

Young People and Social Capital: An Exploration

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Abstract

Drawing on a critical realist approach and especially Derek Layder's 'Domain Theory' (Layder 1997; 2006) this thesis explores the richness and complexity of young people's social capital. The study used a mixed methods design which incorporated sequential and concurrent data collection and analysis comprising 16 in-depth interviews, 17 discussion groups and a survey questionnaire (n=500). Twenty one organisations participated in this study, accessed through youth groups, the youth justice system, one school and one college from the Midlands area, in the 13-19 age range. The total sample using all research methods was 574 young people.

Young people's maintenance and enhancement of social capital is seen as a process which has to be negotiated in a continuous interaction between self, situated activity, social settings and contexts. Within this, critical creative agency, a positive outlook on life and being able to make the leap of trust become agentic mediating factors which help young people to navigate life situations and take the necessary risks to develop a more dynamic social capital.

The study challenges some common discourses on diversity, especially those referring to bonding and bridging social capital (Putnam 2000). Contexts of privilege but also of gender and ethnicity are important mechanisms that have a strong impact on the access to social capital resources and points towards the resiliency young people are able to build.

Policy and practice need to build on the situated activity of young people and not erode it. Enhancing young people's existing social capital is achieved by building on their existing resourcefulness, strengthening their existing support networks, opening up new horizons and creating access to new resources within a strength perspective. Institutions need to enhance resiliency and positive risk taking, nurture trusting relationships with significant others and enhance young people's outlook on life.

I dedicate this thesis to my parents and my sister, who always have been there for me with their generosity. They taught me to be curious, analytical and question the taken for granted.

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Glossary

Bonding and Bridging Social Capital:

Bonding social capital refers to inward-looking bonds, focusing on relationships and networks of trust and reciprocity that reinforce ties within groups. Bridging social capital is concerned with outward-looking connections amongst heterogeneous groups. It has been argued that bonding social capital is good for 'getting by', but bridging networks are crucial for 'getting ahead'.

Community Cohesion:

The broad definition is that a **cohesive community** is one where:

- There is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities
- The diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued
- Those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities
- Strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds in the workplace, in schools and within neighbourhoods. (Adapted from: Commission on Integration and Cohesion, 2007: 'Our Shared Future').

YIPs: Youth Inclusion Programmes established in 2000, are tailor-made programmes for 8 to 17-year-olds, who are identified as being at high risk of involvement in offending or anti-social behaviour.

YOTs: Youth Offending Teams incorporate representatives from a wide range of services. There is a YOT in every local authority in England and Wales. They are made up of representatives from the police, Probation Service, social services, health, education, drugs and alcohol misuse and housing officers. Each YOT is managed by a YOT manager who is responsible for co-ordinating the work of the youth justice services.

YISPs: Youth Inclusion and Support Panels aim to prevent anti-social behaviour and offending by 8 to 13-year-olds who are considered to be at high risk of offending. Panels are made up of a number of representatives of different agencies (e.g. police, schools, health and social services). The main emphasis of a panel's work is to ensure that children and their families, at the earliest possible opportunity, can access mainstream public services.

Chapter 1: Setting the Scene

Research on young people and social capital emerges out of a growing need for wide-ranging discussions about the increasingly polarised life chances of different sub-populations of young people and the extent to which public policy and youth policy may address different manifestations of disadvantage, discrimination and poverty (Williamson 2007). Coming from a youth work background, being involved in policy development and teaching youth and community workers, this thesis hopes to contribute to three salient debates around social capital which have emerged in recent years – the ontological, the policy orientated and the practice orientated. Academic exploration around Bourdieu's (1986), Putnam's (2000), Coleman's (1997) paradigms of social capital have been proliferating within the academic community, coming from different disciplines and varying perspectives (Baron et al. 2001; Forbes and Wainwright 2001; Muntaner et al. 2000; Woolcock 1998). Whilst the study of social capital traditionally has strongly focused on adults, in recent years there has been a growing concern that the insights gained from this research are not necessarily applicable to young people's experiences (Leonard 2005).

This study takes into account that young people's lives in late modernity are complex and the understanding of 'youth' as a stage in life course has provided new opportunities to capture and understand this (France 2009). This complexity is marked by a range of social, cultural and economic risks that make contemporary life for young people particularly challenging, and many of them are beyond their ability to influence and control (Furlong and Cartmel 2007). The modern young citizen constructs a biography in ways that do not correspond any more to the familiar sequences of the 'industrial' life-course of the twentieth century (Threadgold and Nilan 2003). Heavy targeting of young people by corporate businesses and the resultant

consumerism on their part, makes possible new ways for young people to constitute themselves within a “fluidity of opportunities and moments of consumption [...] producing all manner of indeterminate domains and possibilities of identity for young people” (Vaughan 2005: 181). Young people have to navigate the problems of contradiction between positions, possible identities and identifications and the access to, and possession and maintenance of, various forms of capital: economic, cultural and social (Walkerdine 2003).

Within a fluidity and fragmentation of social structures, scholars (MacDonald et al. 2005; Furlong and Cartmel 2007; Green and Owen 2006) highlight the continuing sociological relevance of class, gender and place in understanding the lived experience of young people. Christakis and Fowler (2010), whilst agreeing with an analysis which looks at structure and agency, argue that within this analysis, there is a third factor missing from the debate: “to know who we are, we must understand how we are connected” (p. Xiii).

MacDonald et al. (2005) found that social networks of young people proved indispensable to “negotiate the wreckage of the collapsed ‘economic scaffolding’ that previously enabled transitions to a stable, working-class, adult life” (p.885). Recent network analysis (Christakis and Fowler 2010) has highlighted that the key to understanding people is understanding the ties between them. They have established that there are fundamental rules that govern both the formation and operation of social networks. As such, they have observed that we do not only shape our networks, but also our networks shape us and that social networks tend to magnify whatever they are seeded with.

Networks of family, kin and peers emerge as important aspects of the analysis of youth and youth transitions. However these networks quite often are forged within localities and communities with their own dynamics and within economic, social, political and cultural contexts. This study is concerned with examining some of these aspects and their relationship to

and impact on young people's lives. The emergence of the concept of social capital has expanded on the insights derived from network analysis by focusing on the reciprocities which arise from the networks and the value of these for achieving mutual goals (Baron et al. 2001). As a result, social capital is seen as a set of relationships and interactions that have the potential to be transformative (Weller 2006; Weller and Bruegel 2009).

Policy Responses

The question of improving young people's social networking, life chances and participation in civil society – the development of their social capital – can be observed within the current trend of politics and policy being framed around the notions of individual choice, and the (re)integration of young people into normative social structures. Within this broader perspective, the inclusion of young people in decision-making and organisational structures has been one of the central themes of policy on children and young people (see Every Child Matters, DfES 2003). The current government aims to encourage young people to take an active role in their communities through the introduction of a National Citizen Service and an International Citizen Service. These two youth volunteering schemes are part of the government's drive to create a big society, based primarily upon volunteering and civil engagement (Mycock and Tonge 2011). The Big Society emerged as a response to a view that we are living in 'Broken Britain' and "aims to mend 'societally broken' Britain by nurturing people's altruism, generosity of time and spirit, and sense of agency to change the things they feel most strongly about" (Evans 2011: 165).

Scholars (Hodgson 2004; Kelly 2001; Kemshall 2002a, 2002b) warn of normative and integrationist policies, which seek to 'manufacture' the civil society through 'techniques of social regulation'. Observable are two inherent trends: on an individual level enabling individuals to develop as citizens and at a community level through risk prevention and encouraging young people

to take an active interest in their communities. This has led to discourses of responsabilisation which are heavily prevalent in debates about young people (Muncie 2004).

These discourses tend to see transitions and pathways as individually framed, experienced and negotiated. As 'agents', individuals are seen as shapers of their own worlds, making well-informed strategic choices (Kemshall 2002b; Rose 1996) and are constructed as the active, autonomous and responsible entrepreneurs of their DIY projects of the self (Kelly 2001). This increased individualisation (Mitchell et al. 2001, 2000; Giddens 1998a, 1998b; Kemshall 2002a, 2002b) not only is a marker of late modernity, but also is manifest in policy and in young people's perceptions of their own lives. British young people do appear to be optimistic about their chances in life (Thomson et al. 2002), thus creating a mismatch with the restrictions they may actually face as a result of their social and economic background. Furlong and Cartmel (2007) have pointed to an 'epistemological fallacy' where young people make sense of social inequalities in terms of personal failings and Evans (2002), has illustrated a particularly British orientation towards opportunity and success, which is characterised by a highly individualised attribution of failure. These policy perspectives fail to appreciate that 'individuals can react quite differently to apparently similar events and that this reaction is not fixed, clear or predictable' (MacDonald and Marsh 2001: 383).

From a social policy perspective some scholars (in Franklin 2004) would argue that the 'social capital' approach to social policy has focused mainly on improving individual behaviour and encouraging social responsibility. The concern is that a focus on changing people's behaviour through participation and integration rather than redistribution, perpetuates rather than challenges the unequal balance of society (Baron 2004).

Practice Implications

The third dimension of this study focuses on how practitioners can work with young people to enhance their social capital and develop networks that can enable them to 'get on' in life. For practitioners, a focus on social capital as a resource and as the social context within which people negotiate everyday life would involve paying attention to community and locale, peers, networks, and the social resources to which young people have access. This moves away from an individualist explanation of youth transition – prevalent in youth policy and interventions – acknowledging that actions and choices made by young people are not completely open and free. Choices are often constrained by a practical knowledge and understanding of what is possible – a knowledge and understanding that is clearly mediated by locality, gender, class and ethnicity (Raffo and Reeves 2000; MacDonald and Marsh 2001).

This study is located within a youth work perspective which advocates for the need to consider issues such as relations between people and in particular the elimination of institutionalised domination and oppression (Young 1990). In the same vein, Ginwright and Cammarota (2002) propose a model within the field of youth development work, which shifts the attention from individual and psychological frameworks to a contextual lens which focuses on larger socio-political and economic factors that contribute to everyday youth struggles. Poverty and economic marginality experienced by young people is not necessarily a *direct* product of their social networks and cultural practices (MacDonald et al. 2005). However, there needs to be a recognition that social capital is a social resource that can give access to opportunities, education and the labour market (Edwards et al. 2003) and can lead to collective efficacy which may work to influence children's and young people's well-being (Morrow 2002b). Trajectories through life are a matter of negotiation and the interaction of structure and agency is seen as central to understanding this process (EGRIS 2001). Therefore, an exploration and

greater understanding of practical ways to enhance social capital in young people's lives is needed.

