. If it was not possible to place the YOT practitioner out of hearing range during any oral data collection, practitioners were instructed to remain neutral and not involve themselves with the process unless otherwise requested by the participants. Participants were also given the opportunity to discuss these circumstances prior to participation. The researcher continued to follow up with participants during their participation and debrief to ensure their agency, comfort, and attempt to control for any impact the practitioner's presence may have had. Other practitioners were only present for three of the researcher's research interviews.

4.2.4. Measures

Measures for gang membership are described in 3.2.4.1. Only measures unique to this study are described below.

4.2.4.1. Attitudes Toward Women Scale for Adolescents [AWSA] (Galambos, Petersen, Richards, & Gitelson, 1985)

The AWSA was developed based on the short form of the Attitudes Toward Women Scale, which was designed for adults (Spence, Helmreich & Stapp, 1973). It contains 12 items rated on a scale of 1-4 (strongly agree to strongly disagree), with lower scores indicating more traditional and less egalitarian

views. The measure was validated on US youths in the sixth to twelfth grades (aged about 12-18). The scale has been adjusted to use UK terminology (e.g., using rugby as a rough sport rather than American football). Analyses were run to ensure that this does not impact the scale's robustness. Dr. Petersen gave permission for the measure to be used in this study.

4.2.4.2. Discriminant Moral Disengagement towards Females [DMDF]

Based on the MDS measure developed by Detert and colleagues, as well as the AWSA, this measure was developed by the researchers to measure DMDF (see 3.2.4.2.; Detert et al., 2008; Galambos et al., 1985). The scale will include 24 items total, 3 items for each subscale of MD. Higher scores indicate higher levels of DMDF.

4.2.5. Procedure

The study procedure was outlined in 3.2.5.

4.3. Results

Measures were tested for reliability and validity. The AWSA was initially found to have a Cronbach's alpha of $\alpha=.177$, which improved to $\alpha=.802$ with the removal of a problematic item. The removed item was number 10: Boys are better leaders than girls. The DMDF scale was found to be internally consistent, $\alpha=.881$. There was a highly significant relationship between higher DMDF scores and lower AWSA scores, indicating that more traditional views on the AWSA were linked to higher DMDF scores. This finding indicates good convergent validity for the scale, $r_s=-.539$, $p<.001$.

Visual examination of histograms and calculated z-scores were used to examine the skewness and kurtosis for attitudes towards women and

discriminant moral disengagement towards females within each of the gang membership groupings; these findings are relayed in Table 4.1. Attitude scores were negatively skewed for all groups, with significant kurtosis for gang respondents. DMDF data was normal. A Shapiro-Wilk test confirmed that attitudes were non-normal for at least one group whilst DMDF was normal; interestingly, a Lilliefors Kolmogorov-Smirnov test found both datasets to be normally distributed (see Table 4.1). Levene's test was non-significant for both scales, indicating that the assumption for homogeneity of variance was met (Attitudes: $F(2,43)=.781$, $p=.464$; DMDF: $F(2,43)=1.153$, $p=.325$).

Table 4.1. Z-scores for data normality by group

	Attitudes		DMDF	
	Skewness	Kurtosis	Skewness	Kurtosis
Gang	2.216*	2.568*	0.200	0.135
Possible/Affiliate	2.347*	1.714	0.205	0.689
Non-gang	2.953*	0.126	1.447	0.415
Gang	D(19)=.157, $p \geq .200$ W(19)=.917, $p=.101$		D(19)=.121, $p \geq .200$ W(19)=.984, $p=.978$	
Possible/Affiliate	D(15)=.207, $p=.083$ W(15)=.857, $p=.022^{**}$		D(15)=.165, $p \geq .200$ W(15)=.957, $p=.646$	
Non-gang	D(12)=.236, $p=.065$ W(12)=.881, $p=.090$		D(12)=.231, $p=.077$ W(12)=.906, $p=.188$	

*Indicates significantly skew or kurtosis using $z=1.96$, $\alpha=.05$ because of the smaller sample size (Kim, 2013)

**Indicates data is significantly non-normal, with D signifying the results from Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests and W the result of Shapiro-Wilk tests (both for normality)

Using the interquartile range rule with a multiplier of 2.2 one outlier was identified for attitudes ($M_A=1.55$) and two for DMDF ($M_{DMDF}=.58, 1.29$) (Hoaglin & Iglewicz, 1987). With the multiplier increased to 3 only $M_{DMDF}=.58$ remained as an outlier. Removal of the outliers did not impact upon normality or homogeneity

of variance. Removal of outliers also did not significantly alter the results (see below), and accordingly were included in the overall analysis in order to present a more complete dataset given the low number of participants.

Despite these variances, Pillai's trace has been found to be reasonably robust for non-normal data when there is homogeneity of variance, particularly when data is not strongly skewed, so a MANOVA analysis is still appropriate as a base analysis (Finch, 2005; Finch & French, 2013). ANOVAs are also relatively robust to skewed data and can be used to run follow-up analyses (Khan & Rayner, 2003; Schmider, Ziegler, Danay, Beyer & Bühner, 2010). Box's test was insignificant, indicating that Pillai's trace could be applied despite the slight variances in group size (Field, 2009).

Using Pillai's trace there was no significant effect of gang membership on reported attitudes and DMDF, $V=.198$, $F(4,86)=2.359$, $p>.05$. This remained true with outliers removed ($V=.121$, $F(4,82)=1.320$, $p>.05$). Separate univariate analyses revealed a significant effect on attitudes ($F(2)=4.428$, $p<.05$) and a trend to significance for DMDF ($F(2)=.566$, $p=.057$). Mean scores for each scale are reported in Table 4.2. A post hoc power analysis was conducted using G*Power with a calculated effect size of .110 and alpha level set at $p < .05$ (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2009). Post hoc analyses revealed the statistical power for this study was .694, suggesting the sample size needed to be 57 to be able to trust the negative findings (to reach a statistical power of .803).

Table 4.2. Mean attitudes and DMDF by group

Scale	Group	Mean (SD)
Attitudes	Gang	2.785 (.308)
	Possible/Associate	2.564 (.395)
	Non-Gang	2.985 (.417)
DMDF	Gang	2.726 (.365)
	Possible/Associate	2.850 (.365)
	Non-Gang	2.444 (.577)

Bonferroni, LSD, Gabriel and Games-Howell post hoc analyses all indicated that there were no significant differences between most groups for attitudes, with the exception of non-gang participants having significantly less traditional attitudes than possible/affiliate members ($p < .05$). For DMDF there were similar results, with all tests but Games-Howell indicating that possible/affiliate gang members scored higher than non-gang members in DMDF at a significant or approaching significant level ($p \leq .057$). Similar trends appeared with outliers removed, with an LSD post hoc analyses indicating no significant differences between most groups for attitudes, with the exception of non-gang participants having significantly less traditional attitudes than possible/affiliate members ($p < .05$). For DMDF only LSD indicated that possible/affiliate gang members scored higher than non-gang members in DMDF at an approaching significant level with outliers removed ($p = .061$).

ANOVA and post-hoc analyses confirmed that method of administration, time taken and number of sessions did not have a significant impact on attitudes. Number of sessions was significantly associated with DMDF, but this is likely due

to the high score of the only participant who took three sessions to complete the questionnaire.

4.4. Discussion

The AWSA was validated across multiple samples examining the measure's validity and reliability with $\alpha = .62-.86$ across samples, so it was unexpected that the alpha would be dramatically lower in the current study ($\alpha = .177$) before the removal of a single item greatly improved it ($\alpha = .802$) (Galambos et al., 1985). The removed item was number 10: Boys are better leaders than girls.

A possible explanation is that despite its continued use, the AWSA has not been updated since its original publication in 1985, whereas gender roles and attitudes have evolved since then; potentially more in the UK than in the US where the measure was validated (Galinsky, Aumann & Bond, 2011; Goldscheider, Bernhardt & Lappegård, 2015; Haines, Deaux & Lofaro, 2016; Jaruseviciene et al., 2014; Taylor & Scott, 2018). Perceptions regarding leadership and gender in the current sample may contradict more stable trends in attitudes due to some of these shifts.

Additionally, the AWSA was normed on American adolescents in rural and suburban communities at their schools (Galambos et al., 1985). These demographics differ from the current study's population across several factors, including their country of residence and the areas participants lived in (the current study included urban participants). The AWSA was also normed on a general rather than delinquent population. All of these factors may have contributed to why the scale's alpha improved with the removal of an item in the current study despite the measure's robust validation.

Gang membership did not have a significant effect on either attitudes towards women or DMDF in the current sample. While there may be limitations to the sample size and sampling locations (e.g. gang culture may differ in Manchester versus the Midlands for example), it is still worth considering the preliminary implications of these findings.

Although female victims of gang violence are not necessarily romantically involved with members, literature on teen dating violence offers some insight into the dynamics of gender-based violence amongst teens. For example, less egalitarian and more traditional views of gender roles are associated with teen dating violence (Cepeda & Valdez, 2003; Das et al., 2012; Reed, Silverman, Raj, Decker & Miller, 2011). The AWSA forces participants to identify a response which is either more egalitarian (3,4) or more traditional (1,2), and there is no neutral option. Given this, participants were fairly moderate in their responses indicating either a reluctance to commit to/express a strong view, or that they genuinely hold “middle-of-the-road” views, leaning only slightly more towards egalitarian. Considering past findings regarding more traditional views facilitating domestic violence (a form of gender-based violence), and sexism’s role in both the acceptance and perpetration of aggression towards women, this is surprising in gang youths who should theoretically be more inclined to aggression towards women. On the other hand, it may be consistent with Vasquez and colleague’s findings that sexual objectification did not predict aggression to girls in those with high gang affiliation (2016).

Assuming the results are a valid reflection of gang versus non-gang delinquent attitudes and DMDF, this suggests that another mechanism may be

responsible for, or interacting with, any moral processes facilitating gang violence towards girls; or perhaps that within a delinquent sample there are similar gender norms across groups. Being that the current sample consisted of English adolescents, it may be that there's a culturally significant difference to the attitudes between English teens and the US samples used in several of the established gang/gender studies. The differences may even have resulted from cultural differences within the UK (Disley & Liddle, 2016). Further exploration is necessary to establish this beyond an exploratory level.

An alternative explanation is that individually, all delinquents are similarly inclined towards certain attitudes towards women and DMDF, whilst the group atmosphere and collective norms can polarise attitudes and behaviour "on the street" (Rauxloh, 2016; Vandenbogaerde & Van Hellemonst, 2016). If such a shift only occurs within the group context, it may not have been apparent in the results since participants completed their questionnaires individually and away from their peer groups.

It is interesting to note that the only significant differences flagged were in possible/affiliate members compared to non-members. Possible/affiliate members had the most traditional attitudes on average and highest mean levels of DMDF, whilst non-gang members had the most egalitarian attitudes on average and lowest mean levels of DMDF. Possible/affiliate members would, like gang members, have antisocial peers, but it seems counterintuitive that they would have a harsher orientation towards women. Is there a factor that heightens these tendencies in those who are possible/affiliate members, such as exaggerating their disposition to compensate for lack of formal membership? Or

is there a variable that mediates this orientation in gang members? Future research may seek to replicate these findings and supplement them with further exploration of social factors explaining existing relationships between variables, or lack thereof. Given the multiplicative risk factors for female gang involvement and victimisation, it may even be worth exploring whether gangs particularly heighten females' risk or if it's actually antisocial peer groups in general that heighten risk within a UK context.

4.4.1. Limitations and future directions

One limitation of the current study is the sample size; ideally, a larger sample would have allowed for more certainty and power in analyses. The level of significance of the individual analyses are particularly suggestive that a larger sample would have been useful to clarify relationships. Nonetheless, taken as exploratory this study still holds significant value. For instance, future studies might consider what alternative mechanisms could account for gendered violence and exploitation, and include measures to confirm whether or not participants themselves have been involved in any gendered violence. It may be, through chance, that these participants were not actively involved in any violence towards or exploitation of females. Most of the sample came from outside of London, which previous studies indicate may have increased levels of violence and exploitation compared to other parts of the country, or at least reported levels (Disley & Liddle, 2016).

Another limitation was the gender of data collectors: both the researcher and research assistant were female. Given that over 70% of participants had the questionnaire administered verbally, requiring increased interaction with

facilitators, both of which were female, participants may have felt less comfortable expressing traditional or morally disengaged attitudes towards women (see 3.2.5.). Future studies may wish to examine whether attitudes vary dependent on administrator gender. The method of administration itself was not found to have a significant impact on participant responses (4.3.).

In addition to exploring alternative concepts, DMDF itself might merit further consideration. The DMDF scale used was written to capture moral disengagement directed at females generally, but this may not have been discriminant enough. Earlier, the dichotomy within how male gang members view females was briefly touched upon (4.1.3.). This split between “good girls”/ “dirty girls” reportedly impacts on how females are treated by other gang members of both genders (Cepeda & Valdez, 2003; Newbold & Dennehy, 2003; Ulloa, Dyson & Wynes, 2012). Good girls tended to be in monogamous relationships and invited to “cleaner” gang functions such as barbeques and birthday parties, whilst dirty girls had considerably less protection and may even be viewed as “communal property” (Ulloa, Dyson & Wynes, 2012). Given the tentative Madonna-whore dichotomy identified in Dyberg and Egan’s preliminary explorations of DMD towards sex workers versus general MD in men who purchase sex services, gang members may have higher levels of moral disengagement towards “dirty girls”, but not “good girls” or females in general (2015). Males themselves may even take on different roles around females depending on how they perceive them, for instance being “protectors” of good girls and “playboys” around dirty girls.

While the AWSA was not validated against measures of sexism, the adult version of the measure (The Attitudes Towards Women Scale [AWS]) was (Spence, Helmreich & Stapp, 1973). For example, a previous study found that AWS measures constructs related to but distinct from the Modern Sexism Scale (Swim, Aikin, Hall, & Hunter, 1995; Swim & Cohen, 1997). Additionally, more egalitarian views on the AWS were correlated with higher levels of hostile sexism as measured by the Ambivalent Sexism Inventory, but had no relationship to benevolent sexism; supporting Glick and Fiske's stance that the AWS focuses on hostile sexism (Glick & Fiske, 1996; Glick & Fiske, 1997). As the AWSA is heavily based on the AWS, it seems likely that the AWSA might share similar relationships. Given the convergent validity between AWSA and DMDF in the current study (see 4.3), the DMDF may well have a similar bias, favouring hostile sexism. The "middle-of-the-road" attitudes expressed in the current study may indicate the current population's aversion to expressing hostile sexism in front of female researchers, or overall, rather than benevolent sexism, which is arguably more subtle. Future studies should explore such relationships, and consider them: particularly if updating and validating the DMDF further.

Additionally, it is worth recognising the differences in gang and gender study results are dependent on the participants for future studies (Batchelor, 2009). Whilst this research focuses on males to inform interventions with male gang members, future studies might examine these constructs amongst female gang members. Given that female gang members themselves have been known to judge each other and treat each other according to gang (and largely male) defined roles, it would be interesting to see how females within gangs relate to

each other as fellow females, and whether or not a dichotomy is apparent in their attitudes and actions (Ulloa, Dyson & Wynes, 2012; Vasquez et al., 2016). It might also be interesting to explore how such attitudes do or do not relate to self-image, identity and self-esteem in gang members of both genders.

4.5. Conclusion

There are increasing concerns around the risks faced by females in and affiliated with gangs in England and Wales. Professionals note increased reports of violence and exploitation of females at the hands of gang members, making preventing this phenomenon a policy and criminal justice priority. To better understand this phenomenon, the current study examined whether gang membership was related to attitudes towards women or discriminant moral disengagement towards females. Overall, no significant relationships were found through the multivariate analyses, in contrast to the individually significant/approaching significant findings. The group differences were also more expected, with traditional attitudes and DMDF not correlating with increased fit to the gang definition, but rather spiking for possible/affiliate members. These results provided a wealth of future directions for research seeking to understand how gang members in England view and treat females.

Chapter Five: (Psychometric/Methodological Review)

Abstract

The Eurogang definition was developed to help overcome definitional issues and discrepancies across gang research and to promote comparative work. To facilitate these goals, several instruments were also designed by working groups within Eurogang (a research/practitioner network focused on youth gangs), including the Eurogang Youth Survey (Weerman et al, 2009). It is difficult to assess the reliability and validity of the instruments without delving into the definitional debates of gang research, but the following attempts to critique the largely criminology-based instruments according to psychological standards, given its use in recent psychological studies (Alleyne & Wood, 2010 and follow-up studies, including the present one, for example). Although there are clear areas for debate around the instruments, the Eurogang definition and Youth Survey are unique and valuable tools which appear to be overall valid and reliable.

5.1. Introduction

There is a longstanding debate regarding the definition of a gang member, both within and across the fields concerned with addressing the phenomenon (Ball & Curry, 1995; Esbensen, Winfree, He & Taylor, 2001; Matsuda, Esbensen & Carson, 2012; Maxson & Esbensen, 2016). The definitional debate inevitably influences how gang membership can be quantified and measured. In research, gang membership has typically been measured through self-nomination or self-disclosed association with gang members (Decker, Pyrooz, Sweeten & Moule, 2014; Matsuda, Esbensen & Carson, 2012; Maxson & Esbensen, 2016). Self-nomination (disclosing one's own membership in a gang) and association (disclosing one's friendship/affiliation with gang-involved peers), are both 'filtering' approaches, and are broadly accepted in criminological research, but can garner criticism for their vulnerability to respondent bias (Bjerregaard, 2002; Decker et al. , 2014; Esbensen et al., 2011; Matsuda, Esbensen & Carson, 2012). There are few alternatives to these methods, especially with wide enough use to garner any comparative value. The exception to this are the Eurogang instruments, a group of measures constructed by the Eurogang collaboration/programme of research (see 6.2.1.). All Eurogang instruments are governed by the "Eurogang definition instrument" (EDI), and of these instruments, the Eurogang Youth Survey (EYS) is the only one that relies on primary information as opposed to accounts from professionals (Weerman et al., 2009; Weerman et al., 2010).

Although EDI-derived instruments are arguably the only widely recognised constructed measures of gang membership, they are not often used compared to

the filter approaches. Literature recognises the EDI and EYS's novel contribution, but also criticises the measure's sensitivity and operationalisation (Medina, Aldridge, Shute & Ross, 2013; Wood & Alleyne, 2010). This is hardly surprising, given that the instruments were purposely designed to be flexible, with very limited coding guidance beyond the description of a "funnelling" approach (see 6.2.2.1). Additionally, the continued definitional debate holds considerable sway in such criticisms.

The following is a critique of how gang membership is measured across empirical studies, with a particular focus on the EYS and whether or not it improves upon filtering methods. Given the divisiveness of the definitional debate and lack of consensus amongst researchers, definition-focused critiques will only be mentioned in relation to other critiques, as one who does not agree with the EDI will by design not agree with any measure based on it. Whether there is a need for an empirical measure of gang membership, and of operationalising a valid and reliable measure across diverse research designs, is discussed. The critique argues that the EYS offers valuable progress for comparison-based gang research on all scales, from local to international, while examining future directions for measuring gang membership.

5.1.2. The need for an empirical measure

While ideally there would be an agreed-upon definition of gang membership applicable internationally across professions, gang research and work as a field is nowhere near such an agreement (Ball & Curry, 1995; Esbensen, Winfree, He & Taylor, 2001; Maxson & Esbensen, 2016). Definitional discrepancies are not an issue unique to the field, but it complicates how gang

members are identified both by researchers and practitioners on all levels. Within England for example, the Gang Matrix utilised by one of the forces most impacted by gangs, the Metropolitan Police, has recently been criticised by Amnesty International and called “not fit for purpose” (Amnesty International, 2018; British Broadcasting Company, 2018; Dodd, 2018; Metropolitan Police Service, 2018).³ The database was found to be racially discriminatory, tracking a disproportionate amount of black individuals; over 78% of “gang nominals” on the system were black despite black individuals only accounting for 27% of serious youth violence according to the Metropolitan Police’s records. The report went as far as to criticise the term “gang” as being a vague and unhelpful label, in many ways linking into the Eurogang paradox and issues that the Eurogang network has sought to address (Amnesty International, 2018). Being that the Metropolitan Police have previously served as a benchmark within England and Wales for how gangs are identified and tackled by several police forces, such criticisms highlight the measurement crisis within the country.

The clearest reason for identifying gang members is that gangs have a noticeable and malign impact upon society. Within the UK they have been associated with increased delinquency, weapons crime, and criminally exploiting children to traffic drugs amongst other antisocial activity (Battin, Hill, Abbott, Catalano & Hawkins, 1998; Home Office, 2017; Klein & Maxson, 2006; Maitra, 2016). Such findings are consistent despite variable definitions across international gang research (Maxson & Esbensen, 2016; Matsuda, Esbensen &

³ The Metropolitan Police’s Gangs Matrix is a database designed to track gangs in London. The Matrix utilises a variety of sources, including social media, to monitor individuals in its system and assign them automated violence ratings (Amnesty International, 2018).

Carson, 2012; Medina et al., 2013). In order to better understand these groups through research and tackle them in practice, there must be a way to measure or identify their presence. This issue holds across fields in policy, police work, criminal justice, law, and forensic psychology. Consistent and comparable research could improve how the phenomenon is handled, and potentially allow different institutions to learn from each other: for example, might the UK be able to better tackle the “county lines” issues by examining what has worked for the US in policing state and country borders?

As there is a clear value in being able to identify gang members despite the absence of an overarching definition, the success of the EDI’s application in the EYS could be judged on its ability to identify the type of groups causing problems associated with gangs such as delinquency. Although this is an imperfect baseline, it is the one of the key reasons gang-issues continue to feature in UK and international policy, and provides a more objective baseline than the definitional debate (Ball & Curry, 1995; Esbensen, Winfree, He & Taylor, 2001; Maitra, 2016).

5.2. Overview

In order to understand the nature of the EDI and EYS it is useful to review how the instruments were developed, their content and application, and examples of how they have been applied in research.

5.2.1. Background

During the 1990s a series of meetings culminated in the first Eurogang workshop in 1998. That workshop formed the foundation of the Eurogang Programme and Network, which continues today (Weerman et al., 2009).

Eurogang was set up by Malcolm Klein, an American criminologist, who wanted to explore whether or not the groups of young people that American researchers labelled as gangs existed abroad. While originally an American and Eurocentric discussion, Eurogang's focus on promoting comparative research has expanded to include both researchers and practitioners, as well as contributions from all inhabited continents (Esbensen & Maxson, 2018).

The Eurogang Programme is based in three principles: (1) a commitment to promoting systematic, empirical research on street gangs, (2) to be explicitly comparative in this research, and (3) that the research should ideally be multi-method. In order to promote these principles, the later workshops formed working groups to construct measurements based in a common definition. In 2002 a definition was agreed upon: "A youth gang, or troublesome youth group, is a durable, street-oriented youth group whose involvement in illegal activity is part of their group identity" (Weerman et al., 2010, p. 1).

In 2004 following multiple rounds of piloting, editing, and translation by the programme, the measures were made available to those outside of the programme. The latest manual for the instruments was published in 2009, and the EYS was last updated in 2010. The EDI was intended to facilitate comparative gang research by providing a common definition of gang membership, agreed upon by researchers from several countries. The EYS applies this by gathering quantitative individual data from young people. In addition to identifying whether respondents fit the Eurogang definition of gang membership, the measure is designed to gather information around the participant's background and gang identity (Weerman et al., 2009; Weerman et al., 2010).

EDI-based instruments as a whole remain the only gang-focused instruments that are widely used (see 6.2.3.).

5.2.2. Structure, content, and application

5.2.2.1. The Eurogang Definition Instrument

The EDI, although referred to throughout the Eurogang manual as an instrument, does not actually contain any content beyond the definition given above. It is not published as an independent measure with its own items, but has instead been incorporated into the other instruments. It is most concretely outlined for the EYS, where each component of its “funnel” process is operationalised in Eurogang manual (6.2.2.2.1-5).

The term “funnel” is used as a contrast to “filter”. Filter instruments use a question to separate participants into gang versus non-gang groups; the question acting as a filter. The EDI on the other hand is enmeshed into Eurogang instruments through a set of questions that start broadly and become more and more focused to divide gang members from non-gang members. The elements highlighted by these questions are known as “definers”: they identify elements essential to being considered a gang member (Weerman et al., 2009; Matsuda, Esbensen & Carson, 2012. Sample EDI items from the EYS are depicted in Table 5.1. to illustrate this.

Table 5.1. Sample EDI items from the EYS

Item No.	Item	Type
57	During the past 12 months, have you participated in any teams, scouts, sports club, or other formal groups in your school, neighborhood or city? (IF YES SPECIFY)	Funnel
58	In addition to any such formal groups, some people have a certain group of friends that they spend time with, doing things together or just hanging out. Do you have a group of friends like that?	Definer
59	About how many people, including you, belong to this group?	Definer
60	How many of your close friends belong to this group?	Supplementary
63	How old is the oldest person in this group? _____ years	Descriptor
64	Which one of the following best describes the ages of people in your group? (1. Under twelve, 2. Twelve to fifteen, 3. Sixteen to eighteen, 4. Nineteen to twenty-five, 5. Over twenty-five)	Definer

Definers are questions necessary to determine if an individual's group meets EDI criteria for being considered a gang, Descriptors add information useful in describing a gang but not necessary for defining them, Funnel questions set up/lead into Definers or Descriptors, and Supplementary questions are recommended based on prior gang research

5.2.2.2. The Eurogang Youth Survey

The EYS contains both definers and descriptors, qualities that may describe gang members but are not defining features. It also contains items that examine risk factors, features of youth groups/gangs, and other relevant factors based on questions from a number of influential studies of antisocial behaviour in youth such as the National Youth Survey, Denver Youth Survey, National Evaluation of the G.R.E.A.T. Program, and multiple studies of California youth (Elliot, Huizinga & Ageton, 1985; Esbensen & Huizinga, 1993; Esbensen, Winfree, He & Taylor, 2001; Maxson, Whitlock & Klein, 1998). All items are grouped together in an order agreed upon by the focus group with some input from pilot participants; grouped quasi-thematically, with the measure's guidance outlining

which items are essential, and which items researchers may choose whether or not to include.

The instrument is available in seven languages (Dutch, English, French, German, Norwegian, Russian and Spanish) and was piloted in six countries (France, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Russia, and the USA). All translations were translated and then back-translated to ensure the definition's integrity was maintained across translations. Although the instrument was not piloted in the UK, the measure has since been successfully used in UK studies (Alleyne & Wood, 2010; Medina et al., 2013).

The EYS was principally designed to be administered in a written form in classrooms to facilitate collecting larger datasets, but purposely allowed flexibility for it to also be administered in interview form and in alternative settings should researchers have the resources to access harder to reach samples. The pilot test sample consisted of 2,388 young people aged 12-18, mainly in schools but also in juvenile detention centres. 77 in-person interviews were conducted, while the rest were self-administered (written) questionnaires. This admittedly would exclude any youth with low literacy levels or that had been excluded from school.

The first page of the EYS contains clear instructions so that the measure can be given to participants without additional directions (assuming that ethical measures are in place), while interviews can read aloud relevant directions before proceeding.