Conclusion

This introductory chapter sets the scene for this study. It stems from a concern to understand how young people navigate life, in the light of a growing fluidity and fragmentation of social structures, and the impact this has on the enhancement of social capital. The way we are connected and the resources stemming from this is an essential step in creating a more just society with clear implications for youth policies and practice implications. Within this it has been asserted that social capital has an impact on young people's aspirations and intentions in education, training and the labour market. To contribute to this emerging field of study, this research was designed to explore social capital in an innovative way through a mixed methods design, with a commitment to listening to young people and understanding their experiences.

The Structure of the Thesis

The thesis is organised into ten chapters including this one. Chapter one sets the scene for this study. It locates the thesis within a wider concern to understand the complexities of young people's lives and its policy and practice implications. It also gives a statement of the originality of this study. Chapter two is a conceptual chapter and outlines Coleman's, Bourdieu's and Putnam's work as the underpinnings of the social capital theory. The chapter explores the different types of social capital and their impact on the access to different kinds of resources. The chapter also considers the concept of trust and its relevance to the social capital debate.

Chapter three focuses on how social capital has been explored in youth studies. The chapter gives special attention to some of the different aspects of social capital, such as networks, localities, access to resources and outlook on life and locates the discussion firmly within youth perspectives. The chapter concludes with the formulation of my own definition, the rationale for the study and the research questions.

In chapter four, I introduce my own research paradigm and the relevant ontological and epistemological considerations. A critical realist approach and especially Layder's 'Domain Theory' are outlined. The chapter concludes by giving an overview of the research design of this study and concludes by presenting the methods which have been employed for this study.

Chapters five, six and seven deal with the methodology in practice, the research process and the analysis. These chapters draw on the theoretical considerations of the previous chapters and show how these were applied within the study. Chapter five is a reflection on the research process with a strong emphasis on the ethical considerations and how they were dealt with throughout the research. It includes the demographic profile of the participants in the qualitative and quantitative component of this mixed

methods study and takes the reader through each of the steps within the two phases of the research process.

Chapter six presents the stages of data analysis in which data sets are integrated in the data analysis. Chapters seven and eight present the empirical data collected as part of the thesis. These chapters are organised by drawing on Layder's Domain Theory. Chapter seven focuses on social capital as situated activity and young people's subjective perception of agency. Chapter eight focuses on the interaction between the different domains, and its impact on the formation and enhancement of social capital.

Chapter nine draws together the findings and discusses them in relation to the theoretical insights explored in chapters one to four. This chapter presents the original contribution to knowledge proposed in this thesis by drawing on the work of Layder. The discussion locates the findings within the different domains and discusses the interaction between these. Exploring young people's agency, it introduces the concept of 'critical creative agency' and 'dynamic and static' social capital. It also highlights the need to take account of contextual factors when considering young people's social capital. Importantly, it challenges some common discourses on diversity and highlights the importance of young people's interpretation of trust. The final chapter ten presents the conclusions to the research, highlights some of its limitations and makes suggestions for further research in this field.

Statement of Originality

This thesis was conducted within an ESRC funded 4 year research network "Pathways into and out of Crime for Young People: Risk, Resilience and Diversity". Grant number: L330253001. The De Montfort University team consisted of Hazel Kemshall, Jennie Fleming and the author of this thesis who was employed as a research fellow.

The main purpose of the ESRC funded study was to investigate “**Social capital and its impact on risk, protection and resilience in young people**”. It focused on the relationship between social capital and young people’s navigation of risk pathways, and the role social capital may play in young people’s risk decision making and their resilience to risky pathways. The research was not concerned with whether social capital can act as a cause of criminal activities, but with how different types of social capital might influence the pathways into and out of crime and the types of risks young people may take or successfully avoid.

The key findings from the research highlighted that different types of social capital are linked to young people’s navigation of risk pathways. These types of social capital play a key part in young people’s lives; not only in terms of their well being but also in the creation of new opportunities. The key findings of the project were:

- The relationship between social capital and pathway is important but the type of social capital is crucial. Different types of social capital have different effects on pathways
 - Social capital is a resource for resilience and the avoidance of crime risks (and potential negative risks)
 - Diverse networks and bridging social capital are important resources for young people in navigating life transitions and risks. Networks function as both potentially a risk and resilience factor depending on the type of social capital they are embedded in
- The types of trust young people develop with their peers and adults are an important resource for young people in navigating life transitions and risks
- Young offenders tend to be characterised by a fatalistic outlook on life and to risk

During the research process of the ESRC funded project, the team was very careful to distinguish the contribution of the different members and also to distinguish the ESRC funded project from the study for the thesis. In order to keep a clear record of this, all the team meetings were recorded for transparency and as evidence. It was also very clear from the start, that the focus on risk pathways was Hazel Kemshall's domain of expertise, whilst social capital was my own expertise and an area which I had already worked in a previous project.

I have only used in this thesis the discussion groups and interviews which I personally conducted and the access to the different organisations for the qualitative and quantitative data was negotiated by me. The qualitative data of the ESRC funded project was analysed using NUDIST QSR 6 and the quantitative data was analysed using SPSS, according to standard practice for establishing bivariate correlations (Boeck et al. 2006). For the thesis I reanalysed the whole data set, shifting my focus away from 'risk and pathway into and out of crime' to a more general exploration of social capital in young people's lives. I used NVIVO 8 for the qualitative data analysis and the SPSS analysis focused on 'factor analysis' and 'cluster analysis'. This reanalysis threw new light onto the previous analysis and applied more systematically the research framework developed by Layder (2006), which has been applied systematically throughout this piece of research. The analysis and discussion of these findings therefore present new insights and are not a repetition of the findings from the ESRC funded project.

Therefore, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the work presented in this thesis is original, except as acknowledged in the text, and the material has not been submitted, either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other University. I have acknowledged in the relevant places the use of material from several published papers of my authorship which formed a part of this research.

Chapter 2: Social Capital

Introduction

Much has been written about social capital in recent years and it has influenced academic thought, policy development and practice. Explorations around social capital have been proliferating within the academic community, coming from different disciplines and varying perspectives. It now assumes a wide variety of meanings and has been cited in a rapidly increasing number of social, political and economic studies (Castiglione et al. 2008; Baron et al. 2001; Forbes and Wainwright 2001; Muntaner et al. 2000; Woolcock 1998). Whilst the concept has been used widely and has the 'ability' to be applied to many different disciplines, there remains the fact that the exact meaning of the concept is still "hotly disputed, and its utility in the scientific discourse remains contested" (Castiglione et al. 2008: 1).

A common saying which to a certain extent sums up much of the conventional usage and wisdom regarding social capital is: 'It's not what you know, it's who you know' (Woolcock 2001). However, whilst social capital is contingent on social networks, it should not be treated as equivalent or interchangeable with social networks (Lin 2008). This insight is especially relevant for a study which is not only concerned with theoretical explorations, but also concrete applications of the concept. For example, many policy makers and practitioners tend to stress the importance of developing strong individual or community networks. Warren (2008) critically asserts that "if by *social capital* we simply mean that participation in social groups and networks can have positive consequences for individuals and society, there is nothing very new about the idea" (p.124). In this chapter I will explore some of the salient thoughts around the concept of social capital within social sciences.

Seminal Perspectives: Bourdieu, Coleman and Putnam

As a starting point for this section, I would like to stress that most definitions revolve around the notion of social networks, the reciprocities that arise from them, and the value of these for achieving personal mutual goals (Baron et al.2001). However, the weight given to these different elements and their significance for people's lives vary within the different approaches.

Whilst there is no argument against the vital contributions that Coleman (1988, 1994), Bourdieu (1977, 1984, 1997) and Putnam (1999, 2000) have made, it is important to recognize that social capital theory, as any theory, has developed due to a range of scholars' efforts. Woolcock (1998) traces the origins of social capital back as early as 1961 to Jane Jacobs:

“...the following passage from Jacobs seems to be the earliest: ‘Networks are a city's irreplaceable social capital. Whenever the capital is lost, from whatever cause, the income from it disappears, never to return until and unless new capital is slowly and chancily accumulated’ Jane Jacobs, *The Life and Death of Great American Cities* (New York: Random House, 1961: 138)” (in Woolcock 1998: 192).

I will first outline the contributions of Bourdieu's (1977, 1986), Coleman's (1988, 1994) and Putnam's (1993, 2000, 2002) work as the underpinnings or canon of the theory (Schaefer-McDaniel 2004; Fine 2001; Bassani 2007; Castiglione et al. 2008) and look at some key aspects of each of their explorations around social capital. Their work constitutes in-depth theorisation and has been used as the foundation for many empirical studies.

Pierre Bourdieu

Bourdieu defines social capital as “the sum of resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by the virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition” (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992: 119). Social capital is seen

as an asset and a resource and he explores this by focusing on the ways in which members of professional groups secure their position (and that of their children). For Bourdieu (1997), the amount of social capital which an individual possesses depends not only on the size of the network of connections, but also on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed by each of those people to which he or she is connected. Thus the amount and weight people draw from these different capitals determines their positions within society.

These positions are acquired through the productive and active investment of individuals in social relations within specific groups or categories (Van Deth 2008: 151, Warren 2008: 124). Distinctive to Bourdieu's definition of the concept is that he sees social capital as a resource that requires active investment. "It is the product of an endless effort [...] in order to produce and reproduce lasting, useful relationships that can secure material or symbolic profits" (Bourdieu 1997: 52). The profits which stem from membership in a group are the basis of the solidarity "aimed at establishing or reproducing social relationships that are directly usable in the short or long term". Because these relationships mobilise the economic and cultural capital of the individuals within these networks, they can also become a means to maintain power positions within society. Thus Bourdieu's contribution to social capital is important because it highlights that social capital can function to reproduce inequality (Fram 2004).

Social capital, in Bourdieu's work, is not treated in isolation and is part of a wider analysis of the diverse foundations of the social order. Within this, social, economic and cultural capital are seen as the three main ways in which resources can be accumulated in order to give a head start to individuals in society (Castiglione et al. 2008: 3). Focusing on the maintenance and persistence of social class and other forms of inequalities, social capital is used within Bourdieu's work to explain differential class positions resulting from social connections (Warren 2008: 124). Bourdieu

develops the concept of economic, cultural and social capital as interconnected and as real entities: “the overall volume of capital, understood as the set of actually useable resources and powers – economic capital, cultural capital and also social capital” (Bourdieu 1984: 114). According to Bourdieu we do draw in life not only from the assets gained through our economic capital, but also from the cultural and social capital.