The purposeful flexibility, within the standardised framework agreed by EYS's creators, has allowed the instrument to continue to be applied in an

international context in varied settings (Maxson & Esbensen, 2016). However, it also impacts upon the quantity and quality of comparisons that can be made using the collected data.

For the purpose of examining how the measure “funnels” respondents, the core aspects of the definition and how they are measured by the EYS are outlined below.

5.2.2.2.1. Group membership

In order to assure that respondents answer questions with regards to informal peer groups and not their football team for example, an introductory question (no. 57) asks participants if they’ve participated in any formal groups in last year such as “teams, scouts, sports club[s], or other formal groups in your school, neighborhood or city” (Weerman et al., 2010, p. 7). This helps separate out such groups from the next and first defining question (no 58): “In addition to any such formal groups, some people have a certain group of friends that they enjoy spending time with, doing things together or just hanging out” (Weerman et al., 2010, p.7). No 58 is a core question which determines if the respondent sees themselves as belonging to a group, and is followed by another core question (no 59) asking how many people, including the respondent, belong to the group. In order to meet the Eurogang criteria for a “group” there must be at least three people (Weerman et al., 2009).

5.2.2.2.2. Youth

The next core question (no 64) asks which of five given age ranges most group members fit into; this information can be supplemented by other questions asking for the ages of the youngest and oldest member of the group (no 62-3). Youth was included due to Eurogang's focus on younger antisocial groups, and thus, to meet the Eurogang criteria most members must be aged between twelve and twenty-five (Weerman et al., 2009).

5.2.2.2.3. Street-oriented

The term street-oriented is used to highlight a broader characteristic of spending time in public places without adult supervision, and is considered central to the fear such groups instil in members of the public. More recently there have been discussions about the use of social media as public spaces, but this is still a relatively new discussion (to be discussed at Eurogang 2018). Currently, this definer is measured by no 66 which asks respondents whether or not they spend a lot of time with their group in public places such as parks, the neighbourhood or shopping areas (Weerman et al., 2009). To meet the criteria, respondents must reply "yes" to this item.

5.2.2.2.4. Durability

No 71 asks participants how long their group has existed. While several options are available, only one option ("less than three months") excludes respondents from the criteria, as Eurogang considers a group that exists three months or more to be durable. This cut off helps to capture groups that form during school holidays, but may disperse or be less active during term time for example. This element also draws focus to a group identity, as the group's age

will supersede the duration of individual membership in the group (Weerman et al., 2009).

5.2.2.2.5. Illegal activity and group identity

Two items combine to ascertain whether illegal activity is part of a group's identity (no 78-9). The first question asks whether doing illegal things is "accepted by or okay for" the group, while the second asks if the group actually engages in illegal activity together (Weerman et al., 2010, p. 10). This can be supplemented by additional items asking how often the group engages in certain behaviour, including some illegal activities. The recommended questions do not account for the amount of substances used, but rather the frequency of their use.

5.2.3. Use

The EYS was developed to facilitate comparative research on youth gangs at an international level. It has been used in its entirety or as a basis in several multi-site studies utilising a variety of methods, yet even within the Eurogang Programme of Research, there has been a recent trend of researchers substituting self-nomination and association over applying the Eurogang definition (Eurogang 2016 workshop). One example of the EYS's definitional base being used in an international context is in the International Self-Report Delinquency Study II (ISRD-II), which measured gang prevalence in thirty different countries. The study found that while the prevalence of gang membership varied between countries, antisocial behaviour exhibited by such groups was consistent and similar across different locations, suggesting that the

definition successfully identified a particular type of antisocial youth group (Gatti et al., 2011).

In the UK, the EDI and EYS have historically been used in the Offending Crime and Justice Survey (OCJS) and Youth Justice Board survey, although both surveys have since been discontinued (Anderson, Worsley, Nunney, Maybanks & Dawes, 2010; Sharp, Aldridge & Medina, 2006). The EYS has also been used in smaller studies, and the Eurogang definition is commonly cited even if it is not applied as a measure (Alleyne & Wood, 2010; Wood & Alleyne, 2010).

5.3. Key characteristics

Certain characteristics exemplify what is typically regarded as a “good” measure in psychology: it should be properly standardised and normed, objective, reliable, valid, and usable (Gregory, 2014; Groth-Marnet, 2009; Keebler, Manrodt, Durtsche, & Ledyard, 1999). Such traits ensure a measure’s integrity, allowing for replication and comparison. Some of these ideas vary across fields, and it is worth noting that the EDI and EYS were primarily designed by criminologists. Nonetheless, as Eurogang encourages multidisciplinary work and the current context is for psychological research, whether or not the measures meet the criteria commonly applied to psychological measures will be discussed below.

It should be noted that the Eurogang Manual acknowledges several strengths and limitations of the instruments, with the reasoning behind several design-decisions explained. As such, issues already explained within the manual are not highlighted below unless directly relevant to another point (Weerman et al., 2009).

5.3.1. Norms, standardisation, and objectivity

In order for norms to be properly established for the EYS, the prevalence of gangs internationally would need to be identified, as they were in Gatti and colleagues' 2011 publication (which did not include the UK). Some other prevalence studies exist, including UK estimates, but the more recent measures did not use the EDI (Office for National Statistics [ONS], 2018). Prevalence studies are also limited in that some proportion of gangs, particularly those involved in more serious criminal activity, are unlikely to be open to research participation in case it were to draw attention to them. In addition to definitional issues, it is reasonable to hypothesise that gang prevalence will fluctuate over time dependent upon cultural and socio-political trends, investment into intervention and prevention work, etc. As such, norms for EYS would need to be adjusted over time. The instrument's flexibility makes this particularly challenging (Ball & Curry, 1995).

Nonetheless, the EYS was extensively piloted and a standardised set of instructions were developed. They set out guidance for the administration of the interpretation of the instrument, though some elements remain ambiguous. For instance, the instructions clearly outline what the requirements are to be considered a gang member, but do not set out whether sub-gang youth should be grouped together or in different categories (such as entirely non-gang versus gang affiliates). Yet again, the flexibility is by design but may prevent the instrument from fulfilling its comparative purpose.

The gang criteria itself is objective, but leaves room for some ambiguity depending on the number of items used. For example, if only the items outlined

as essential to the EDI are used, all gang members can be coded based on whether their answers do or do not meet the criteria set out in the manual. But additional items may offer contradictory information, which the manual does not address what to do with. For example: if the young person states their group does not engage in illegal activity (no 79) but then reports engaging in multiple illegal behaviours on the next page, how is this reconciled in coding?

5.3.2. Reliability

Due to the changing nature of several traits measured by the EDI and EYS, it is difficult to establish the reliability of the measure. One US study, although it cannot be generalised internationally, found that while gang membership shifted across “waves” in a longitudinal study, youth identified as gang members consistently reported higher levels of delinquency, substance use, and victimisations than non-gang youth (Matsuda, Esbensen & Carson, 2012). This finding implies that the gang members identified by EDI traits consistently display certain behavioural characteristics over time. The same study compared EDI-identified gang members to filter-identified members and found that across all waves, gang membership according to any of the three definitions remained below 10% for US youths. This finding suggests some reliability with regards to the prevalence of gangs in the US, but nonetheless includes variation. Additionally, this research was conducted in the country arguably most familiar with the term ‘gang’, which likely impacted on the effectiveness of self-identifying filter techniques compared to other countries where the Eurogang paradox is in effect. Key literature on reliability and validity findings are summarised in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2. Key literature

Study	Description	Key Relevant Findings
Aldridge, Medina & Ralphs, 2012	Drawing on YOGEC, the 2004 OCJS and the 2008 Madrid Study, researchers reflect on their experiences of applying the Eurogang definition (UK and Spanish samples). They question the validity of how group identity and illegal activity is measured, as well as the relevance of drug-taking and street orientation within the definition. Researchers suggest reputation for willingness to resort to violence might better capture youth gangs, as counting drug-taking as illegal activity includes a proportion of participants who do not engage in other offending and were not thought to be valid gang members by researchers.	<i>Of those identified as gang members by the Eurogang definition, 33.3% of Madrid participants and 13.4% of OCJS participants engaged in drug-taking with their group but no other delinquent activities. About 12% of each of those groups did not identify themselves as engaging in any of the delinquent behaviours listed in the studies.</i>
Gatti, Haymoz, & Schadee, 2011	This study surveyed youth from cities in 30 different countries.	<i>According to the Eurogang criteria about 4.4% of all participants were considered gang members, with the prevalence in individual countries varying from about 1 to 16%. Despite the differing prevalences the association between gang membership and antisocial behaviour was similar across the different national contexts. Gang membership was generally associated with a higher prevalence of delinquency, violence, and alcohol and drug use, with greater differences with regard to more serious antisocial behaviour. This implies that the definition reliably identified antisocial youth groups across different countries, also supporting the measure's validity.</i>

Matsuda, Esbensen & Carson, 2012

Study compared whether youth would be considered gang members or not across three definitional approaches: (a) self-nomination, (b) friends-in-gang, and (c) Eurogang; it also looked at certain traits across these groups across time (US sample).

*Gatti and colleagues also found that of the youths who self-nominated their group as a gang, over half (56%) stated that their group did not indulge in illegal activities and claimed that their group did not consider such activities acceptable (53%); even in the United States 19% of those who consider their group to be a gang state that its members do not commit illegal acts, and 29% claim that committing crimes is regarded as unacceptable by their group. This indicates that youth identified by self-nomination (particularly outside of the US, but even there) would not satisfy the group identity items of the EDI/EYS, potentially an issue with **concurrent validity**.*

*At Wave 4 about 12.2% of the sample fit at least one of the three definitions of gang membership, with the proportion of gang members in the total sample increasing over time (or with age). Gang members across definitions reported higher rates of delinquency, substance use and victimisation than non-gang youth and lower levels of parental monitoring. Overall, gang membership across any or all of the three definitions was correlated with certain attitudinal and behavioural tendencies, suggesting **reliability** over time and in terms of the type of group identified by the measures, and that the definitions **validly** identify a type of antisocial youth group.*

Overall, at Wave 4: 9% of gang participants fit all three definitions, 4% fit Eurogang and self-nomination, 8% fit Eurogang and friends-

Medina, Aldridge, Shute & Ross, 2013

Using the 2005 wave of OCJS (UK) researchers used a latent class analysis to examine the “conceptual and empirical adequacy” of the EDI/EYS (pp. 1).

*in-gang, 12% fit self-nomination and friends-in-gang, 36% fit only Eurogang, 15% fit only self-nomination, and 17% fit only friends-in-gang. The percent of gang members in the whole sample identified by any of the three definitions remained under 10% throughout all waves; self-nomination consistently identified about 5% of participants as gang members across waves while friends-in-gang decreased each wave and Eurogang increased. The study acknowledges that although all three definitions identify gang youth which are significantly different from non-gang youth, the three definitions each capture different youth within the sample. The Eurogang identified more females and white gang members than the other definitions, both of which fall outside of the American stereotype of what constitutes a gang member. It may be that the Eurogang definition successfully circumvents social schemas to **validly** identify gang youth, or that it casts a broader net which **may or may not be valid**. Eurogang-identified youth were also found to have stronger commitment to antisocial peers. Findings support that instrument(s) identifies a distinct group of youth involved in more frequent and serious offending, supporting the measure’s **reliability and validity**. However, they argue that the measure also captures a subgroup whose only illegal activity is drug use which should not be considered gang members and thus **reduce** the measure’s **validity**. They conclude that the EDI/EYS can be used to identify “approximations of the prevalence of delinquent youth groups” as*

Melde, Esbensen & Carson, 2016

Builds on Matsuda et al. 2012 (above), again with a US sample. Their literature review suggests "that the Eurogang strategy for measuring gang involvement appears quite adept at identifying a subset of individuals with heightened criminal propensities, but not a group synonymous with self-identified gang members, nor those who report associating with gangs", but that there are limitations to those studies necessitating further examination (pp. 36). They seek to address some of these limitations by looking at how well each of the measures reflect violent and offending characteristics consistent with current gang theory and research.

long as certain limitations are recognised and preferably addressed by additional items (pp. 13).

*They found that all three measures produced an effect consistent with periods of gang membership being associated with substantive increased in criminal propensity; Eurogang defined gang membership (coefficient = 1.00; $p < .05$) and self-reported gang membership (coefficient = .99; $p < .05$) produced a nearly identical impacts on criminal propensity, whereas having friends in a gang produced a slightly smaller impact (coefficient = .75; $p < .05$). In producing similar levels of elevated criminal propensity the measures demonstrate **high construct validity**. Self-reported gang membership and having friends in gangs were both associated with significant increases in the likelihood of violent over non-violent offending, consistent with gang theory and research. Eurogang definition gang members, however, had a ratio of violent-to-non-violent offending was actually lower than that of non-gang involved youth (coefficient = -.08, $p < .05$), challenging its **validity**. The authors state that Eurogang members still commit more violence than non-gang youth, but at less pronounced levels compared to their absolute involvement in offending than members identified by the other two measures.*

It is worth noting that while overall offending demonstrated high reliability across levels of analysis, violent specialisation had suboptimal reliability at levels 2 and 3. Authors conclude

Weerman & Esbensen, 2005	Comparative study in which US sample (from GREAT) used filtering definitions and Netherlands sample used Eurogang definition.	that their findings support Matsuda et al. 2012 that each approach reliably and validly identifies youth who are significantly more "at risk", but that policy focused on violence reduction may want to employ self-nomination and friends-in-gang measures rather than Eurogang. They do not discuss how differences in filtering approaches' validity in Europe may factor into these findings outside of a US context. Findings from bivariate analyses indicated that demographic, attitudinal and behavioural risk factors were similar between the gang groups identified in each country compared to non-gang youth. Despite this, what factors were predictive of gang membership and the descriptors associated with gangs in each country was different. Researchers argued that the similarities for risk factors inferred a degree of validity (or arguably reliability) on their findings despite their use of different definitions.
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It is recognised that given the Eurogang definition measuring illegal activity is somewhat tautological, but it is also key in establishing construct validity

5.3.3. Validity

5.3.3.1. Face and Construct Validity

The EYS has good face validity insofar as the items mapping directly onto the EDI with what appears to be clear cut-offs; however the content validity is variant.

The first definer of group membership is purposefully ambiguous and the EYS seems to capture this fairly well, with one caveat: is it useful to impose a researcher's views of what constitutes a formal versus informal group? Presumably this was not an issue when the EYS was piloted and young people fed back on the instrument, but it is unclear which translations were discussed with young people and to what extent. There is some debate even within academics with regards to whether gangs constitute 'organised' or 'disorganised' crime, so it may merit further exploration how youth (gang-involved or not) see gangs with regards to this construct (Decker & Pyrooz, 2014).

Youth, being defined as most members being between ages twelve to twenty-five, is difficult to operationalise across cultures with differing ages of legal responsibility, but for the purposes of UK study successfully captures the age group typically considered "young people". Given the organisation's interest in youth groups it is suitable that their focus is on groups predominantly composed of younger members, but there is some question as to whether this criteria means that the EDI only measures a type of gang membership.

The durability construct is based on approximations founded in professional judgment, which is not empirically ideal, but likely the best option.

These are speculative criticisms of broader constructs which have successfully identified young people involved in antisocial youth groups in past studies despite these concerns (Matsuda, Esbensen & Carson, 2012; Medina et al., 2013). Traditionally, criticisms levered at the EYS's construct validity have focused on how the later definers are measured: particularly street orientation and illegal activity in relation to group identity.

With the rise of social media, the arguments that certain forums online constitute public spaces, and that increased policing on streets has driven youth indoors, the notion of street-orientation's role in the EDI has been subject to discussion at recent Eurogang workshops (Dyberg, 2017; Holt, 2017; van Gemert, Rogers, Pinkney, Storrod, West-Fagan & van den Broek, 2016). Prior to that, English studies questioned whether the construct holds the same meaning in the UK as it does in the US (Aldridge, Medina & Ralphs, 2012).

Medina and colleagues found that street-orientation decreased with age in their 2013 study, which of course raises the issue of how this impacts upon identifying older gang members: do they cease to become gang members when their activity becomes less public? Newer policies focused on criminal exploitation of children highlights that this may not be the case, and as older gang members may just be manipulating younger group members to carry out risky tasks for them (Home Office, 2017).

Potentially the most controversial construct, in part because the variance of criminal law across countries, is the aspect of the EDI which deals with illegal activity's enmeshment into group identity. Illegal activity is undoubtedly a key

factor in public interest over gangs; but given that legal systems tend to weigh crimes dependent on perceived severity, should the measure do this as well?

Several researchers have flagged that the Eurogang definition could potentially capture groups displaying only minor drug infractions in the same category as those who are explicitly violent and aggressive. Medina and colleague's analysis confirmed that there were two distinct groups within Eurogang-identified gang youth: one whose illegal activity was limited to substance use, and another which included other offending behaviours (2013). This is discussed in greater detail within 6.3.3.3. Medina and colleagues, like Hallsworth and Young, argue that the substance-exclusive group should be differentiated from the more 'delinquent' group, particularly with regards to violence (Hallsworth & Young, 2004).

Despite these criticisms, longitudinal studies of the EDI/EYS suggest that the constructs remain fairly stable, and that changes are consistent with developmental changes within the cohort (Medina et al., 2013). A study looking at violence across gang definitions and construct validity found that Eurogang-identified youth did engage in less violence than filter-identified gang youth, but posited that this did not mean they were non-violent, and highlighted that Eurogang-identified gang members were still more violent than non-gang members in the study (Melde, Esbensen & Carson, 2016).

The use of a panel of experts in constructing the EDI and EYS in itself lends a degree of construct validity.

5.3.3.2. Convergent validity

If the EDI-based questions within the EYS validly measure gang membership, then its results should converge with other valid measures of gang membership. Given the continued definitional controversy, the EYS was compared to the filter measures of gang membership that are most commonly used. In both US and English studies, the EYS produced similar prevalence compared to self-nomination and association filter methods, although none of the three measures identified the same group (as a whole) as gang members. Despite this, the gang-identified groups across methods were all behaviourally and attitudinally distinct from non-gang groups (Matsuda, Esbensen & Carson, 2012; Medina et al., 2013).

An American longitudinal study broke down the level of overlap between the three methods and found the following: of those identified as gang members in one wave of the data collection, 57% fit the EDI/EYS (either exclusively or in addition to another definition), as opposed to 40% fitting self-nomination and 46% fitting association. In some other waves EDI was less prominent, but for this particular wave it captured the largest group of youth out of the three methods. Out of those that fit the EDI 4% also self-nominated and 8% also identified through association. 9% of identified gang youth fit all three definitions. Across waves, most youth were only identified as gang members by one definition. Despite these differences, all gang-identified youth, regardless of definition, were distinct from non-gang youth and shared several behavioural and attitudinal markers (Matsuda, Esbensen & Carson, 2013).

In terms of delinquent behaviour, all age groups within these studies, even across time, consistently reported higher levels of delinquent behaviour than non-gang groups. The EYS recognises groups that align with known risk-factors of gang involvement, including some which are not explicitly part of the definition (Matsuda, Esbensen & Carson, 2012; Medina et al., 2013). Such similarities were repeated in later studies (Melde, Esbensen & Carson, 2016). Other studies have found the measure to have good predictive and discriminant validity, though it should be noted that most thorough studies on the EYS were conducted by people involved in its construction, and thus, there is an inherent possibility for bias (Esbensen, Brick, Melde, Tusinski & Taylor, 2008; Medina et al., 2013; Weerman & Esbensen, 2005).

In the present study (see Chapters Three and Four), five measures of membership were applied: the EDI/EYS, friends-or-family-in-gang, self-nomination, the English and Welsh government definition of a gang, and Youth Offending's estimated classifications of each participant (The Centre for Social Justice, 2009; Weerman et al., 2009). For further details on each measure please see Chapter Three. Friends-or-family-in-gang was added to supplement this critique and is based off a single item asking participants if they have family or friends that are in a gang. Results for gang membership as detected by each measurement can be found in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3. Gang membership as detected by measures in current study

Measure	Percent
Any measure	63.8%
Eurogang (EG) only	8.5%
Family or Friends (FamFriends) in gang only	10.6%
Self-Nomination (Self) only	2.1%
England and Wales government definition (EW) only	0%
Youth Offending Team (YOT) classification only	2.1%
EG and FamFriends	4.3%
EG and self	2.1%
EG, FamFriends and self	6.4%
EG, FamFriends and UK	6.4%
EG, FamFriends and YOT	2.1%
FamFriends and Self	2.1%
FamFriends and YOT	2.1%
FamFriends, EW and self	2.1%
FamFriends, YOT and self	2.1%
EG, FamFriends, YOT and EW	2.1%
EG, FamFriends, self and EW	8.5%
None of the measures	36.2%

N=47, with the exception of self and FriendsFam where one participant's answers were missing

Overall, 63.8% of the sample, which targeted delinquents likely to have some form of antisocial group involvement, were considered to be a gang member by at least one measure. Within the total sample, 10.6% were considered to be gang members by four out of five measurements (including Eurogang), and none were considered gang members across all five measures. Of those recognised as gang members by at least one measure, 63.3% fit the Eurogang criteria. While a relatively low percentage were considered gang members by four or five measures, 78.9% of those meeting the Eurogang criteria also met another criteria for gang membership. This suggests promising convergent validity; but is also consistent with earlier findings that the Eurogang definition might capture a broader subgroup.

The current study is limited by its small sample size ($N=47$) as discussed in previous chapters, but it is also worth noting exploratory attitudinal and behavioural trends within the data. ANOVAs found that gang membership under the Eurogang classification was significantly associated with illegal acts being accepted by the group ($F(2)=14.138, p<.001$) and being committed by the group ($F(2)=18.423, p<.001$). Being a gang member identified by the Eurogang classification was also associated with violent, substance-related, and acquisitive offending (see Table 5.4).

Table 5.4. Associations between gang membership and antisocial behaviour by definition

Factor	Eurogang	FamFriends	Self-Nomination	EW Government	YOT Estimate
Group accepts illegal activity	F(2)=14.138***	F(4)=.462	F(4)=1.089	F(3)=9.100***	F(2)=.180
Group engages in illegal activity	F(2)=18.423***	F(4)=1.308	F(4)=2.282	F(3)=7.137***	F(2)=.357
Group carries weapons	F(2)=7.063**	F(4)=1.405	F(4)=1.423	F(3)=4.407**	F(2)=.901
Group violent offending	F(2)=14.531***	F(4)=1.021	F(4)=1.240	F(3)=10.889***	F(2)=.577
Group substance use	F(2)=2.808	F(4)=.767	F(4)=.324	F(3)=2.498	F(2)=1.542
Group sale of substances	F(2)=5.752**	F(4)=2.764*	F(4)=1.447	F(3)=3.509*	F(2)=.417
Group alcohol use	F(2)=2.726	F(4)=.401	F(4)=.173	F(3)=.880	F(2)=.195
Group acquisitive offending	F(2)=8.679***	F(4)=.715	F(4)=2.520*	F(3)=8.755***	F(2)=.618

* Significant at $p \leq .05$

**Significant at $p \leq .01$

***Significant at $p \leq .001$

5.3.3.3. Concurrent validity

A final factor to consider regarding validity is the measure's ability to identify gang members versus non-gang members, and rests partially on the validity of these two groupings as distinct from one another. This in itself is somewhat of an issue, because the EYS does not explicitly state how grouping should be approached with the measure. Cut-offs are given for the gang-criteria, which implies a gang/non-gang dichotomy, as seen in G.R.E.A.T. and other large studies (Esbensen et al., 2011; Sharp, Aldridge, & Medina, 2006). However, other studies have added additional groups, such as youth that are "on the edge" of gangs or "wannabes" (for example, Alleyne & Wood, 2010).

A latent class analysis by Medina and colleagues on an English sample revealed five distinct groups: three non-deviant and non-gang, and two that fell within the 'gang' categorisation (2013). The two deviant groups are differentiated by having exclusively substance-use related deviant behaviour versus a broader range of antisocial behaviour reported. Researchers argue that the substance-use group should be separated and possibly considered "sub-gang", despite that some results indicate that youth from this group are likely to self-nominate as gang members (Matsuda, Esbensen & Carson, 2012; Medina et al., 2013). Such judgments fail to account for how youths are funding their drug use and how enmeshed they are in the criminal network producing the substance, particularly amongst youth too young for employment. Data from the current study presented in Table 5.4 is indicative that in delinquent samples, Eurogang identified gang membership is significantly associated with spending time with a group who sells drugs, while substance use was approaching significance

($p=.071$). There are those who argue that separating peer groups into delinquent versus non-delinquent is a misguided task, though without the distinction youth justice research would be significantly crippled (Joseph & Gunter, 2011).

Like most central criticisms of the instrument, these come back to definitional issues: do gangs engage in illegal and/or violent behaviour? The common behavioural and attitudinal traits shared by gang youth identified in these studies indicates that gang youth are a distinct group that can validly be separated from other non-gang groups, though the divisions within those two groups are less clear (Matsuda, Esbensen & Carson, 2012; Medina et al., 2013). Data from the current study supports this on an exploratory basis, with Eurogang gang classification and English and Welsh government definition being the only measurements with significant links to self-reported group offending across offence types, consistent with the cafeteria-style offending gangs are known for (see Table 5.4).

5.4. Conclusion

The EYS is the most explicit application of the EDI amongst Eurogang instruments, and aims to facilitate comparative gang research through the application of a common definition. This inherently invokes a definitional debate regarding what truly constitutes a gang, or what factors determine a group's "gang-ness". Focusing on youth gangs, the EYS reliably identifies youth involved in higher levels of delinquency than non-gang youth across different age groups and within the same population over time. While the measure's validity is subject to criticism, this is mainly to do with concerns linking back to the definitional debate. Assuming the EDI, which underwent years of reviews by experts in the

field, is valid then so too is the measure. As such, though the EYS will have to adapt if the EDI is updated over time, currently the two present a unique and valuable set of instruments for researchers and practitioners to apply.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

6.1. Introduction

Public concern about gangs in the UK has led to them becoming more prominent both in the media and policy (BBC, 2018; Home Office, 2016; Home Office, 2017; Home Office, 2018; Whittaker et al., 2018). Psychological research on gangs is still in its early stages, particularly in the UK, but has started to examine mechanisms underlying gangs' antisocial behaviour, such as moral disengagement (Alleyne & Wood, 2010; Alleyne et al., 2014; Alleyne et al., 2015; Niebieszczanski et al., 2015). The current thesis aimed to build on existing research to look more closely at this process within particular contexts, with a view of informing future directions for gang-focused practice, policy, and psychological research.

A systematic review of gang prevention and intervention literature was conducted to explore the quantity and quality of programmes with a moral component or base available to target gang violence. The review revealed gaps that current and future research may help to fill by informing the implementation of such interventions. It also found that most moral components were named but not described in the reviewed literature, indicating the literature base might benefit from a deeper understanding of the moral mechanisms underlying gangs. As such the empirical studies aimed examined general moral disengagement in gang versus non-gang delinquents from four different Youth Offending Services in the UK. Additionally, the studies looked at moral disengagement in particular contexts thought to be relevant to gang youth: discriminant moral disengagement towards outgroups and females. While exploratory in nature, the results revealed that more contextual view of moral disengagement may well be

beneficial and revealed several exciting possibilities for future research. Finally, the Eurogang Definition Instrument (EDI) and Eurogang Youth Survey were reviewed to examine whether their measurement of gang membership meets psychological standards for measurement validity and reliability (Weerman et al., 2009; Weerman et al., 2010).