Considering aspects of inequality, Bourdieu also looks at the context within which these inequalities are reproduced. He theorises this through the concepts of 'habitus' and 'field'. Bourdieu explained this in an accessible way by using the metaphor of a fish in water:

"Social reality exists, so to speak, twice, in things and in minds, in fields and in habitus, outside and inside social agents. And when habitus encounters a social world of which it is the product, it is like a 'fish in water': it does not feel the weight of the water and it takes the world about itself for granted. [...] It is because this world has produced me, because it has produced the categories of thought that I apply to it that it appears to me as self-evident" (Forbes and Wainwright 2001: 805).

His formulation of 'habitus' (Bourdieu 1977), which is defined in terms of situational agency, sheds light on the person in environment (or 'field'). Habitus refers to socially acquired and culturally embodied 'systems of durable, *transposable* dispositions' (Bourdieu 1977: 72). He acknowledges contextual constraints, which are not only due to structural factors, but also include behaviours and practices of privilege. The lived environment becomes the context in which the individuals can either explore or negotiate new fields and develop new forms of social capital, or the context which restricts this exploration and negotiation. Whilst attributing strength and influence to the field within which individuals act, there is also space for individual agency, change and progress (Bourdieu 1993). Bourdieu's (1998) views on social capital as being generated by the particular strategies people adopt to pursue their goals and significant relationships with social others, is especially relevant within this.

Bourdieu's theoretical framework seems appropriate when trying to capture within research elements such as conflict and power (Arneil 2007). His work acknowledges the inter-relationship between social capital and wider structural factors in society. Thus, he has influenced researchers in questioning how underlying issues of race, class and gender influence individuals' social capital and the diverse ways they utilise this as a social resource in their everyday lives (Holland 2007). Within youth research, this distances itself from a normative and value laden approach, which treats young people as threats to civil society, or as passive consumers of civic life (Ginwright et al. 2005). As a result, social capital is seen as a resource that can give access to opportunities, education and the labour market and can lead to collective efficacy (Franklin 2004). This is embedded within a critical awareness of the systems and institutions that promote or hinder progress toward social equality and respect for human dignity (Ginwright et al. 2005) and an understanding that social capital does not only create opportunities, but also can close them off (Tonkiss 2004).

Whilst Bourdieu's approach has much to contribute to the exploration of social capital, Field argues that his theory seems to be rooted in "a relatively static model of social hierarchy" (Field 2008: 20). Bourdieu's work emphasises too much the 'individualistic' side of social capital, stressing that privileged individuals maintain their position by using their connections with other privileged people in order to maintain their superiority, and associational life. "Bourdieu's usage of the concept [...] virtually allows only for a dark side for the oppressed, and a bright side for the privileged" (Field 2008: 31). It is problematic to see social capital as only the property of elites and it does not deal with the more open and loose social relationships of late modernity especially prevalent in young people's lives (France 2009).

Recognising the important contribution and insight Bourdieu makes to the study of social capital, it is also important to note that Bourdieu's notion of

habitus does not explain adequately how social change can be promoted (Bohman 2000). Promoting social change is partly driven by critical and transformative agents. This calls for “socially and culturally situated agents to reflect upon their social conditions, criticize them, and articulate new interpretations of them” (Bohman 2000: 145). Within Bourdieu’s theorisation of habitus, this critical reflexivity is the property of a professional elite, the sociologist or the theorist. If social capital is the property of elites and if there is no room for non-professional critical and transformative agency it is not clear where the general resources for progressive social change would come from (Bohman 2000). This critical assessment is especially pertinent when considering the agency of young people and whether they have the capacity to be active agents in the transformation of their own lives. Alternative conceptualisations of agency will be needed. I will explore these in chapter four.

James Coleman

Coleman’s notion of social capital provides a framework for his view that social relations are a resource. Coleman defines social capital as:

“the set of resources that inhere in family relations and in community social organisations and that are useful of the cognitive or social development of a child or young person. These resources differ for different persons and can constitute an important advantage for children and adolescents in the development of their human capital” (Coleman 1994: 300).

Within this, it is not the children who possess higher or lower levels of social capital, rather it is inherent in family and community relations. In relation to children’s development, he defines social capital as “...the norms, the social networks, and the relationships between adults and children that are of value for the child’s growing up. Social capital exists within the family, but also outside the family, in the community” (Coleman 1994: 334). Social capital is important as a resource not only to acquire status or credentials (as seen by Bourdieu), but also in the enhancement of children’s human capital, i.e. the

cognitive development of children and the evolution of a secure self identity. For Coleman, this is facilitated within the family and as such the family becomes the “archetypal cradle of social capital” (Field 2008: 29).

Coleman was concerned with understanding the basis of social order by seeking to develop an interdisciplinary social science that could draw on both economics and sociology (Field 2008). His main contributions lay in sociology theory – including the analysis of social change, collective action and rational choice – the sociology of education and public policy. Whilst rational choice theory is based on a highly individualistic model of human behaviour with a belief that all behaviour results from individuals pursuing their own interests, Coleman pursues a middle way between rational choice perspective and a social norm perspective. Social capital becomes a way to reconcile individual action and social structure, normative-driven and self interested behaviour in social analysis (Castiglione et al. 2008: p.3). As such, the concept of social capital was for Coleman a means of explaining how people manage to cooperate (Coalter 2008), even when – according to rational choice theory – “their immediate interests seem best served by competition” (Field 2008: 24).

Like Bourdieu, Coleman acknowledges structural aspects which have an impact on social capital and in his empirical studies, he focuses on the relationships between social inequality and children’s academic achievement in schools. The “Coleman Report” (Coleman et al. 1966) found that family and community background characteristics tended to outweigh factors related to the nature of the school itself. In contrast to Bourdieu’s point of view, Coleman has shown in his studies of education that social capital was not limited only to the powerful, but also gives real benefits to poor and marginalised communities.

“Social capital, according to Coleman represents a resource because it involves the expectation of reciprocity, and goes beyond any given individual to involve wider networks whose relationships are governed by a high degree of trust and shared values” (Field 2008: 23).

Coleman (1988) argues that closure of networks gives strength to social capital. This closure creates trustworthiness in a social environment, helping to establish obligations and expectations between actors. As such, collective sanctions can also be applied, which in turn secure trustworthiness. Whilst the family is seen as a 'primordial social organisation', the church is seen as a 'constructed form of social organisation' which is important to promote closure of networks and is the space where "social capital of an adult community is available to children and youth" (Coleman 1990: 336). Important to note here is, that social capital is not seen as part of the domain of young people, but of adults who pass it to young people.

Coleman's definition of social capital bridges both the individual and the collective and this is important for my own study. He views social capital as "a capital asset for the individual" but saw it as built up of "social structural resources" (Coleman 1994: 302). As such, he stresses structural aspects and defines social capital by its function, facilitating actions within structures. (Coleman 1994). Within this structural approach, normative or cultural elements such as the held obligations and the trustworthiness of the social environment, are crucial factors in order to facilitate a sense of mutual return, i.e. reciprocity, and thus produce returns for individuals.

Coleman's formulation of social capital is criticised for not reflecting the reality of contemporary family life or the agency of young people (Leonard 2008; Hammer 2003; Seaman and Sweeting 2004). Also, a view that shared norms of trust and cooperation are a means of overcoming the collective action problems does not acknowledge that "if a community is driven by conflicting interests, the nature and meaning of social capital becomes more complicated" (Evans 1996: 1127). How this is especially relevant in young people's lives will be explored in chapter four.

Putnam

Putnam defines social capital as the “connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them” (Putnam 2000: 19). Since his publication ‘Bowling Alone’, Putnam (2000) has been seen as the most widely recognised proponent of social capital. He has established the concept firmly in the academic and public discourse and has been widely discussed and adapted within social policy development. “He was able to harness it firmly to a number of powerful normative and analytic traditions of political interpretation, such as Tocqueville’s analysis of American democracy, classical civic republicanism, the 1960’s studies of ‘civic culture’, and the emergent literature on communitarianism” (Castiglione et al. 2008: 4). Putnam was concerned about the demise of associational life in America, especially drawing on the writings of Alexis Tocqueville, for whom voluntary associations and civic involvement was an important function of social order and the active creation of social trust and moral obligations (Baron et al. 2001). Thus, Putnam (2000) sees social capital as a concept to explain what makes societies both efficient and cohesive.

Putnam has been especially influential in highlighting the distinction between different types of social capital: ‘bonding’ and ‘bridging’ (see also Gittell and Vidal 1998; Schuller et al. 2000; Evans and Syrett 2007). This draws on Granovetter’s (1973, 1983) work on “strong” and “weak” ties:

“...individuals with few weak ties will be deprived of information from distant parts of the social system and will be confined to the provincial news and views of their close friends. This deprivation will not only insulate them from the latest ideas and fashions but may put them in a disadvantaged position in the labour market” (Granovetter 1983: 202).

Putman (2000) considers the distinction between bridging and bonding to be of crucial importance, referring to bridging as exclusive networks and bonding as inclusive networks. It is within this distinction where he argues that social capital aids access to resources. Bonding social capital resides in family and

friendship relationships, and peer groups that provide a sense of belonging in the 'here and now'. Bridging social capital is, as it sounds, about creating links with people outside of immediate family and friendship circles. These networks can be very important for broadening people's opportunities and horizons. He not only states the difference, but also highlights what he considers to be some of their consequences: "Bonding social capital is... good for 'getting by' but bridging social capital is crucial for 'getting ahead'" (Putnam 2000: 23). Thus, bridging social capital is seen to generate broader identities and reciprocity, whereas bonding social capital bolsters our narrower selves.

In contrast to Bourdieu and Coleman who are sociologists, Putnam's background lies in political science, and as such he is concerned that the loss of civic engagement and social interaction is not only troublesome with regard to social cohesion, but also in terms of its political consequences (Stolle and Hooghe 2005), especially in undermining political stability (Flanagan 2003). The disciplinary difference between the three scholars is an important aspect which needs to be recognised. Whilst on one hand, as I have highlighted in the previous paragraphs, Bourdieu and Coleman are interested in how structural aspects are related to social inequalities, Putnam's concern is about the state of democracy and community, which does not necessarily mean that he does not take into account aspects of inequalities. Putnam's studies look at the interrelationships between government and civil society and emphasises the importance of fostering norms of reciprocity and trust.