6.2. Summary of findings

The systematic review presented in Chapter Two identified eight papers, detailing seven programmes, that addressed gang violence through prevention/intervention programmes which included moral components; none of the programmes were morally-based. There is a lack of explicitly moral gang-targeted prevention and intervention work, and as such the quality of the discussion is also inherently limited. Accordingly, though only one of the reviewed studies reported success, further exploration is merited; particularly given that the successful programme most closely aligned with the principals outlined by Gibbs for prospective moral intervention work with gang youth (Gibbs, 1993). Additionally, six of the seven programmes were US-based with only one UK-based programme (based on a US programme) met the criteria for review.

Chapter Three's empirical study replicated portions of Alleyne and Wood's 2010 study, finding that gang membership is not significantly linked to general moral disengagement. However, it also contradicted findings regarding which general moral disengagement strategies are linked to gang membership.

A more specific process, discriminant moral disengagement towards outgroups, was found to be significantly related to gang membership: with gang

members exhibiting higher levels of discriminant moral disengagement towards outgroups than non-gang members. General moral disengagement and discriminant moral disengagement towards outgroups were also found to be positively correlated with each other, but without significant agreement, indicating that the measures are distinct from one another despite their relationship.

Gang membership was not found to have a significant effect on attitudes towards women and discriminant moral disengagement towards females, though separate analyses indicated a significant effect on attitudes and a trend towards significance for discriminant moral disengagement towards females. The discriminant moral disengagement towards females scale was found to have good convergent validity with the attitudes towards women scale for adolescents (Galambos et al., 1985). Both discriminant moral disengagement scales were found to be reliable.

Lastly, the Eurogang Definition Instrument (EDI) and Eurogang Youth Survey (EYS) were critiqued according to psychological standards for measures (Gregory, 2014; Groth-Marnet, 2009; Keebler, Manrodt, Durtsche, & Ledyard, 1999; Weerman et al., 2009; Weerman et al., 2010). The EYS contains the most explicit application of the EDI and was found to reliably identify youth involved in higher levels of delinquency than non-gang youth in the current study, as well as across different age groups and within the same population over time. The measure's validity is tied to the definitional debate within gang research, but nonetheless has established reasonable validity through multiple means. The two present a unique and valuable set of instruments for researchers and

practitioners to apply, and one of the better options for psychologists looking for an objective measure of gang membership.

6.3. Implications

Based on the above, there are several implications for policy, practice, and research. The systematic review's implications overlap across these domains, having highlighted that despite the promising results of programmes such as ART and EQUIP and the growing discussion around gang youth and morality, there are no published evaluations of morality-based programmes for gang violence (Gibbs, 1993; Goldstein & Glick, 1994; OJJDP, 2018; van Stam et al., 2014). Major programmes such as GREAT II, GAGV, and other Comprehensive programmes have incorporated moral components, but do not emphasise them or examine their influence on outcomes specifically. This gap in literature was particularly pronounced outside of the US, despite that gang prevention and intervention has been a priority in England since the 2011 Riots. The chasm is particularly surprising given that much of the research on gangs and moral disengagement is currently rooted in the UK. This suggests a need for improved communication between policy makers, practitioners, and researchers, so that each branch can inform the other. Such communication issues extend well beyond gangs and into most topics, but the gaps here are pronounced.

If UK policy makers wish to effectively address gangs, it is not enough just to review what works, one must actually implement and assess what works. Rather than funding research and intervention separately, policy-makers should encourage researchers and practitioners to work together in order to optimise funding, and document their work so it can be informed by existing research and

contribute its own findings to the discourse on how gang violence is effectively addressed. The lack of UK-based evaluations with moral components is surprising and unnecessary. It is recommended that morally-based programmes are trialled on a gang-specific basis, or at the very least that moral components remain to help address moral disengagement. It is further recommended that funding be mindful of the importance not just of piloting but of maintaining programmes.

The first empirical study added an additional dimension to this, suggesting that beyond general moral disengagement, discriminant moral disengagement towards outgroups specifically should be considered in gang work. The results are suggestive that outgroup contexts heighten moral disengagement towards a target (outgroup) population, and as such how moral reasoning shifts with regards to outgroups is likely a useful intervention focus. Accordingly, when adjusting general morality-based programmes to address gang violence, moral reasoning skills and self-regulation in outgroup contexts will be particularly important. This phenomena may also inform prevention and intervention work focused on the dynamics of group pressure, and how discriminant moral disengagement towards outgroups might facilitate certain group processes.

With regards to females, a further dynamic may be in play between “good girls”/“bad girls” rather than gang members displaying discriminant moral disengagement towards females in general. Professionals across all domains must be careful not to draw conclusions regarding gang members’ attitudes towards female before more conclusive results are established, as the dynamic suggested by the exploratory results is more complex than initially expected.

Lastly, the EYS is a good basis for measuring gang membership without relying on self-nomination and participant interpretations of “gang”, and can provide researchers across fields with comparable data. As the definitional debate evolves the instruments may have to adapt to reflect such changes, but currently, no comparable alternative exists.

6.3.1. Future directions

Future research may seek to replicate the exploratory findings from Chapters Three and Four to gain a deeper understanding of discriminant moral disengagement and how gang youth apply it (or not) to outgroups and females. Using a larger sample size would be particularly useful for examining subscales within each phenomena. Ideally, longitudinal data with an added measure of gang embeddedness would also help to track how moral disengagement and discriminant moral disengagement shifts (or does not) over the course of delinquent’s careers, particularly in relation to their gang association and membership. This in turn might be broadened by examining collective moral disengagement, which was originally incorporated into the study design but had to be abandoned due to participant numeracy levels making the measure unworkable with the current population. Collective moral disengagement is the process through which a group’s shared beliefs morally justify antisocial behaviour (Gini, Pozzoli & Bussey, 2014). The process has been explored in classrooms, but relies on participants’ understanding of percentages. Given that gangs function as groups, it is plausible that gang members would have a collective morally disengaged culture compared to non-gang members, and may engage in moral disengagement as a social not just an individual process.

Developing and standardising a measure of collective moral disengagement with less of a numerical focus would facilitate examination of the process in youth offending populations which often contain disproportionate levels of students out of education and with learning needs (Berridge et al., 2001; Delebarre, 2015).

With regards to disentangling gang youths' perceptions of women and why sexual violence has become such a prevalent issue, it may be beneficial to explore discriminant moral disengagement in terms of a "good girl"/"bad girl" dichotomy. It may be that gang members are more morally disengaged towards "bad girls" than "good girls", and would also be interesting to note whether girls can move between the two roles. These questions would be interesting to address with both male and female gang members, given that the literature reviewed in Chapter Four indicated that girls discriminate against each other in gangs too. Measures of benevolent and hostile sexism would complement such research well by giving a more in-depth look at attitudes underlying or paralleling any moral disengagement strategies. Knowing the attitudinal and cognitive processes behind how females are perceived and treated by gang youth would help to inform more effective policy and practice.

In turn, policy and practice could cooperate with researchers to produce high quality evaluations of gang prevention and intervention programmes, particularly outside of the US where work is being conducted by professionals, but a drought of high quality evaluations remain; particularly for moral programmes. Such evaluations may want to apply the EDI/EYS as measure of gang membership to create data for comparative research and establish membership with less bias. Using an objective measure can circumvent the

stigma associated with the word “gang” in the UK amongst both youth and professionals. However, researchers need to be mindful that there are no set coding materials for the EYS. A future direction may even be to develop such guidelines to facilitate consistency across different fields pursuing gang research.

Future work should also aim to parallel shifts in UK gang culture. Recent work highlights that English gangs’ motivations are shifting from being status-based to profit-driven; this shift has seen the emergence of issues such as county lines and child criminal exploitation (Whittaker et al., 2018). As gangs seek to profit they will be in competition over drug economies, making the literature on inter-group competition more relevant. Inter-group competition drives inter-group conflict through various mechanisms, and could be an important component to informed prevention work (Vasquez et al., 2015; Vasquez, Lickel, & Hennigan, 2010). There is evidence to suggest that there are moral components to intergroup conflict, and even that moral disengagement mediates the positive relationship between in-group identification and unethical pro-group behaviour (Chen, Chen & Sheldon, 2016; Cohen, Montoya & Insko, 2006). Future research may seek to explore the relationship between moral disengagement and both inter-group competition and conflict. For example, if moral disengagement mediates unethical competitive behaviour, does competition increase the likelihood of moral disengagement or impact on the severity of actions disinhibited by moral disengagement?

6.3.2. Limitations

This thesis provides valuable insight into moral disengagement in gang versus non-gang delinquents, the possibility of discriminant moral disengagement in both groups towards outgroups and females, the state of moral intervention literature for gangs, gang measurement, and more. Nonetheless there are limits to each chapter, some of which have already been acknowledged but will be summarised below.

A key limitation is the lack of existing literature on the psychology of gangs, particularly outside of the US. This has started to shift within the last decade, but overall most psychological research with gangs remains exploratory and relies on literature from other fields and related topics to inform it. For example, there is a wealth of literature on moral processes and offending, or even delinquency, in general, but this has not extended to gangs (i.e. Bandura, 1999; Bandura, Underwood & Fromson, 1975; Giner-Sorolla, Leidner, & Castano, 2012; Gini, Pozzoli & Hymel, 2013; Palmer, 2005). The lack of literature in the UK, particularly outside of Scotland, is not altogether surprising given the reluctance to acknowledge gangs, but nonetheless presents an obstacle.

Even within gang literature, there are challenges to overcome such as the definitional debate. Gang definitions range within research, law enforcement, nearly everywhere that you find them. This thesis adopted a widely recognised, international definition as an attempt to address this, but nonetheless as is clear in Appendix 3.A there are still variations between the Eurogang definition and other broadly recognised definitions such as that coined by the Centre for Social

Justice (2009). The sparse literature and inconsistencies within existing literature will continue to pose a challenge to researchers until a more solid base is established; something which this thesis hopefully contributes to.

Additionally, as touched upon earlier, the small sample size for the empirical studies is a significant limitation. Small sample sizes can limit the significance and generalisability of results, particularly with regards to lowering the statistical power of a study. The small sample size resulted from data collection being an unexpectedly labour-intensive process, whereby a disproportionate number of participants asked to have the questionnaire administered verbally (over 70%). Additionally, participants were difficult to access, most services contacted declining to participate and those who did participate making limited referrals. Of those referrals, though most youth consented to participate some were remanded to custody, changed locality over the course of the study, or did not attend their appointments, making it difficult (in some cases not possible) to collect data from them. Nonetheless, the present sample provide an exploratory basis for future work and highlighted some trends meriting further investigation.

6.4. Conclusion

This thesis has identified gaps in literature regarding the application of moral prevention/intervention programmes to gang youth. It has also explored the processes through which gang and non-gang delinquents morally disengage generally, and towards particular targets: outgroups and females. The measure of discriminant moral disengagement offers a new way to explore moral disengagement's mechanisms and processes, potentially better informing future

research, policy, and practice. Additionally, it reviewed a measure of gang membership's reliability and validity, potentially informing its future use across different fields and comparative contexts. This may help to encourage consistency in a growing field, where several future directions have been highlighted.

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Appendices

Appendix 2.A. Systematic review protocol

Version 1.7

Title	<i>Working Title: The Efficacy of Morality-Based Interventions in Targeting Violent Behaviour in Youth Gangs</i>
First reviewer	Miriam Dyberg
Supervisor	Dr. Vince Egan
Project title	Moral Disengagement in Gang and Non-Gang Delinquents

Support

SR overview	Advice sought from Dr. Vince Egan
Protocol development	Advice sought from Dr. Vince Egan and Jeanette Eldridge
Literature searching	Partook in training provided by University of Nottingham's library services and additional lectures by Dr. Shihning Chou, Dr. Vince Egan and Dr. Kate Green. Completed previous relevant literature searches as a component of an MSc and for the ethics proposal of the current project
Quality appraisal	Criteria based off of reading relevant literature and based on advice from Dr. Vince Egan
Data extraction	Form developed based on literature review
Synthesis	Conducted July-August 2018
Write-Up	Conducted August 2018

Change Record

Date	Changes and Rationale
10/06/17	Original draft (Version 1.1) started.
14/07/17	More removed as term because quantitative meaning more likely to arise than moral meaning. It was also hoped that 'moral' terms would capture this term. You* adj group added to capture various forms of youth groups.
16/08/17	Version 1.2 created due to addition of several new terms and combination strategies.
12/04/18	Version 1.3 started following hiatus to capture improved terminology and phasing for question, including a shift of focus from antisocial behaviour to violence. The focus also shifted specifically to gang-involved youth.
13/04/18	Version 1.4 created with the following changes: Removal of search terms pertaining to identifying young offenders: this is captured under the more relevant umbrella of young gang members. The term "gang"

	moved up to replace these in defining the search population (see new line 7) • Removal of search terms capturing antisocial non-violent behaviour, as the search's focus has narrowed to violent behaviour. Outcome variable now defined by line 3 • This new protocol is shorter but deemed to be more effective in scoping exercises
15/04/18	Version 1.5 established with addition of "AND intervention" to final search line in order to narrow focus of social sciences databases and decrease number of demographic rather than intervention focused papers
18/04/18	Edited inclusion/exclusion criteria to focus search and increase consistency
06/06/18	Population edited to specify non-clinical
06/18	Date cut off changed to reflect earlier reviews

Background to Review

Previous studies have established the link between various dimensions of morality and antisocial behaviour; including higher levels of moral disengagement being found in offenders versus the general public, and gang versus non-gang youth (Alleyne & Wood, 2010; Alleyne & Wood, 2012; Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, & Pastorelli, 1996; Emler & Reicher, 1995; Shulman, Cauffman, Piquero, & Fagan, 2011). Moral disengagement is "the act of disengaging moral reasoning from one's behaviour" (Detert, Treviño & Sweitzer, 2008). Knowing that gang members tend to exhibit heightened moral disengagement helps us to understand their behaviour, but does it help us prevent or extinguish violent tendencies? Or to encourage alternative behaviour?