As a critique, Muntaner and Lynch (2000) argue that Putnam's construct of social capital is mainly informed by a psychological and communitarian perspective (see Etzioni 1995). Within this perspective, order, stability and cooperation largely depend on learned and shared norms and values. The social capital of communities is seen as crucial in establishing relevant norms, values and roles which respectively contribute to social stability,

economic development and cohesion (Boeck and Fleming 2005). This perspective, which is mainly held by Putnam, is criticised as “too society-centred, undervaluing state agency and associated political factors” (Lowndes and Wilson 2001: 629). In terms of using this perspective as an analytical device, Leadbeater (1999) asserts that it has strong normative connotations with an implicit assumption that trusting relationships are good for social cohesion and for economic success. The concern is that a policy agenda, which seeks to enhance social capital within this perspective, might impose subtle ways of regulating young people and their communities aiming to achieve harmony and integration in society. The emphasis on social capital from this communitarian perspective could become part of that subtle regulation (Green 2002).

Further explorations

It can be argued that all the three main exponents, Bourdieu, Coleman and Putnam, are based on the conceptualisation of social capital as covering both structural and cultural aspects (Van Deth 2008). The structural aspects are about the connections between people and the different networks which arise from them and the cultural aspects are about the obligations, or social norms and values, especially trust.

“Based on this broad characterisation of structural and cultural aspects, social capital is principally understood as a form of capital; that is, social capital is considered as ‘accumulated wealth’ or a ‘fund’ that requires an investment in order to obtain some future benefit” (Van Deth 2008: 151).

Social capital works to provide returns because “social relations can provide the antecedents of cooperation, through which individuals’ resources are complemented, combined, and multiplied to mutual benefit” (Warren 2008: 124). Lin (2008) makes the distinction between accessed and mobilized social capital. The accessed social capital can be conceived as the pool of resources embedded in one’s social networks. The mobilised social capital is

conceived as the actual use of resources and the further production of social capital.

When using such a complex concept, it is also important to ask what the effects of social capital are and where they have been identified.

“In politics its effects have been in encouraging political participation and improving institutional performance; in economic activity the effects have been in favouring development, cooperation between economic agents, and more generally in reducing transaction costs; whilst in social welfare the effects have been in facilitating social cohesiveness, community support, and life satisfaction” (Castiglione et al. 2008: p.5).

The distinction between the different effects is important for this study, because it highlights that there are different types of social capital and these types reflect the different approaches adopted in the study and the application of the concept. What Castiglione (2008) fails to point out is that social capital has also an effect at the individual, personal level. This is further disentangled by Esser (2008) who makes the distinction between individual and collective benefits. For Esser, the benefits gained through social capital can be separated into two subgroups and divided further into six typical forms of social resources. The following table sets out Esser’s argument:

Table 1: social capital benefits

| | |
|--|---|
| access to information and a certain kind of social life through the relationships | ‘relational capital’: depends on an actor’s <i>individual</i> and <i>intentional</i> effort and thus is almost a <i>private</i> good that can be used when needed |
| readiness of actors to become trustfully involved in risky ventures with other actors | |
| production of support, help and solidarity | |
| availability of social control and certain level of attention to the fate and action of other members of an entire network | ‘system capital’: <i>collective</i> phenomena and represents collective goods and cannot be achieved by individual intentional efforts alone. |
| climate of trust in the network | |
| validity of norms, values, and morality within a group, organization, or society | |

With all these benefits and resources attributed to social capital, the concept becomes very attractive to policy design and policy making. Policies are used and designed either to effectively exploit existing social capital (accessed social capital) or produce social capital (mobilised social capital). Within the production of social capital as a policy aim, several aspects may be pursued, such as enhancing individual and generalised trust, the adherence to value systems based on social justice and cooperation, social cohesion, and participation in democratic life. It is presumed that these aspects better both individuals and society as a whole (Castiglione et al. 2008: 7). The consideration of social capital and its impact on youth policy will be explored further in the next chapter.

Trust

Many scholars who write about social capital underscore the importance of social trust (Coleman 1997; Putnam 1993, 2000; Fukuyama 2001). However, there are different views within the social capital debate as to whether trust is a constituent part or a consequence of social capital, or even if social capital is one of the outcomes of trust (Woolcock 1998). Because of the importance of this concept within the social capital debate, this section will look at some of the current approaches and finish by presenting Moellering's (2001, 2006) conceptualisation of trust. This conceptualisation will be used for the empirical investigation of this study.

Putnam (2000) defines trust as a key component of social capital, referring to social trust as opposed to trust in government or other social institutions. "Trust in other people is logically quite different from trust in institutions and political authorities" (p.137). Putnam makes the valuable distinction between 'thick' and 'thin' trust. Thick trust is seen as embedded in personal relations that are strong, frequent and nested in wider networks. Thin trust is the trust in the generalised other, which

“rests implicitly on some background of shared social networks and expectations of reciprocity. Thin trust is even more useful than thick trust, because it extends the radius of trust beyond the roster of people whom we can know personally” (p.136).

A different perspective is taken by Fukuyama (2001), for whom trust, networks and civil society arise as a result of social capital, but do not constitute social capital itself. He defines social capital as “an instantiated¹ informal norm that promotes co-operation between two or more individuals” (p.7) contributing to the efficient functioning of modern economies, and being “the *sine qua non* of stable liberal democracy”. However, these norms only constitute social capital if they lead to co-operation in groups, related to virtues like “honesty, the keeping of commitments, reliable performance of duties, reciprocity, and the like” (p.8).

For Fukuyama, social capital is a private good which can produce both negative and positive externalities. His assumption is that if the ‘radius of trust, that is, the circle of people among whom co-operative norms are operative’ (p.8) is larger than the group itself, then the group produces more positive externalities. Uslaner (2002, 2003) also uses the notion of ‘radius of trust’, suggesting that an empirical way to investigate this is by asking whether people trust other people they do not know; the assumption being that a narrow radius of trust is characterised by people not trusting other people they do not know.

It is believed that groups with a ‘narrow radius of trust’ have a higher ‘in-group solidarity’ which “reduces the ability of group members to co-operate with outsiders and often imposes negative externalities on the latter” (p.9). This reflects Granovetter’s (1973) writings about the ‘strengths of weak ties’ which are said to have a strong cohesive power and positively influence mobility opportunity. In contrast, Coleman (1988, see previous section)

¹ Instantiate: to represent (an abstract concept) by a concrete or tangible example

argues that closure of networks gives strength to social capital. This is also the position of Kilpatrick et al. (2003) when they assert that

“the capacity to share values and interests allows a community to develop strong bonds and a high level of trust among individuals. This strengthens the entire social network and enables the community to move to develop and resource bridging ties that serve mutual action” (p.425).

Within these debates, trust seems to be closely related to bonding and bridging social capital, but without agreement between the different academics. It is interesting to note that in a similar way to the debates around social capital, trust is in danger of becoming an insignificant sociological concept if its nature is not captured in an ‘imaginative, comprehensive and rigorous’ manner (Moellering 2001: 415; Koniordos 2005). Weber and Carter (1998) assert that trust is socially constructed and as a result, they see it as a product of human social relationships: “...people work collectively to form this bond we call trust” (p.21). Many debates revolve around the functional properties of the concept whereby trust is seen as a ‘state of favourable expectation regarding other people’s actions and intentions’ (Moellering 2001: 404). These expectations that people have, regarding others or themselves, have been conceptualised, as expectations of social order, competent role performance and people placing others’ interests before their own (Barber 1983 in Weber and Carter 1998). An alternative view is based upon a conceptualisation of trust as an individual’s expectations of order and stability in the world of everyday interaction (Garfinkel 1967 in Weber and Carter 1998). As such, “without the general trust that people have in each other, society itself would disintegrate” (Simmel 1990:178 in Moellering 2001).

Moellering (2001, 2006) argues that apart from expectation, there are two other elements, i.e. interpretation and suspension. Trust should be seen as a force that works for and through individuals, and thus “...the uncertainty of interpersonal interactions and the emotional investment of such put the

individual at risk [...] trust places the self at risk” (Weber and Carter 1998: 8). The process of trust ends with a state of expectation and begins with *interpretation*. He argues that trust research is mainly concerned with interpretation “...assuming (wrongly) that ‘good reasons’ will inevitably produce trust...” (Moellering 2001: 412). *Expectation* towards other people’s actions and intentions needs to be understood as the ‘output’ of the trust process. As a result, it may become a functional ‘input’ for actions (risk-taking, co-operating) and associations (relationships, social capital) which in themselves, however, should not be confounded with trust.

One of the most important aspects about trust for Moellering is the consideration of the concept of ‘suspension’, which he refers to as the ‘leap’ of trust. The German sociologist Niklas Luhmann (1980) stresses that trust is a way of dealing with complexity in an increasingly complex society. Solomon and Flores (2003) assert that

“...trust not only lets us increase complexity in our lives (and thus simplify them at the same time); it also changes our lives in dramatic ways, allowing us to explore in new directions, to experiment and express ourselves in our relationships in ways that would otherwise be unthinkable” (p. 9).

Therefore, trust entails a willingness to take risks in a social context based on a sense of confidence that others will respond as expected and will act in mutually supportive ways. Or at least, that others do not intend harm (Fukuyama 2001; Misztral 1996). The consideration of ‘suspension’ explores how the ‘willingness of taking risks’ or making the ‘leap of trust’ happens. “To grasp fully *how* people trust (the nature of the concept) all three elements – expectation, interpretation and suspension – need to be studied and connected” (Moellering 2001: 415).

Private or Public Good

Social capital has been conceptualised as both a public and a private good (Coleman 1994; Portes 1998, 2000; Putnam 2000). As a public good, places,

not people, possess this social capital, although individuals can take advantage of it (Coleman 1997; Putnam 1993; Woolcock 1998). As a private good, social capital is an asset that individuals possess as a result of taking part in a set of social relationships or a group (Bourdieu 1986; Burt 1992; Coleman 1994). This resource is possessed by the actor individually, beyond his social relationships. As such, for Bourdieu, people can invest in social capital with an eye towards reciprocal profits (Esser 2008: 24). In this conceptualisation, people, not places, possess larger or smaller amounts of social capital. If social capital is seen as only a group resource, it creates difficulty, as not everyone in a community has the same type of social capital, or the same access to it.

For Putnam, social capital can be both a “private good” and a “public good” (Putnam 2000: 20). Esser (2008) argues that the mixture of individual and collective is most clearly proposed by Coleman’s definition who asserts that social capital is “not a single entity, but a variety of different entities having two characteristics in common. They all consist of some aspect of social structure and they facilitate certain actions of individuals who are within the structure” (Coleman 1994: 302).