Violent behaviour and related cognition was chosen as an outcome measure as it causes a clear and quantifiable harm. Violence reduction is also a consistent focus of criminal justice policy in the UK (UK Ministry of Justice [MoJ], 2016; MoJ, 2018).

Objectives

1. To establish the quantity and quality of evidence on the efficacy of morality-based interventions for reducing violent behaviour from youth gangs.
2. To examine the evidence and identify relevant areas which require further exploration in order to establish the usefulness of morality as a mechanism within prevention and behaviour-targeted work.

Search Strategy

1	juvenile* OR you* OR child* OR adolescen* OR teenage* OR minor*
2	gang
3	violen* OR aggressi*
4	moral* OR value* OR ethic* OR empath* OR (executive adj function)
5	understand* OR educat* OR interven* OR dilemma* OR develop* OR train* OR teach* OR judg* OR problem* OR grow* OR orientation OR disengag* OR psychoeducat* OR DPE OR discuss* OR prevent*
6	(victim adj2 aware*) OR (aware* adj3 victim) OR (perspective tak*) OR relat* OR understand* OR skill* OR function*
7	1 AND 2
8	4 AND 5
9	6 OR 8
10	3 AND 7 AND 9 AND intervention

String: (violen* OR aggressi*) AND gang AND (((victim adj2 aware*) OR (aware* adj3 victim) OR (perspective tak*) OR relat* OR understand* OR skill* OR function*) OR ((moral* OR value* OR ethic* OR empath* OR (executive adj function))) AND (understand* OR educat* OR interven* OR dilemma* OR develop* OR train* OR teach* OR judg* OR problem* OR grow* OR orientation OR disengag* OR psychoeducat* OR DPE OR discuss* OR prevent*)) AND intervention

Where possible, relevant filters such as the timeframe, population and subject were also selected.

For databases that do not allow for such complex search structures, "gang" AND "violence" AND ("intervene*" OR "prevent*") was run as two searches. These were sorted by "most relevant" and limited to the first fifteen pages of results:

Search engines used to identify databases included: NUSearch

Comprehensive list of databases (excluding those used solely for scoping or database identification): OVID (Books@OVID, Journals@OVID, PsycARTICLES, OVID MEDLINE, PsycINFO), EBSCO (Education [ERIC, Teacher Reference Center, SPORTDiscus, Educational Administration Abstracts, eBook Collection (EBSCOhost), Education Abstracts (H.W. Wilson)] and Psychology Collections [CINAHL Plus with Full Text, Child Development & Adolescent Studies, European

Views of the Americas: 1493 to 1750, eBook Collection (EBSCOhost)], ASSIA, ProQuest Criminology Collection (NCJRS, Criminal Justice Database)

Total Results (Electronic):

Source	N Search Results
OVID	2092
EBSCO	231
ASSIA	1385
ProQuest Criminology Collection - NCJRS	339
ProQuest Criminology Collection – Criminal Justice Database (no theses/dissertations)	3504 appear
ProQuest Criminology Collection – Criminal Justice Database (theses/dissertations)	2135
Web of Science	99

Duplicates: 178 sets of duplicates identified by Mendeley

Selection Criteria

Inclusion criteria:

i. Population	Gang involved males aged up to 18; <i>no LD, MI etc specific samples 6/6/18</i>
ii. Dependent Variable	Violent behaviour
iii. Study type	Any with an outcome measure
iv. Intervention	Morality-based interventions, including empathy-targeted interventions. Any length or type.
v. Time period	1945-Present. Due to the niche scope of this review, publications from 1945 and onward will be considered. Publications before this fall outside the scope of modern psychology, but making the cut off year 1945 allows for inclusion of research following WWII, where there was an increased interest in morality and its role in antisocial behavior.
vi. Language	Only resources published in English will be considered to maintain linguistic consistency and facilitate a more focused approach to a topic likely to span several fields (psychology, criminology, social work, etc.).

Geographic area	To ensure some level of cultural consistency, particularly with regards to reasonably comparable justice systems and social programmes and morals, only occident countries with common law legal systems will be considered. Occident countries were defined according to Huntington's post-Cold War classification of which countries constitute Western civilization (Huntington, 1996). Countries and territories included: (American) Samoa, Australia, Canada, the Fiji Islands, Ireland, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, United Kingdom, United States of America, Tonga, Tuvalu
Publication type	Theses (published and unpublished), published journal papers, freely available research; all subject to meeting a quality criteria to ensure that findings can reasonably be seen as honestly and correctly reported, no book reviews (added 9/6) (so no descriptive papers)

Quality Assessment

Standards to be reviewed and used to form a quality and risk of bias assessment tool to be applied to all included studies.

Data Extraction

Dependent upon results both narrative and statistical data will be extracted. Focuses will be informed by previous reviews and outlined in a data extraction sheet (for example, Huey, Lewine & Rubenson, 2016). Outcomes will be extracted as statistical values if possible, and otherwise rated as successful, partially successful, or not successful.

Synthesis

A narrative synthesis will be conducted. If results permit, data may be synthesized to attempt a meta-analysis.

Appendix 2.B. Sample search strategy

SCOPUS



General

1	juvenile* OR you* OR child* OR adolescen* OR teenage* OR minor*
2	gang
3	violen* OR aggressi*
4	moral* OR value* OR ethic* OR empath* OR (executive adj function)
5	understand* OR educat* OR interven* OR dilemma* OR develop* OR train* OR teach* OR judg* OR problem* OR grow* OR orientation OR disengag* OR psychoeducat* OR DPE OR discuss* OR prevent*
6	(victim adj2 aware*) OR (aware* adj3 victim) OR (perspective tak*) OR relat* OR understand* OR skill* OR function*
7	1 AND 2
8	4 AND 5
9	6 OR 8
10	3 AND 7 AND 9 AND intervention

String: (violen* OR aggressi*) AND gang AND (((victim adj2 aware*) OR (aware* adj3 victim) OR (perspective tak*) OR relat* OR understand* OR skill* OR function*) OR ((moral* OR value* OR ethic* OR empath* OR (executive adj function)) AND (understand* OR educat* OR interven* OR dilemma* OR develop* OR train* OR teach* OR judg* OR problem* OR grow* OR orientation OR disengag* OR psychoeducat* OR DPE OR discuss* OR prevent*))) AND intervention

Appendix 2.C. Quality and risk of bias assessment instrument

	Title	
	Authors	
	Year	

Area		Risk of Bias Rating	Quality Rating
Research design - Strong design: (B) Randomised and blind allocation (Q) RCT or comparison w control group, controlling for other factors - Moderate: (B) Blind randomisation somewhat present (Q) Other comparisons and single group correlations across time - Weaker designs: (B) Allocation to groups not blind not random (C) Other studies			
Selection Adequate case definition: gang measure used? - Strong: (B) Independent party or set measure of gang membership (Q) Established gang measure - Moderate: (B) Second-rater confirmed gang membership (Q) Independent gang measure - Weak: (B) Researcher judgment of membership or not specified (Q) Gang measurement not specified			
Representativeness - Strong: (B) General recruitment (Q) Resembles intended population - Moderate: (B) In between (Q) Partial resemblance - Weak: (B) Clear, targeted recruitment (Q) Unlikely to represent/significant differences to target population			

Presence of Control/Comparison Group • Strong: Multiple group comparison with a non-exposure group • Moderate: Before/after single group comparison • Weak: No comparison			
Comparability On basis of design • Strong: Control condition matched as appropriate (time period for example) • Moderate: Reasonable but not strong • Weak: Absent or lacks information			
On basis of key demographics • Strong: Reasonably similar/matched • Moderate: Some issues or missing information • Weak: Lack of information or low evidence of comparability			
Intervention Targets appropriate population? • Strong: Gang population/at risk population • Moderate: General delinquent/AS youth • Weak: Other • *For prevention studies a general population is moderate			
Targets appropriate outcome? • Strong: Violent behaviour • Weak: Other targets			
Moral aspect? • Strong: (B) Second rater agrees (Q) Clearly described • Moderate: (B) Agreement of aspect reached through discussion (Q) Clearly named • Weak: (B) Agreement cannot be reached, or reached as non-		Researcher's bias	

moral (Q) Some ambiguity (ex states targets empathy but no moral mention)			
Control group comparable exposure? - Strong: Yes - Moderate: Somewhat - Weak: No (or likely to encourage an outcome to bias comparison)			
Outcome Outcome measured - Strong: (B) Appropriate to intervention target (Q) Violent bx - Moderate: (B) Related to target (Q) Violence-related bx or cognitions - Weak: (B) Inappropriate measure of target (Q) Non-violent or general ASB, other			
Outcome measure - Strong: Objective, quantifiable measure - Moderate: Self-report or similar - Weak: Other			
Collection method - Strong: Effective blinding of participants/researchers to expected bxs - Moderate: Somewhat effective - Weak: Lacks evidence or absent			
Quality of outcome measure (reliability and validity) - Strong: : (B) Effective blinding of participants/researchers to (Q) Well-established, multiple measures expected outcomes - Moderate: (Q) Well-established single source data - Weak: Other			
Outcome measure same for both groups? - Strong: Yes - Moderate: Reasonably adjusted - Weak: No			

Significance/practical importance indicated? • Strong: Yes • Moderate: Somewhat • Weak: No			
Generalisability indicated? • Strong: Yes • Moderate: Somewhat • Weak: No			
Attrition Non-response rate			
Non-response reasons			
Drop-out rate			
Drop-out reasons			
Other relevant issues			
Statistics Analysis appropriate?			
Confounds etc. controlled for?			
Evidence of unreported/unrecognised data?			
Future replication/use Feasibility of applying on smaller/larger scales?			
Other issues of note			

Appendix 2.D. Data extraction form

	Title	
	Authors	
	Year	
	Type and T's Title (Journal/Thesis...)	
	Other citation info	
	Research design	
	Research question	
	Countr(ies)	
P	N total	
	N gang	
	Gender make up	
	Gang measurement	
	Age(s)	
	Ethnicities	
	Source of Participants	
	Community/Custody	
	Other notes	
I	Intervention	
	Moral aspect	
	Brief description	
	Length	
C	Is there a comparison group?	
	What are they? (nongang...)	
	Ages	
	Ethnicities	
	Source	
	Community/custody	
O	Outcome measured	
	Outcome measure	
	Collection method (oral etc)	
	Statistical analysis	
	Statistical outcomes (p values etc)	
	Violence reduced or no?	
	Notes	

Appendix 3.A. Data coding sheet

Coding Sheet

Participant:

Ethnicity:

Nationality:

Religion:

Offences committed with (solo/1-2/3+)

Special Needs:

Written or Oral:

Total time taken:

YOT estimate of Classification:

EG Definition:

Item	Yes	No	Possible/Affiliate
Youth group (aged 12-25), group exists <i>In addition to such formal groups, informal group (p. 3)</i> <i>How many ppl about in group (p. 3)</i> <i>Age of group (p. 4)</i>			
Durable (3mo or more) <i>How long existed (p. 5)</i>			
Street-oriented (outside home, work, or school; public places w/o adult supervision) <i>Does this group spend a lot of time in public places (p. 4)</i>			
Illegal activity part of identity (part of what is normal/accepted for group, criminal/delinquent bx not just ASB) <i>Illegal things accepted and done? (p.7)</i>			
Other points to consider			
Classification			
Classification: Classical (<i>often: territorial, 100+ members or so, ages 10-30, existing 20+ yrs, sub-groups</i>)			
Neo-Classical (<i>newer (10 yrs or so), territorial, fewer members than classical, age subgroups</i>)			
Compressed (<i>age 12-20, short history (less than 10 yrs), no subgroups, less than 50 members, may or may not be territorial</i>)			
Collective (<i>more disorganised, wider age range, up to 100 members, no clear subgroups, 10-15 yr existence, may or may not be territorial</i>)			
Specialty (<i>narrow crime pattern, more criminally than socially motivated</i>)			

Definition used by UK Government (from Centre for Social Justices):

Trait	Yes	No	Possible/Affiliate
See themselves/are seen by others as a discernible group			
Engage in a range of criminal activity and violence			
Identify with or lay claim over territory			
Have some form of identifying structural features			
Are in conflict with other, similar, gangs			
Classification			

Statutory Definition [section 34(5) Policing and Crime Act 2009; updated in Serious Crime Act 2015]

** note that it is intentionally broad*

Trait	Yes	No	Possible/Affiliate
Group of three or more people			
Group has one or more characteristics that enable its members to be identified by others as a group			

Scores:

Moral Disengagement

Pg.	Number	Sub-Scale	Score
10	1	MJ	
	2	EL	
	3	AC	
	4	DISR	
	5	DIFR	
11	6	DEH	
	7	MJ	
	8	EL	
	9	AC	
	10	DC	
	11	AB	
	12	DEH	
	13	MJ	
	14	EL	
	15	DISR	
12	16	DIFR	
	17	DC	
	18	AB	
	19	DEH	
	20	AC	
	21	DISR	
	22	DIFR	
	23	DC	
	24	AB	
Total:			

Advantageous Comparison (AC)

#	Score
3	
9	
20	
Total	

Attribution of Blame (AB)

#	Score
11	
18	
24	
Total	

Dehumanisation (DEH)

#	Score
6	
12	
19	
Total	

Diffusion of Responsibility (DIFR)

#	Score
5	
16	
22	
Total	

Displacement of Responsibility (DISR)

#	Score
4	
15	
21	
Total	

Distortion of Consequences (DC)

#	Score
10	
17	
23	
Total	

Euphemistic Labelling (EL)

#	Score
2	
8	
14	
Total	

Moral Justification (MJ)

#	Score
1	
7	
13	
Total	

Moral Disengagement to Out Groups (OG)

Pg.	Number	Sub-Scale	Score
13	1	MJ	
	2	EL	
	3	AC	
	4	DISR	
	5	DIFR	
	6	DEH	
	7	MJ	
	8	EL	
	9	AC	
14	10	DC	
	11	AB	
	12	DEH	
	13	MJ	
	14	EL	
	15	DISR	
	16	DIFR	
	17	DC	
	18	AB	
15	19	DEH	
	20	AC	
	21	DISR	
	22	DIFR	
	23	DC	
	24	AB	
Total:			

Advantageous Comparison (AC)

#	Score
3	
9	
20	
Total	

Attribution of Blame (AB)

#	Score
11	
18	
24	
Total	

Dehumanisation (DEH)

#	Score
6	
12	
19	
Total	

Diffusion of Responsibility (DIFR)

#	Score
5	
16	
22	
Total	

Displacement of Responsibility (DISR)

#	Score
4	
15	
21	
Total	

Distortion of Consequences (DC)

#	Score
10	
17	
23	
Total	

Euphemistic Labelling (EL)

#	Score
2	
8	
14	
Total	

Moral Justification (MJ)

#	Score
1	
7	
13	
Total	

Attitudes towards Women

Pg.	Number	+/-	Score Pre-Reversal	Score
15	1	+		
	2	+		
	3	-		
16	4	+		
	5	-		
	6	+		
	7	-		
	8	+		
	9	-		
	10	+		
	11	+		
	12	-		
Total				

Moral Disengagement towards Women

Pg.	Number	Sub-Scale	Score
16	1	MJ	
17	2	EL	
	3	AC	
	4	DISR	
	5	DIFR	
	6	DEH	
	7	MJ	
	8	EL	
	9	AC	
18	10	DC	
	11	AB	
	12	DEH	
	13	MJ	
	14	EL	
	15	DISR	
	16	DIFR	
	17	DC	
	18	AB	
19	19	DEH	
	20	AC	
	21	DISR	
	22	DIFR	
	23	DC	
	24	AB	
Total:			

Advantageous Comparison (AC)

#	Score
3	
9	
20	
Total	

Attribution of Blame (AB)

#	Score
11	
18	
24	
Total	

Dehumanisation (DEH)

#	Score
6	
12	
19	
Total	

Diffusion of Responsibility (DIFR)

#	Score
5	
16	
22	
Total	

Displacement of Responsibility (DISR)

#	Score
4	
15	
21	
Total	

Distortion of Consequences (DC)

#	Score
10	
17	
23	
Total	

Euphemistic Labelling (EL)

#	Score
2	
8	
14	
Total	

Moral Justification (MJ)

#	Score
1	
7	
13	
Total	

Appendix 3.B. Case manager demographic sheet

Case Manager Demographics Sheet



This sheet is purely for information sharing purposes with the researcher; please do not share it with any young people.

Young Person's Name (to be blacked out once questionnaire completed):

Gender:

Age at time of Referral to Study:

Date of Referral:

Gender:

Age at time Questionnaire Administered:

Date(s) Questionnaire Administered:

Ethnicity:

Nationality:

Religion:

Is the young person fluent in English? Yes No

Which of the following applies to the young person?

Known gang affiliation

Suspected gang affiliation

No gang affiliation

Are they known to a gang-specific team/taskforce? (such as VanguardPlus, Trident, etc.) If yes please specify which team/taskforce

Yes No

If they are known to be in a gang or suspected of involvement, what is the basis for this knowledge?

Have most of the young person's offences been committed...

on their own

with one or two friends

in groups larger than three

Does the young person have any known physical, mental, emotional, attention or learning difficulties (such as dyslexia, ADHD, autistic spectrum disorder, anxiety, diabetes, functioning at lower cognitive age, etc.)? If yes please specify.

Yes

No

In your opinion, how would the questionnaire best be administered to the young person?

- ☐ They can write their own answers in one sitting (if they prefer to get it out of the way for example)
- ☐ They can write their own answers in one sitting but will need 5 minute breaks
- ☐ They can write their own answers but would be better off completing the questionnaire in two parts
- ☐ They need the questionnaire read aloud to them

Please give a brief explanation for why you selected that answer.

For completion by researcher/administrator:

Administration was:

- ☐ **Written**
- ☐ **Oral**

Questionnaire Time Sheet

Date	Time Started	Time Finished/of Break	Questions Completed

Justification for selected administration method and other administration notes, such as questions which required clarification.

Appendix 3.C. Information sheet

(Final Version 1.1: 31 Mar 2016)

Title of Study: Moral Disengagement in Delinquents Name of Researcher: Miriam Dyberg(-Tengroth)

You have been asked to take part in a study, but it is your choice if you do or do not. Before you decide, please look through the notes we have given you below. They talk about what the study is about and what we would be asking you to do if you decided to do it.

You can ask your Youth Offending Team/Service (YOT/YOS) worker or the researcher if you have any questions. If they can't answer your question, or you can't talk to them for some reason, you can contact the researcher's supervisor. Their contact information is at the end of this sheet.

Feel free to talk to others about the study if you wish, and contact the researcher if there is anything that is not clear. Don't worry, this is the most reading/listening we'll ask you to do for the study.

- **What is the purpose of the study?** We are looking at how young offenders see themselves, their friends, and morality
- This study is not meant to judge you as a person, but to help us understand groups
- **Why you?** The researcher has asked case managers to refer young males aged 14-18, who speak English and are known to a YOT/YOS. We would like as many young people as possible to fill out the questionnaire
- **Do I have to do it?** It is up to you to want to take part or not, and you can even change your mind about whether you want to or not. You do not have to give any reason or tell us why you choose to do this study or not

- **What will happen to me if I take part?** You'll be asked to give **consent** (say that you want to do this and understand what we are asking you to do). After that you'll be asked to **answer some questions** about yourself and the people you spend time with, such as your ages (no one's names!). Finally, you'll be asked to complete some **scales** that ask your opinion about things that may be seen as moral or immoral. They measure attitudes and something called "moral disengagement", which is when someone decides that the rules they live according to (or sometimes that society thinks you should have) do not apply for some reason. The measures will also look at how you think about these things
- You can do the questionnaire **all at once, with breaks, or in two parts**. We will write down what you choose and how long it takes you, but this does not affect your scores
- After that you're **done!** We check to make sure that you understand everything that has happened, and that you know what to do if you think of any questions later. You can also choose if you want to find out what your results are
- This study is **completely anonymous**. Anonymous means that no one will know which one of all the surveys we have is yours, no one outside the research team will know you did the survey, and no one will know which results are yours unless you ask to be told what they are (then of course the person that tells you will know your results as well)
- **What are the possible disadvantages of taking part?** Some questions mention things that some people find hard to talk about, such as weapons. If you'd like to talk about how anything in the survey makes you feel, you can contact the researcher at any time, or ask the worker giving you the survey. Please remember that your answers are completely anonymous, as are any questions, worries, or

feelings you report unless they could cause harm to yourself or others

- **What are the possible benefits of taking part?** This may help our **understanding** of young offenders. In the long run, understanding you can help us make YOT/YOS better, or maybe even have an **effect on UK laws/guidelines**. Your answers could also help young offenders in **other countries** be understood too
- **What happens when the study stops?** The survey goes into a **safe place** where only the researcher can get it. It will later be entered into analytic software to see if any patterns emerge, and we can look at how young offenders in various **groups** answered instead of individual (one person's) answers. Only the researcher and their supervisor will have access to everyone's answers unless it needs to be reviewed. The group data will be used in a research dissertation and possibly published
- **What will happen if I want to stop?** You are free to stop at any time, without giving any reason, and without your legal rights being affected. If you decide this after finishing the study, your answers may be used in an analysis if we can't find which survey is yours (since it is anonymous)
- **Your YOT/YOS cannot discriminate against you for not taking part.** This research is associated with a university, not the Youth Justice Board, so it has no implications on your order or other YOT/YOS-run programmes

Further information and contact details

Researcher's name: Miriam Dyberg-Tengroth

Researcher's e-mail address: msxmfd@nottingham.ac.uk

Supervisor's name: Dr. Vincent Egan

Supervisor's e-mail address: mczve@nottingham.ac.uk

Appendix 3.D. Consent

Consent:

Please check all relevant boxes:

- ☐ I have read/heard the information sheet.
I understand...
- ☐ ... the information sheet and know how to contact the researcher if I want to.
- ☐ ... that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason, and without my legal rights being affected. This means I can stop taking the survey any time I want.
- ☐ ...if I withdraw after handing in my survey, my answers might still be used as researchers will not be able to see which survey is mine.
- ☐ ...that no identifying information will be collected. Unless I request to see my results, in which case my survey will be coded so that only the research staff can identify which results belong to me.
- ☐ ...that the data collected in the study may be looked at by authorised individuals from the University of Nottingham, the researcher's supervisor(s) and regulatory authorities where it is relevant to my taking part in the study.
- ☐ I give permission for these individuals to collect, store, analyse and publish information obtained from my participation in this study. I understand that my personal details will be kept confidential.

- ☐ I confirm that I identify as male.
- ☐ I confirm that I am between the ages of 13-18.
- ☐ I confirm that I am fluent in English.
- ☐ I confirm that I am known to a Youth Offending Team or Service.
- ☐ I agree to take part in the above study.

Signature:

Date:

- ☐ I want to see my results

If participants is under 16, for the Appropriate Adult:

I am satisfied that the above young person has had all information explained to them that they need in order to give informed consent. I believe the above young person understands the conditions of their participation and has made an informed decision to take part in this study.

Signature:

Date:

Role of Appropriate Adult:

Thank you for taking part in the study.

Appendix 3.E. Study questionnaire

PART1: DEMOGRAPHICS

Instructions:

1. Do NOT write your name on the questionnaire.
2. Your answers are CONFIDENTIAL – no one outside of the research staff will know how you answered the questions.
3. Please answer the questions in the order they appear.
4. Circle (or check) the number that best shows your answer to each question
5. There are no right or wrong answers. Your opinion is what counts.
6. You may skip any questions that you do not want to answer.
7. You can stop filling out the questionnaire any time you wish.
8. We hope you enjoy answering these questions.

We are going to start with a few questions about you and your background. Please circle the response that best describes you.

I am _____ years old.

Think of the place you live most of the time. Which of the following people live with you? (Choose all that apply.)

- | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Mother | 8. Grandfather |
| 2. Father | 9. Other adults (SPECIFY_____) |
| 3. Stepmother | 10. Sister(s) |
| 4. Stepfather | 11. Brother(s) |
| 5. Aunt | 12. Stepsister(s) |
| 6. Uncle | 13. Stepbrother(s) |
| 7. Grandmother | 14. Other children |
| 15. I live alone | |

In what country where you born?

- 1. England**
- 2. Scotland**
- 3. Wales**
- 4. India**
- 5. Pakistan**
- 6. Bangladesh**
- 7. Poland**
- 8. Romania**
- 9. Nigeria**
- 10. Other European country (SPECIFY:_____)**
- 11. Other Asian country (SPECIFY:_____)**

12. Other African country (SPECIFY:_____)
13. Other (SPECIFY:_____)

In what country was your father born?

1. England
2. Scotland
3. Wales
4. India
5. Pakistan
6. Bangladesh
7. Poland
8. Romania
9. Nigeria
10. Other European country (SPECIFY:_____)
11. Other Asian country (SPECIFY:_____)
12. Other African country (SPECIFY:_____)
13. Other (SPECIFY:_____)
14. I don't know

In what country was your mother born?

1. England
2. Scotland
3. Wales
4. India
5. Pakistan
6. Bangladesh
7. Poland
8. Romania
9. Nigeria

- 10. Other European country (SPECIFY:_____)
- 11. Other Asian country (SPECIFY:_____)
- 12. Other African country (SPECIFY:_____)
- 13. Other (SPECIFY:_____)
- 14. I don't know

Studies have found that many people break the rules and laws some of the time.

The following questions are about your friends or the people you spend time with.

During the past 12 months, have you participated in any teams, scouts, sports club, or other formal groups in your school, neighborhood or city?

- 1. No 2. Yes IF YES, SPECIFY _____**

In addition to any such formal groups, some people have a certain group of friends that they spend time with, doing things together or just hanging out. Do you have a group of friends like that?

- 1. No 2. Yes**

(IF NO, GO TO THE SCALES SECTION)

IF YOU SPEND TIME WITH MORE THAN ONE SUCH GROUP, ANSWER FOR THE ONE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU

About how many people, including you, belong to this group?

2	3-10	11-20	21-50	51-100
	more than 100			

How many of your close friends belong to this group?

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. All of them | 4. Less than half of them |
| 2. Most of them | 5. None of them |
| 3. About half of them | |

Which of the following categories best describes this group?

- 1. All male**
- 2. Mostly male**
- 3. About half male, half female**
- 4. Mostly female**
- 5. All female**

How old is the youngest person in this group? _____years

How old is the oldest person in this group? _____years

Which one of the following best describes the ages of people in your group?