The distinction between public and private good aspects of social capital might be conceptually useful, but in terms of policy and practice there is always a tension between these two definitions (Buerkle and Guseva 2002: 659). Whereas Bourdieu fits his more individualistic notion of social capital into a wider picture of actors who were concerned to reproduce social and economic inequality, Coleman’s definition remains both abstract and functionalist (Field 2008: 29). He also seems to share “the old lament over the decline of *Gemeinschaft* or the primordial solidarity and its replacement by *Gesellschaft* or constructed solidarity” (Field 2008: 30). Portes points out that Coleman overstates the role of close ties and underestimates the importance of weak ties (Portes 1998: 5). Putnam rejects the contrast between *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* and in his Italian study, he suggests

that closed bonding ties are less important as a source of solidarity than bridging ties of acquaintanceship and secondary associations (Putnam 1993: 175 in Field 2008: 36).

‘Bad’ Social Capital

Several authors critique the usage of social capital as an unquestioned positive force, which mainly stress the benign functions of social capital without looking at the darker side of it. Putzel (1997) for example, argues that work on social capital is coloured by an idealisation of the role of the family and of the American political past, influenced by current communitarian thinking. Newton (1997) highlights that there is a dark side of social and political organisation that produces conflict and division and Ostrom (2000) points out that relationships can involve vast inequalities and can be an obstacle to economic betterment.

Warren (2008) in his exploration of the ‘nature and logic of bad social capital’ states that within the concept, particular kinds of social relations are identified as significant, owing to their good or bad consequences. Coming from the perspective that social capital can be a ‘public’ and a ‘private’ good, some of the investment into social capital benefits the person who invests, but also the people who are the ‘bystanders’ (Putnam 2000: 20). As such, Putnam also recognises that social capital can have negative external consequences – for society at large – and internally – for the member of the network. This is where Warren (2008) highlights that

“...there might just as well be negative externalities for those outside social capital-producing networks. [...] Freedom of association also implies freedom to exclude. [...] But when exclusion combines with resources that others need, freedom of association can reinforce skewed distributions of economic power, undermine democracy, and enable conspiracy and corruption. [...] Indeed we should expect any society with cleavages of class, race, ethnicity, religion, and other lines of fracture will potentially suffer from group-specific social capital” (Warren 2008: 129).

These considerations are very relevant for this study which recognises – as expressed in chapter one – the continuing sociological relevance of class, gender and place in understanding the lived experience of young people.

The Social Capital Debate within Social Theories

From the previous sections, it becomes clear that social capital cuts across a number of important dichotomies in social research, such as that between the individual and collective action (Esser 2008: 24), self-interest and concern for others, culture and structure, economy and society, and community and society (in the sense of *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*) (Castiglione et al. 2008: 4-5).

Portes (1998) highlights that such a notion was already developed in the writings of Marx and Engels (1848), Tönnies (1887), Durkheim (1893), Simmel (1905) and Weber (1922). Portes and Sensenbrenner (1993) contend that there are four different types of social capital corresponding to each of the major theoretical traditions. These types are summarised in Woolcock (1998: 161) as follows:

- "bounded solidarity": this notion can be extracted from the work of Marx and Engels and means that adverse circumstances can act as a source of group cohesion (e.g., sharing among refugees)
- "reciprocity transactions": this notion is from the work of Simmel and refers to the norms and obligations that emerge through personalised networks of exchange (e.g., favours between neighbours)
- "value introjection": this notion can be extracted from the work of Durkheim, which refers to the importance of the idea that values, moral imperatives, and commitments precede contractual relations and inform individual goals other than the strictly instrumental (e.g., gifts to children)
- "enforceable trust": this notion is from the work of Weber and refers to the idea that formal institutions and particularistic group settings use

different mechanisms for ensuring compliance with agreed-upon rules of conduct – the former (e.g., bureaucracies) using legal/rational mechanisms, the latter (e.g., families) substantive/social ones

The main dichotomy, which this piece of research needs to deal with, is that expressed by Davies (2001), who considers there to be two theoretical models underpinning the concept, which embrace a neo-Marxist and a neo-Liberalist perspective. Similarly, Holland et al. (2007) argue that understandings of social capital fall largely into two traditions of social theorising: it is seen as a concept dealing with the dilemma of collective action and integration (or neo-Liberalist according to Davies 2001), or as one dealing with social injustice and inequality (or neo-Marxist according to Davies 2001). Coleman (1994) and Putnam (2000) sit predominantly in the integration strand, stressing collective goods of reciprocity, trust and cooperation. As Putnam puts it: ‘features of social organisation, such as networks, norms and trust that facilitate action and cooperation for mutual benefit’ (1993, p.35). The work of Bourdieu (1986) is mainly located within a social justice and inequality strand. However, as it has been explored previously, it would be misleading to tie these scholars into dualistic perspectives without recognising the overlaps and fluidity within their writings. I would argue that all the different perspectives have something to contribute to the social capital debate and would provide fruitful insights to this study. Therefore, I am interested in a paradigm which would allow me to overcome and integrate these different perspectives. The way forward to this will be explored in chapter four, in which I will assert my own ontological and epistemological position within a critical realist paradigm and especially Layder’s (1997, 2006) ‘Domain Theory’.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have outlined the contributions of Coleman's, Bourdieu's and Putnam's work as the underpinnings or canon of the social capital theory. Whilst recognising that the concept is still disputed the chapter also highlights that most conceptualizations of social capital cover both structural and cultural aspects and most definitions revolve around the notion of social networks, the reciprocities that arise from them, and the value of these for achieving personal mutual goals. Important for the empirical investigation of this study is the recognition that whilst social capital is contingent on social networks, it should not be treated as equivalent or interchangeable with social networks.

The study needs also to acknowledge that structural aspects have an impact on social capital (Bourdieu, Coleman). Recognising the important insights gained from this chapter it seems appropriate to consider aspects of inequality and the context within which these inequalities are reproduced (Bourdieu). Whilst social capital, inherent in family and community relations and their impact on young people's lives (Coleman) are seen as relevant, this study distances itself from a view that children and young people do not possess higher or lower levels of social capital, thus 'muting' their own agency. This has been contested by many of the youth studies which will be explored in the next chapter.

The distinction between different types of social capital: 'bonding' and 'bridging' (Putnam) is a recurring theme throughout this study. The critical consideration of bonding and bridging social capital in young people's lives is an important contribution to the conceptual development of social capital. This will be explored in the next chapter with an insight on how young people can be constrained by their communities and localities, thus highlighting the positive and negative outcomes of social capital. Trust was seen as an important aspect within the study of social capital (Putnam) and especially

the notion of suspension or 'leap of trust' (Moellering). An important new aspect in terms of developing more diverse and trusting relationships will be considered in the youth studies, looking at the role of the meaningful engagement with significant others and the development of a positive outlook on life.

Chapter 3: Social Capital and Young People

Introduction

In chapter two, I have outlined the contributions of Bourdieu's, Coleman's and Putnam's work as the underpinnings or canon of the social capital theory. Children and young people do not feature prominently in this body of work and we still know more about the operationalisation of social capital in everyday lives of adults and their communities than the everyday lives of children and young people (Leonard 2005). The relationships that young people develop and mobilise remain overlooked in the main social capital literature (Thapar and Sanghera 2010). One should also be careful in assuming that adult measures and indicators of social capital can be extended non- problematically to account for stocks of social capital held by young people (Leonard 2008; Baier and Nauck 2006).

Whilst I have found some sporadic examples and references to young people and children in Putnam's (2000) exploration of social capital, there is no cohesive body of work which relates to young people. As within Putnam's explorations, in Coleman's approach, young people seem to disappear into the background, overshadowed by the social capital of adults and their communities. Young people's social capital is generally seen as a by-product of their parents' relationships with others and their own social capital networks are rendered as invisible (Leonard 2005: 607). In both Coleman and Putnam's accounts, the agency of young people is rather muted. "Their own ability to develop stocks of social capital is under- played. What these approaches have in common is a tendency to see young people as human becomings rather than human beings" (Leonard 2008: 226).

The different perspectives of Bourdieu, Coleman and Putnam to social capital shape in different ways the studies on youth and social capital. I will give some selected examples to illustrate this.

There are youth studies, in the context of education, which find it useful to draw on Coleman's conceptualisation of social capital with a focus on family dynamics. Lauglo (2011), roots his enquiry within this conceptualisation and uses data from a large-scale survey of Norwegian youth (aged 13-16), to examine, whether there is a relationship between the performance in key academic subjects and aiming for higher education, and the political socialisation at home. Parents are seen as providing young people with important support and information and the family environment becomes a key aspect within the enhancement of social capital. They argue that parents' cultural capital only becomes available to the children if the social connection between the child and the parents is sufficiently strong. Lauglo argues for a widened concept of 'home background' in the sociology of education. However whilst the acknowledgement of the family is important, Lauglo's study does not recognise the agency of young people and their own contribution to the enhancement of social capital.

Another example is a study by Hammer (2003), who examines the return to education or employment of unemployed young people in Northern Europe. Drawing on Coleman, young people's social capital is seen as based upon that of their parents. This in turn leads to the assumption that young people "who had unemployed parents probably had less social capital, or social capital that may even have had a negative impact on their job chances" (Hammer 2003: 218).

In a qualitative study of parenting in families with teenage children conducted in and around Glasgow Seaman and Sweeting (2004) also draw on Coleman's work to develop an understanding of the role of families in the production and enhancement of social capital. However they conclude that

Coleman's formulation of social capital does not reflect the reality of contemporary family life, nor the agency of young people: "...older children within the household can also be seen as a resource with developmental benefits for younger ones, rather than as a passive drain upon parental resources" (Seaman and Sweeting 2004: 188). Their findings also suggest that material circumstances may be a greater constraint on access to social capital than family form.

Research around the 'health enabling community' has drawn on Putnam's perspective on social capital focusing on local networks of support, civic engagement and participation and positive local identities (Campbell 2001). In my own early research (Boeck et al. 2001) I have drawn on Putnam's conceptualisation of social capital. However, early on within these studies, it became evident that the approach was deficient because of not sufficiently recognising structural inequalities and focusing too much on normative conceptualisations on community participation (Boeck and Fleming 2005).

Romer et al. (2009) in an American study explored Putnam's proposition that television and other media may undermine social capital. They surveyed a nationally representative sample of 14- to 22-year olds, evaluating young people's media use, to determine whether television and other popular media facilitate or hinder the development of social capital in young people. In contrast to Putnam's proposition, their findings suggest that many young people use media to reinforce social ties, leading to a strong relationship between civic activity and media use.