- 1. Under twelve**
- 2. Twelve to fifteen**
- 3. Sixteen to eighteen**
- 4. Nineteen to twenty-five**
- 5. Over twenty-five**

**Which of the following categories describes the people in your group?
(CIRCLE OR CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)**

- | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. White British
of them | a. all of them | b. most of them | c. some |
| d. none of them | | | |
| 2. British, Afro-Caribbean
of them | a. all of them | b. most of them | c. some |
| d. none of them | | | |
| 3. British, Asian
of them | a. all of them | b. most of them | c. some |
| d. none of them | | | |
| 4. British, other
of them | a. all of them | b. most of them | c. some |
| d. none of them | | | |
| 5. Irish
of them | a. all of them | b. most of them | c. some |
| d. none of them | | | |
| 6. Traveler/Gypsy/Roma
of them | a. all of them | b. most of them | c. some |
| d. none of them | | | |
| 7. Afro-Caribbean (not British) | a. all of them | b. most of them | c. some of them |
| d. none of them | | | |
| 8. Asian (not British) | a. all of them | b. most of them | c. some of them |
| d. none of them | | | |
| 9. Mixed | a. all of them | b. most of them | c. some of them |
| d. none of them | | | |
| 10. Other (please specify below) | a. all of them | b. most of them | c. some of them |
| d. none of them | | | |

Does this group spend a lot of time together in public places like the park, the street, shopping areas, or the neighborhood?

- 1. No 2. Yes**

Does this group have an area or place that it calls its own?

- 1. No 2. Yes**

IF YES, Is this area or place...

- 1. a park or playground**
- 2. a street, street corner or square**
- 3. a drinking or eating place (such as a pub, café, restaurant)**
- 4. living space (such as an apartment, house, flat)**
- 5. a neighborhood or area of the city**
- 6. shopping area**
- 7. other (SPECIFY)_____**

Does your group let other groups come into this area or place?

- 1. No**
- 2. Yes**

Does your group defend this area or place against other groups?

- 1. No**
- 2. Yes**

IF YES, how do they do that?

- 1. Fight**
- 2. Intimidate or threaten others**
- 3. Other (SPECIFY)_____**

How long has this group existed?

- 1. Less than three months**
- 2. Three months to less than one year**
- 3. One to four years**
- 4. Five to ten years**
- 5. Eleven to twenty years**
- 6. More than twenty years**

Within your group, are there distinct subgroups or cliques that especially spend time together, either because of their age, sex (gender), or because they live in the same neighborhood?

- 1. No 2. Yes**

IF YES, are these subgroups based on (Circle all that apply)

- 1. age**
2. sex (gender)
3. neighborhood
4. other (Specify _____)

Does your group have a name for itself?

- 1. No 2. Yes**

IF YES, What is the group's name? _____

The following is a list of reasons that young people give for joining groups. Which of them were important reasons for you to join your group? (Circle all that apply)

- 1. to make friends**
2. to feel important
3. to feel like you belong to something
4. to prepare for the future
5. to keep out of trouble
6. for protection
7. to share secrets
8. to get away with illegal activities
9. to participate in group activities
10. to have a territory of your own
11. to get your parents' respect
12. because someone in your family was a member of the group

- 13. to meet members of the opposite sex
 - 14. to get money or other things
 - 15. to get money or other things from selling drug
 - 16. because a friend was a member of the group
 - 17. for company
 - 18. any other reasons for why you joined your groups? (SPECIFY)
-

Which of the following characteristics describes your group?

- | | | |
|--|-------|--------|
| 1. Recognized leaders | 1. no | 2. yes |
| 2. Symbols | 1. no | 2. yes |
| 3. Boys and girls do different things | 1. no | 2. yes |
| 4. Regular meetings | 1. no | 2. yes |
| 5. Specific rules or codes | 1. no | 2. yes |
| 6. You have to do special things to get in | 1. no | 2. yes |
| 7. Special clothing | 1. no | 2. yes |
| 8. Tattoos | 1. no | 2. yes |

Does your group promote or support a particular political or religious issue?

1. No 2. Yes

IF YES, what issues? _____

Is doing illegal things accepted by or okay for your group?

1. No 2. Yes

Do people in your group actually do illegal things together?

1. No 2. Yes

How often are the following things done by your group?

- | | | | | |
|--|----------------|-----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 1. Threaten people | 1 Never | 2 Rarely | 3 Sometimes | 4 Often |
| 2. Fight | 1 Never | 2 Rarely | 3 Sometimes | 4 Often |
| 3. Steal things | 1 Never | 2 Rarely | 3 Sometimes | 4 Often |
| 4. Get protection money | 1 Never | 2 Rarely | 3 Sometimes | 4 Often |
| 5. Rob other people | 1 Never | 2 Rarely | 3 Sometimes | 4 Often |
| 6. Steal cars | 1 Never | 2 Rarely | 3 Sometimes | 4 Often |
| 7. Sell illegal drugs | 1 Never | 2 Rarely | 3 Sometimes | 4 Often |
| 8. Carry illegal weapons | 1 Never | 2 Rarely | 3 Sometimes | 4 Often |
| 9. Damage or destroy property | 1 Never | 2 Rarely | 3 Sometimes | 4 Often |
| 10. Beat up someone | 1 Never | 2 Rarely | 3 Sometimes | 4 Often |
| 11. Write graffiti | 1 Never | 2 Rarely | 3 Sometimes | 4 Often |
| 12. Use drugs | 1 Never | 2 Rarely | 3 Sometimes | 4 Often |
| 13. Use alcohol | 1 Never | 2 Rarely | 3 Sometimes | 4 Often |
| 14. Break and enter (burglary) | 1 Never | 2 Rarely | 3 Sometimes | 4 Often |
| 15. Other illegal offenses (SPECIFY)_____ | 1 Never | 2 Rarely | 3 Sometimes | 4 Often |

Do you consider your group of friends to be a gang?

- 1. No 2. Yes**

If you are not now, have you ever been in such a gang?

- 1. No 2. Yes**

If you do not use the word "gang" for your group, is there some other term you would use? For example, some groups call themselves clubs, bands, crews, posses, taggers, bikers, party crews, and so on. If your group uses a term other than "gang", what is that term?

Have any of your brothers, sisters or cousins ever been in a gang?

- 1. No 2. Yes, my siblings 3. Yes, my cousins 4. Yes, both**
5. I have no brothers/sisters/cousins

Have any of your friends ever been in a gang?

- 1. No 2. Yes 3. I have no friends**

Are there people living on your street who belong to a gang?

- 1. No 2. Yes 3. I don't know**

Are there any gangs in your neighborhood or city?

- 1. No 2. Yes 3. I don't know**

The next set of questions is about your group of friends. Please circle or check the number that best represents how you feel.

Being in my group makes me feel important.

1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Uncertain 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree

My group provides a good deal of support and loyalty for each other.

1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Uncertain 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree

Being in my group makes me feel respected.

1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Uncertain 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree

Being in my group makes me feel like I'm a useful person.

1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Uncertain 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree

Being in my group makes me feel like I belong somewhere.

1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Uncertain 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree

I really enjoy being in my group.

1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Uncertain 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree

My group is like a family to me.

1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Uncertain 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree

If you are doing the study in two components STOP. If not, please continue.

PART 2: SCALES

Please select the answer which is most true of you for every question.

(All: 1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Uncertain 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree)

It is ok to fight to protect your friends.

Sharing test question answers is just a way of helping your friends.

Damaging some property is no big deal when you consider that others are beating people up.

If people are living under bad conditions, they cannot be blamed for behaving aggressively.

A member of a group or team should not be blamed for the trouble the team caused.

Some people deserve to be treated like animals.

It's ok to steal to take care of your family's needs.

Talking about people behind their backs is just part of the game.

Stealing some money is not too serious compared to those who steal a lot of money.

People don't mind being teased because it shows interest in them.

If someone leaves something lying around, it's their own fault if it gets stolen.

It is ok to pick on an unimportant little person.

It's ok to attack someone who threatens your family's honour.

Looking at a friend's work without permission is just "borrowing it".

If someone is pressured into doing something, they shouldn't be blamed for it.

If a group decides to do something harmful, it is unfair to blame any one member of the group.

Teasing someone does not really hurt them.

People who are treated badly have usually done things to deserve it.

Someone who is annoying does not deserve to be treated like a human being.

Compared to other illegal things people do, taking some things from a store without paying for them is not very serious.

People cannot be blamed for misbehaving if their friends pressured them to do it.

You can't blame a person who plays only a small part in the harm caused by a group.

Insults don't really hurt anyone.

People are not at fault for misbehaving at work if their managers treat them badly.

It's ok to hurt someone who threatens my group.

Sometimes you have to show other groups who's in charge.

The way you treat people in other groups is no worse than how they would treat you.

If a more senior member of my group tells me to hurt someone outside of our group, I do what I'm told and that isn't my fault.

If your group has to retaliate against another group you shouldn't be blamed as an individual for what the whole group has done.

People who join groups other than yours don't deserve your respect

It's ok to steal from another group if you're doing it to help your own group out.

Sometimes people get done in, but it doesn't concern me if they're not associated with me.

Me beating someone (from another group) is ok, since the police won't do anything to set things right.

Sometimes you've got to bang someone out to get respect, especially from people outside of your group.

The government doesn't put enough money into giving young people support and protection, we have to protect ourselves.

People in other groups deserve to be treated like animals.

If another group comes after your group, you've got to sort it because the police won't help people like you anyway, and someone has to even things out.

Standing up to other groups is just a part of life where I live.

If an older member of my group tells me to take something from our rivals, I've got to do it.

If my group is fighting another group, and one of the other guys gets stabbed, that isn't my fault.

People getting hurt is just part of life, everyone knows it.

If someone messes with my group they're asking for trouble.

Punching a rival group member is not as bad as punching someone who doesn't belong to a group.

Even though we get into trouble, my group has more respect than other groups.

If I don't act a certain way towards other groups, the leader of my group will make sure I get what's coming to me.

Even if I know that my group is going to do something to another group, I am not responsible for it.

It isn't really hurting anyone outside of the groups if my group has beef with another group.

In my neighbourhood you have no choice but to join a group and do what they expect of you.

WARNING: The scale for this measure is reversed, 1 now means strongly agree, etc.

(All: 1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree)

Swearing is worse for a girl than for a boy.

On a date, the boy should be expected to pay.

On average, girls are as smart as boys.

More encouragement in a family should be given to sons than daughters to go to school.

It is alright for a girl to want to play rough sports, like rugby.

In general, the father should have more authority than the mother in making family decisions.

It is alright for a girl to ask a boy out on a date.

It is more important for boys than girls to do well in school.

If both husband and wife have jobs, the husband should do a share of the housework such as washing dishes and doing the laundry.

Boys are better leaders than girls.

Girls should be more concerned with becoming good wives and mothers than having a professional or business career.

Girls should have the same freedoms as boys.

WARNING: The scales now switch back to as they were

(All: 1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Uncertain 4. Agree 5. Strongly agree)

Girls should listen to what their men say, they know what's best for them.

Women who don't respect men should get what's coming to them.

Even if I don't respect girls as much as boys, at least I treat them better than other guys do.

If someone I respect tells me to control my girl, I have to show that I can.

I can't be held responsible for how people treat girls.

It makes sense for a girl to settle her man's debt because she's his.

If a man thinks his woman is being unfaithful, he is right to punish her.

Sometimes I go a bit overboard around girls, but that's what happens when you're passionate.

Sometimes I might act out towards girls, but nowhere near as bad as what others do.

Stopping to ask for consent ruins the mood, it's a given that you can just go ahead once you get to a certain point.

It isn't a boy's fault for having sex with a girl if she comes on to him.

Girls don't feel or understand things the way men do.

Once a girl has had a man's child, she shouldn't leave him and break up the family, even if she wants to.

Just because a girl isn't in the mood doesn't mean a man should have to go without sex.

I'm expected to get respect from women, I shouldn't be blamed for doing what I need to get that respect.

If everyone's had a turn with a girl, there's nothing wrong with me having a go too.

Girls like being whistled at.

If a girl dresses a certain way, she's asking for it.

Some girls are slags and deserve to be treated as such.

Even if it can be tough for girls to hang around guys, girls are better off in groups where at least they're protected.

It's not my fault for treating a girl the way I was brought up to treat them.

Everyone has sex with drunk girls.

Girls that get involved in rough crowds know what they're getting into.

The way I treat girls is a result of how I grew up, and I can't change that.

Thank you for completing this survey!

Appendix 3.F. Debrief

Debriefing

You've reached the end of the study! Thank you for taking part. If you have any questions, concerns or wish to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at msxmfd@nottingham.ac.uk. If you do not have an e-mail address, you can ask your YOT/YOS worker to get in touch with the researcher for you.

If you would like to know your results, this is your last opportunity to tell the researcher before your survey is completely anonymised. This means that any identifying information, such as your name or your case manager's name, will be blacked out. Your survey will then be securely stored and picked up, in person, by the researcher. The researcher will store all surveys securely for seven years, after which they will be destroyed unless needed for review. The researcher will also be entering your answers into a software and comparing trends across groups. As you were told before, no matter which group you belong to, your responses are completely anonymous and untraceable.

While it is not unusual for young offenders to commit crimes in groups, not much is known about gangs in the UK. As young people are most likely to be involved in gangs, your answers about your groups, friendships, and yourself, can give us valuable insight, even if you do not belong to a gang.

Taking part in this research does not necessarily mean you are in a gang or that your YOT/YOS thinks you are, but some young people might be. Your answers to the first part of this study will be used to look at the types of groups you are involved with, but the analysed results will only be linked back to you if you have requested to know your results.

Remember the term “moral disengagement”? It is when morals are not applied to certain behaviours or in certain situations. The scales you completed measured general moral disengagement, moral disengagement towards out-groups, attitudes towards women, moral disengagement towards women, and collective (group) moral disengagement. By looking at the scores from young offenders and establishing norms, we can see if young people that spend time in a particular group, such as a gang, differ from other young offenders.

We hope to use this to improve the way various organisations, laws and policies deal with young offenders both in and out of gangs.

Thank you again for your participation.

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