Bourdieu does not mention children or young people in his analysis of social capital. Nevertheless, within youth studies, it is Bourdieu who is being seen as providing a very useful framework for the analysis of social capital (Holland 2009; MacRae 2004) locating it within a social justice and inequality

strand² (Adkins 2005). Because of Bourdieu's contextual approach these studies view social capital as strongly rooted in the processes and practices of everyday life (Morrow 1999; Ecclestone 2004; Holland 2007; Leonard 2004; Koca et al. 2009).

A key theme within youth and social capital studies has been the 'extent to which young people access and/or generate social capital and exhibit agency in its acquisition and deployment' (Holland 2005: 2). These studies tend to be located within social justice and social inclusion perspectives which advocate democratic empowerment and change, and that are sensitive to children's and young people's rights and civil liberties (Chawla and Malone 2002:129).

It is Bourdieu's approach which provides several scholars with a framework for not only exploring the 'disadvantage' that some young people face, but also the resourceful ways in which many use their social capital to overcome contextual and economic constraints, or exert their agency as individuals and within groups (Gillies 2005; Henderson et al. 2007; Cockburn and Cleaver 2009; Weller 2006). In the following sections, I will further explore those studies, which shed light on young people's social capital and how it is forged within localities, communities of different types and groups of interest or identity.

My own study will focus on personal, local and institutional level interactions of young people, within a broader national policy perspective. As Halpern (2005) highlights, this social capital perspective is different to a cross-national perspective and should not be confused. In the selection of the studies for the following sections, I have been aware that sometimes research can be culturally alien (Bourdieu 1984) and also might ignore cultural and economic contexts (Morrow 2002a). Thus, the following review of the relevant social capital literature will focus predominantly on studies within the United Kingdom. However I have also included several international studies to give

² This has been discussed in chapter two, section: social capital debate within social theories.

relevant insights, which I considered important in the framing of my own study.

In the next sections I will explore the role of networks within localities and communities in accessing not only important resources, but also in helping young people to navigate through life. Within this, I will present approaches which are critical of the distinction between bonding and bridging social capital, as developed by Putnam. I will also present studies which underline the impact of different contextual factors on young people's ability to access and draw on social capital.

Networks

Key to understanding people is to understand the ties between them and to acknowledge that not only do we shape our networks, but also that our networks shape us (Christakis and Fowler 2010). Sometimes each of these overlapping networks have different sets of norms, trust and reciprocity (Field 2008) and this fluidity seems to be especially prevalent in young people's lives (Raffo 2006; Weller 2006, 2010; Gilchrist et al. 2010).

Whilst social capital is contingent on social networks, networks on their own do not constitute social capital (see chapter two). In terms of the social capital analysis, social capital should not be treated as equivalent or interchangeable with social networks (Lin 2001). Social capital grows when supportive relationships are convertible into beneficial outcomes and function as keys to unlocking the structural barriers that exist between the individual, people's localities and the wider environment (Leonard 2008). As such, social networks are not only important in terms of emotional support, but also crucial in giving people more opportunities, choice and power (Woolcock 2001).

Exploring the beneficial outcomes of the value of social capital, Leonard (2008) makes the distinction between 'exchange' and 'use value' of social capital. The distinction is derived from Marx (1883), who suggests that commodities have both 'use value' and 'exchange value' (Wolff 2010). 'Use value' refers to the specific quality of a commodity as perceived by users in relation to their needs, and 'exchange value' can be understood as the price of that commodity (Lepak 2007). 'Exchange value' would mean that the possession of social capital gives the possessors the power to obtain goods of other kinds by means of exchange. Leonard (2008) argues that the relationships developed in families and more bonding networks might give

“access to other forms of capital, less recognised by the wider society as having exchange value. Many children derived emotional satisfaction from supportive family relationships” (p.611).

In a study with Black young people in Brixton, Howarth (2002) illustrates how some young people collaboratively develop the social and psychological resources to protect themselves against the prejudices of others. As such, the use value of social capital empowered some young people in their mutual quest for recognition and esteem. Thapar and Sanghera (2010) arrive at similar conclusions stating that:

“...some communities invest in bonding capital, precisely because they have been and continue to be excluded from wider civic engagement (bridging) or from accessing formal and informal resources (linking)” (p.8).

The recognition of 'use value' and not only 'exchange value', when considering resources and resourcefulness within young people's lives, is a useful point of reference.³ Thus, there can be significant differences between the types of networks people have, not only in quantity but also in quality.

The concept of social capital can encapsulate these differences. In the

³ To note is that within this exploration I am not applying the value distinction from an economic perspective. From this perspective the distinction between these two types of value is disputed. Adkins (2005) highlights that especially within postmodern economies there is a collapse of the dualism of exchange versus use value. Within this, the assumption in social capital debates that social capital may be accumulated, possessed and exchanged by individuals and collectivities is unsustainable. (Adkins 2005:208)

following section, I will examine some of these aspects and their relationship to and impact on young people's lives. Using the notion of bonding and bridging social capital, I will explore the literature which focuses on young people's networks and the resources that accrue from them.

As explored in chapter two, the distinction between "bonding" and "bridging" social capital (Putnam 2002; Gittell and Vidal 1998:10) draws on Granovetter's (1973; 1983) work on "strong" and "weak" ties. Bonding social capital refers to inward-looking bonds, focusing on relationships and networks of trust and reciprocity that reinforce ties within groups; bridging social capital is concerned with outward-looking connections amongst heterogeneous groups (Putnam 2000; Lin and Erickson 2008; Holland et al. 2007). It has been argued that bonding social capital is good for 'getting by', but bridging networks are crucial for 'getting ahead' (Putnam 2000).

Bonded Localised Social Capital

For many young people, their embeddedness in their locality is clear (Reay and Lucey 2000). This is where their family and friends are based and where they feel comfortable. Not only their identity, but also how they see their future, lies within the context of their localised social networks (Raffo and Reeves 2000; Webster et al. 2004; White and Green 2011). Within these localised social networks, it is the strength of relationships between parents and children which is seen by Coleman (1988) as social capital. Social capital within the family is enhanced through the quality of the relationship between parents and children, and thus the presence of several siblings is seen as a "dilution of adult attention to the child" and is being treated as a "measure of lack of social capital" (Coleman 1988: S111).

Gillies and Lucey (2006) whilst recognising the influential thinking of Coleman, distance themselves from studies which construct siblings as "merely additional claimants for the time and attention of their parents,

soaking up finite reserves of family social capital” (p.480). They argue that these studies overlook the quality and meaning of sibling relationships and how young people are agents in generating their own resources (see also Seaman and Sweeting 2004). Their qualitative research with young people aged between 5 and 22, living in the South East of England, suggests that living with brothers and sisters provoked feelings of anger, frustration and vulnerability, but also love, loyalty and security. Bonded relationships with siblings were commonly experienced in their cohort of young people, as a source of intimacy, support and protection and children and young people in their study relied on their siblings in the process of growing older and striving for independence. This seems to be even more relevant for working class children and young people

“for whom group membership held the most significance, with individual senses of self being intimately tied up with the group, whereas middle class sisters and brothers were more likely to see themselves as an individual who also happened to be a sibling” (Gillies and Lucey 2006: 484).

The use value of social capital is important for younger siblings who rely on older brothers and sisters to cope with the demands of growing up and becoming adults (White and Green 2011). The use value of these kinds of family relationships can compensate for their lack of exchange value (Gillies and Lucey 2006; Pinkerton and Dolan 2007). Generally, this kind of value which is important in children’s and young people’s lives, is dismissed in the work of Putnam, Coleman and Bourdieu and there is an over emphasis on ‘exchange value’ over ‘use value’. However it also has to be recognised that networks of family might not be in all instances of ‘use value’. Thus, for example, Quilgars et al. (2008) suggest that the main ‘trigger’ for homelessness among young people in the UK is relationship breakdown, usually with parents or step-parents. For many, this is a consequence of long-term conflict within the home and often involves violence.

As such, Leonard suggests that additional and different indicators may be necessary to “adequately capture the importance and function of various types of capital in enabling young people to access scarce resources” (Leonard 2008: 236). Other more qualitative orientated research provides us with further insights by focusing attention on young people’s communities, place and neighbourhood. This will be examined in the next section.

Community, Place and Neighbourhood

Moving the focus away from the immediate family, place and neighbourhood also influence young people’s ability to access relationships that are important to their identity. These networks which are based upon the immediate locale of the street, local park and home can have an important ‘use value’ for young people giving them a strong sense of belonging, safety and security (Morrow 2004). This sense of belonging and rootedness refers to young people feeling that they are part of a collective community. As such, two elements are seen as important: a sense of feeling part of a group or environment and influence in the sense that the individual matters to the group. The underlying assumption is that “when people feel they belong to a school and/or neighbourhood and have a symbolic attachment to the place, they are more likely to make friends and interact with peers” (Schaefer-McDaniel 2004: 163).

Putnam (2002) explores the relationship of social capital, children and their surrounding community in his investigations around education and children’s welfare.

“Child development is powerfully shaped by social capital [...] trust, networks, and norms of reciprocity within a child’s family, school, peer group, and larger community have wide-ranging effects on the child’s opportunities and choices and, hence, on his behaviour and development” (p.296).

It is noticeable how for Putnam children are not seen as the agents of social capital, and how positive outcomes are seen to be the result of parents' social capital in the community. Borrowing Coleman's quotation, Putnam asserts that we cannot understate "the importance of the embeddedness of young persons in the enclaves of adults most proximate to them, first and most prominent the family and second, a surrounding community of adults" (p.303) and he concludes that, "the implication is clear: Social capital keeps bad things from happening to good kids" (p.296).

Whilst bonded community networks can be of support for young people, they can also create an environment for young people in which they feel isolated or even trapped. Sometimes, young people recognise their bonding networks as highly constraining, tying them into their community. Whilst the networks allow them to 'get by', these networks might stifle individual progression and social mobility (Holland et al. 2007, Furlong and Cartmel 2007). In a longitudinal study around youth transitions in England and Northern Ireland⁴, Holland et al. (2007) indicate that Putnam's way of looking at reciprocity and trust at the community level was very low amongst young people. "Children living in more affluent suburban areas were just as likely not to trust their neighbours as those living in more disadvantaged inner-city areas" (Holland et al. 2007: 111). This highlights that trust and reciprocity are quite often located in individual close relationships with family and friends, rather than within the neighbourhood.

A study by the Prince's Trust of 2,226 16 to 24-year-olds showed that more than one in five young people felt isolated "most of the time" in their neighbourhood, whilst just over one in 10 felt like an outcast. Almost a third did not think there was a future for them in their local area. More than a third of young people in the UK aged 16 to 24 do not feel part of their local

⁴ This study is one of the three studies part of the Families and Social Capital ESRC Research Group at London South Bank University (Holland et al. 2007). I will refer to this study as the 'South Bank' study.

community and those who were not in education, employment or training were significantly more likely to feel isolated (Prince's Trust, 2010). Drawing upon data from the 2000/01 UK General Household Survey, Fahmy (2006) suggests that young people are less likely to know their neighbours or to speak to them on a regular basis, are less likely to trust their neighbours, and are less inclined to believe that 'neighbours look out for each other' than adults. Within this, Holland (2007) asserts that children living in more affluent suburban areas were just as likely not to trust their neighbours as those living in more disadvantaged inner-city areas.

Whilst community is often viewed in the conventional sense of neighbourhood or village in social capital theory, young people often identify with a number of other communities including those associated with their school, families and interests. The strong sense of belonging to these communities and social networks tends to be endorsed by their peers and "where communities exclude, belonging and integration inevitably weaken" (Wood 2009: 101). In her study of young people in a low-income, Hispanic/Latino and African American neighbourhood in New York, Schaefer-McDaniel (2006) found that young people who were spatially more restricted compensated for their inability to go out and about in the neighbourhood by building more relationships in school, thus having a stronger sense of belonging to the school than to the neighbourhood.

It is important to highlight that the inward looking nature of some communities might be the consequence of other structural forces, which have an impact on the groups by inducing them to 'close ranks' when confronted with the perceived threat. A study carried out in England and Scotland (Kintrea et al. 2008) identifies that some tightly bonded youth groups who have strong territorial attachments to their neighbourhoods are often perceived by outsiders as gangs. Weller (2007) points out that such a view would infer Putnam's more destructive or negative definition of social capital. This view "only affords children and young people agency in the formation of

destructive or negative social capital, such as membership of a gang” (p.560). This overlooks the fact that teenagers’ ability to harness bridging and linking social capital might not only be affected by conflicts between different sections within the community, but might also be due to that fact that teenagers “are often marginalized and excluded from the mainstream society” (Weller 2006:570 see also France and Wiles 1997). Also, living in stigmatised neighbourhoods might corrode trust between neighbours, engender social isolation and limit opportunities for interaction with other communities (Cattell 2001).

Another example is that of some sectarian communities in Northern Ireland. In these communities could exert a strong hold but equally generate a strong desire to get out. A large proportion of the Northern Irish group in ‘Youth Transitions’ project of the South Bank study (McGrellis 2004, Holland et al. 2007), had left their homes and communities for education or work in other parts of the UK, or further afield. However, some of the young men in Northern Ireland, for example, were totally embedded in the sectarian youth culture, and all their social capital came from that association and those networks (Holland et al. 2007).

These examples reflect Portes’ (1998) assertion that social capital can act as a mechanism of exclusion: the same strong bonded ties that help members of one group also enable it to exclude outsiders. Communities can be places of conflict where power is unequally distributed (Staeheli 2008). In the lives of young people, this can manifest itself through intergenerational conflicts within neighbourhoods (Fahmy 2006), differences of interests between groups in the community (Weller 2008) and ethnic segregation (Holland et al. 2007). Communities constitute “a wide diversity of people with varying perceptions, interests and safety concerns” (White, 2003: 139). Strong community ties can become mechanisms to exclude young people, especially when they are being defined as a ‘social problem’, which has been

especially the case when enforcing dispersal powers through the Anti-Social Behaviour legislation (Crawford 2008; Yates 2009).

Apart from the impact of tight and inward looking community relationships on young people, tightly bonded networks or ‘weak individualised systems of social capital’ (Raffo and Reeves 2000) also can have a negative impact on creating ‘exchange value’ for young people. Social capital which is strongly embedded in the immediate neighbourhood and based on networks, which are small and focused on immediate family and friends, can lead to “relatively passive/static articulation(s) of individual change and development” (Raffo and Reeves 2000: 156). Tightly bonded social capital which is located within localities with poor access to material resources and lack of job opportunities, tends to restrict wider support and longer-term education, training and employment opportunities (Webster et al. 2004). Young people who draw on this localised static social capital tend to be unaware of how to find work through agencies, job centres or even through friends and family. Often, their avenues for finding jobs are based on previous experiences (Raffo and Reeves 2000; Webster et al. 2004): “There was clear evidence that the position of these young people was fragile, with few recognized opportunities for them to find work – work that they [...] wanted in order to fulfil a dream of independence” (Raffo and Reeves 2000: 156-157).

Even in those cases where young people have access to multiple social resources within a restricted location, similar dynamics were found (Raffo and Reeves 2000; MacDonald and Marsh 2009; Walther et al. 2005). As highlighted in the previous section, it is important not to overlook the role of familial and place based social networks (indicative of strong ‘bonding’ social capital) in facilitating labour market inclusion, especially in circumstances where jobs are advertised by ‘word of mouth’ (MacDonald 2008; Field 2008). A European youth transitions project (YOYO)⁵ identified that, young men in

⁵ The project ‘Youth Policy and Participation, Potentials of Participation and Informal Learning for Young People’s Transitions to the Labour Market’ (YOYO) was funded by the

particular, who restrict their contacts to those within their own neighbourhood or their own youth cultural scene, find their networks acting as a positive resource for finding jobs or apprenticeship posts. However the transitions “into the labour market within the reach of these networks are often restricted to precarious segments of the labour market (temporary work, petty jobs, assisting in the shops of relatives, etc.)” (Walther et al. 2005: 230, see also EGRIS 2001). These work opportunities very rarely lasted longer than a year and more often than not were part of a rapid sequence of temporary low-paid jobs (Raffo 2006; Raffo and Reeves 2000) interspersed with lengthy periods of idle unemployment (MacDonald 1998: 170).

In a study that investigated youth transitions in a context of severe socio-economic deprivation in Teesside, MacDonald and Marsh (2001) have found that whilst “connections to local networks could help in coping with the problems of ‘social exclusion’ and generate a sense of ‘inclusion’, paradoxically, they could simultaneously limit the possibilities of escaping the conditions of ‘social exclusion’” (p.384). Membership of a tightly bonded network provides access to a restricted social capital, with consequently diminished opportunity to make changes or to exercise choice. Raffo and Reeves (2000) conclude that these localised and weak networks provide a “lack of opportunities for generating subjective practical knowledge about how to deal with the problems of finding employment and making effective transitions to adulthood” (p.158).

Many young people seen as ‘at risk’ tend to be ‘risk averse’, in the sense of being unable or unwilling to take the risk of leaving their present situation, immediate network and locale (Kemshall 2008). This might constrain horizons and lead to a pathway of restricted choice, restricted power to do otherwise, and restricted opportunity (Kemshall 2002, 2009). Webster et al.

European Commission between 2001 to 2004. The partners involved came from Denmark, Germany, United Kingdom, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Rumania and Valencia. www.iris-egris.de/yoyo

(2004) assert that social networks can also be restricting because strong trust and loyalties engendered through such ties may result in alternative opportunities being ignored.

Thus, strong bonding social capital can provide young people with a strong sense of belonging, security and safety, but also with few opportunities for interactions with significant others. These others include peers who might be able to help to generate new, informal and practical knowledge, to start the process of dealing with the constraints in their lives and thus gaining access to material, cultural or social resources (Raffo and Reeves 2000; McDonald 1998; Morrow 2004; Fram 2004).

Lin (2001: 46–54) posits differences between “homophilous” and “heterophilous” interactions (also termed “bonding” and “bridging” ties by Putnam 2000) as core social capital processes that sustain stratification. Homophilous interactions are those that occur between similarly positioned others. Because similarly positioned others are unlikely to have spare and diverse resources to offer, homophilous interactions are not as helpful for getting ahead and yield low return when the motivation for action is the desire to gain resources (Fram 2004).

Diverse Social Capital

Putnam (2000) refers to young people and social capital in several instances especially when describing informal social networks, economic prosperity and educational achievement. His deliberations around informal social networks reflect his concern around how “we allocate our time – towards ourselves and our immediate family and away from the wider community” (p.107). He asserts that in adolescence “women are more likely to express a sense of concern and responsibility for the welfare of others – for example by doing volunteer work more frequently” and concludes that “women are more avid social capitalists than men” (p.95). Whilst he is also concerned that

informal social connectedness has declined in all parts of American society, he asserts that it is “higher among young people and retired people than among the middle aged” (p.108). In terms of access to resources, he mentions young people’s economic success within religious groups as not having anything to do with their belief, but with the “networking aspect of churchgoing” (p.321).

The importance of networking and having a diverse set of networks is also referred to in transitions to work, in research done in Spain and Germany. Field (2008) refers to work done by Viscarnt (1998) and Völker and Flap (1999). Half of young people in Spain in a 1996 survey had entered work thanks to family and friends. In subsequent studies this ratio stayed the same (Faroldi 2007). Also, whilst one third of the young people tried to get jobs through job centers, only 6% reported that they actually got a job through this channel (Santos 2006). A study of young people who had grown up in the German Democratic Republic, found “that the individual's education played a more important role than the father's resources in finding work; nevertheless, nearly half of their sample had found work through informal channels, and in these cases it was often important to possess strong ties with highly prestigious contacts” (Field 2008: 51). This indicates that some individuals can draw upon superior social connections, which gives them advantages in successfully accessing the labour market (Becker and Reimer 2009; White and Green 2011).

Raffo and Reeves (2000) in their study with young ‘disaffected’ and ‘disadvantaged’ young people in Manchester, observed that participation within diverse networks facilitated the development of social capital. This entailed the ability to negotiate, a complex set of relationships within differential peer-group norms and institutional norms of school. Young people often have to negotiate different types and levels of relationships, especially with complex response to authority. The ability to overcome adversity depended strongly on the quality of the relationship with peers and ‘significant others’. Webster et al. (2004), followed the fortunes of a

proportion of the Teesside study (Mac Donald and Marsh 2001) as they reached their mid-to-late twenties. They found that desistance from offending and heroin use was aided by the support of family members and partners, and the leaving behind of earlier social networks that encouraged crime and drug use. They also referred to informal contacts as being more effective in the search for jobs than training or education.

Bottrell (2009) finds the concepts of 'bridging' and 'bonding' forms of social capital particularly helpful when analysing social capital in the context of young women's networks within a deprived housing estate in Sydney. Her study describes the dynamics between how young people's social capital is perceived from outside and how young people perceive it. Whilst seen as problematic from outsiders, for the young women, the "youth network constitutes an enhancement of resources, trust, reciprocity, and recognition" (p.23).

White and Green (2011) assert that in their study with young people from deprived neighbourhoods in the cities of Hull, Walsall and Wolverhampton, families can play a highly supportive role, in encouraging a young person to follow the career or qualification they have identified for themselves. The distinction between 'bridging' and 'bonding' social capital is not clear cut and, "it should be noted that, in reality, any line which is drawn between 'bonding' and 'bridging' social capital is a fuzzy one" (White and Green 2011: 48). Holland et al. (2007) found that the distinction between bonding and bridging social capital, as developed by Putnam, is not strictly applicable to young people's lives. Many young people in these studies value bonding social capital during their transition phases, as an important mechanism to bridge across into new networks and opportunities.

Whilst these examples present bonding social capital in a mainly positive light all the above mentioned authors also assert that some important strong

bonding communities can “militate against social and geographical mobility” (Holland et al. 2007: 109) and “bonding social capital may also be cast as a disabling or constraining factor in accessing training or work opportunities” (White and Green 2011: 51). This reflects the explorations in the previous section: Bonded Localised Social Capital.

Weller (2007) refers in her study (part of the South Bank project) to young people, who on one hand bonded with people of their own age and with similar lifestyle choices, but also showed aspects of bridging social capital across gender and linking social capital through alternative forms of civic engagement. However, her study like those of Holland et al. (2007) and White and Green (2011), questions the usefulness of narrowly using the distinction between bonding and bridging social capital in young people’s lives. The tensions, fluidity and interwoven nature of these different types of social capital can be very complex. Children and young people negotiate the push and pull of communities in different ways. In some instances, strong bonding communities provide the resources to bridge and in others they hinder this process (MacDonald et al. 2005).

Strong bonded networks of young people can be the precursor to bridging across different groups. Kay and Bradbury (2009) give further insights into these dynamics exploring youth sport volunteering. They point out the relevance of the contextual framework within which volunteering takes place. Thus, whilst many of the volunteering activities took place in familiar localities such as the school or the neighbourhood, young people forged new and important social ties due to the types of activities they were involved in and the different roles they performed in such activities such as coaching and sports leadership.

“In this respect, the sites and activities for sports volunteering and the social connections engendered through this process contributed to the maintenance of ‘bonding’ capital and the emergence of newer forms of ‘bridging capital within particular social milieu” (p.137).

However within youth volunteering, whilst many young people might develop new relationships with different young people, how lasting and important for the enhancement of social capital they are, is questionable. There is a difference between just meeting new young people and another thing is having relationships which give access to diverse resources (Boeck et al. 2008). As such, quite often, particular places and institutions, rather than particular networks foster young people's social capital at the community level (Leonard 2005).

Generally, it can be said that the heterogeneity in network relationships are relevant to young people's lives

“because they provide a diversity of resources, experiences and qualities: the youth cultural network primarily provides information and exchange of practical support; circles of friends (be they wider circles or in the more intimate form of a love relationship) are important for belonging, trust and encouragement; the parental generation often provides access to financial resources” (Walther et al. 2005: 226).

However the above assertion highlights how important it is to consider the perspectives from which the different studies draw. Walther et al. in the above statement, whilst recognising the importance of the 'use value' of young people's youth networks, do not attribute to it any 'resource' value and relates that to the social and economic capital of the parents. Leonard (2005) challenges the benefit of bridging social capital by stating that

“Putnam's distinction between bonding and bridging social capital does not go far enough in acknowledging the inherently unequal features of both bonding and bridging social capital” (p.930).

She asserts that bonding does not always exclude others and bridging does not always benefit the 'whole' community.

“Making the transition from bonding to bridging social capital may not necessarily lead to the positive outcomes envisaged by Putnam but rather reinforce existing social, economic and political inequality” (p.942).

Significant Others

Whilst relationships with parents might still play a central role in the orientation of young people towards the competing claims of locality and mobility (Thomson 2003), they might not be the only points of reference. It is seen that the lack of diverse relationships experienced by many young people, who only have access to inward looking social capital, is often counteracted through the meaningful engagement with significant others. A key factor for those young people interviewed in Walther et al's (2005) research was to meet (or have met) the right people. This means different things according to transition contexts; for example, people with influence who are at the same time 'fair' and not only interested in their own profits.

In order for these relationships with adults to be meaningful, they should not only be based on providing information or advice. Advice from individuals, who are seen as part of an external system, with few, if any, authentic links to the lives of young people, carries little or no importance for these young people (Walther et al. 2005).

“What they really might be on about is having *relationships* that enable them to try things, make mistakes, and change their minds – and then be able to put it all together in creative ways. So making the transition work for young people means supporting them *through* the confusing times and the changes of heart; but it doesn't necessarily mean eradicating those things” (Vaughan 2003: no pagination).

Through the meaningful, authentic and culturally appropriate relationships with significant others, individual strategic decisions about life transitions and choices are being affected by external agencies and actors. Whilst in the previous section we have considered the limiting influence of locality and class, Raffo and Reeves (2000) suggest that significant others, and the positive influence of external agencies can, aid young people to overcome these limiting influences.

Walther et al. (2005) asserts that some of these contacts are characterised by strong emotional bonds and a high level of reciprocity; while others are

planned and developed much more strategically. However, despite the different emotional qualities and different functions, these people become 'significant others' (Mead 1934) in the lives of young people. It is important, therefore, to acknowledge the supporting role key adults such as parents, schools and youth workers can play in fostering and mobilizing teenagers' social capital (Walther et al. 2005; Boeck et al. 2008; Weller 2006).

The lack of real and meaningful relationships is often experienced by 'young people at risk' in their encounters with professional institutions with their emphasis on 'reorientation' and 're-education' (Kemshall 2002a). Official vocational guidance agencies and the employment services are often viewed as being too bureaucratic or even 'over-charged' ('they can't do anything, anyway'), and young people feel these services are not interested in personal needs and individual aspirations. However, Walther et al. (2005) asserts that

“most young people with choice biographies have no major problems in using institutions strategically as contacts and in separating individual utility value from the level of identity and relationship. 'The right people' often are used as 'door openers' and they fulfil this function exactly because the relationship keeps the right distance” (p.227).

For many young people, a significant adult or a mentor is the first and the most consistently positive and emotionally supportive person in their lives (Dallos and Comley-Ross 2005). Significant adults often play an important role for young people to develop new trusting relationships and especially a sense of 'being trusted' by adults. I have referred to this, in chapter two, as making the 'leap of trust' (Moellering 2001) and thus as one of the important aspects of developing new bridging social capital through being able to take social risks. Past and present negative experiences influence how young people find it difficult to develop trusting relationships. This might lead to difficulties in making deeper social contacts such as new friends or future partners, as young people hardly trust anyone except for a few (Tolonen 2005). In order to overcome some of these barriers building strong positive

trusting relationships with an adult can help young people to explore and open up to other relationships (Dallos and Comley-Ross 2005)

In a recent study around youth action volunteering and social capital in England, Boeck et al. (2009) found that important factors in promoting the participation of young volunteers are for them to be able to make their own decisions, and being trusted by others to make these decisions. It was extremely important to young volunteers to feel that they have high levels of influence in their volunteering activities and to be trusted by adult workers. The research also suggests that the number of benefits, in terms of gaining resources and opportunities to get ahead in life (such as education and employment), young volunteers received through meeting new people is higher when young people have higher levels of participation, influence and trust. Johnston (2004), looking at after school youth settings, found that for older youth, it is gratifying to know they are trusted by adults with responsibility for younger participants; for some, it becomes a career path into teaching, coaching, or professional youth work.

Outlook on Life

Linked to the development of a diverse social capital is the possibility of individuals having aspirations, and developing and engaging in practices which are outside of their safety zone. The need for diverse and wider ranging networks, a sense of belonging to a wider locale, and a focused and active outlook on life is well recognised (Halpern 2005). This is not just about the 'size and density' of the network, it is also about the resources that the network brings. Uslaner (2002) asserts that a 'pessimistic outlook' is related to the lack of trust in others early in life. According to some psychological theories (Romer et al. 2009), young people who exhibit a pessimistic outlook on life are more prone to experience hopelessness and depression which often leads them to withdraw from social activity.

Brannen (2002) argues that when considering young people's outlook on life we have to be aware that "the way people think about the world, the links between the future, present and past are no longer understood as having a linear or chronological relation to one another" (p.518). The outlook on life for young people might not be any more strictly linear and young people often speak from a present time perspective in which they want to try out different possibilities and do not want to think too much about the future and adulthood. Brannen (2002: 529-530) comes up with three models:

- In the **model of deferment** young people consider adulthood in vaguer, more abstract terms, they live very much in the present and orientate themselves to their present status as young people. They make assumptions about adulthood upon an unquestioning acceptance that it will resemble their parents' lives
- In the **model of adaptability** young people view the future as a risk to be calculated and controlled, and perhaps even a positive challenge. These young people expect to be able to try out different types of jobs before they settle down, and are adamant that they do not want to get stuck in boring jobs
- In the **model of predictability** young people's orientations are not dissimilar to traditional assumptions about jobs for life. Far from constructing individualized pathways into adulthood they relied on the support and aspirations of their parents

Vaughan (2005) found in her research with young people in New Zealand, that nearly all the young people considered a state of goal-less-ness to be 'a bad thing' and confidently stated their belief that it was important for people their age to have goals. However, few had any definite plans towards their own goals. Reflecting on the fluidity of young people's own views of navigating transitions, Vaughan's (2005) research shows that some young

people associated definite plans for the future with a notion of adulthood as dull, or as the closing down of options.

Where young people live also matters in terms of their perception of the opportunities objectively available to them, and 'bounded horizons' and relative immobility continue to constrain the labour market behaviour of young people (Green and Owen 2006; Green and White 2008). Social networks and place attachment shape aspirations and intentions in education, training and the labour market. Hence, where people look out from affects what they see, or choose to see, and how they interpret and act on their experience. For some young people, place-based social networks and attachment to place are very important factors in their decisions about life choices. Localised outlooks may mean that they do not consider opportunities beyond their neighbourhood or home town, or opportunities that are different from those conventionally followed by local people (Green and White 2007, 2008). Within this, there is also quite often a strong reliance on family and friends in shaping aspirations and intentions in education, training and the labour market.

Yates (2008) stresses that when discussing aspirational uncertainty amongst young people, it is important to consider wider-ranging structural uncertainties in the youth education, training and labour markets and the uncertain combinations of education, short-term work, unemployment, government schemes, self-employment, part-time employment and training. These uncertainties will inevitably "shape the context in which they will form and pursue aspirations" (p.6). However, whilst young people often are aware of labour market uncertainties, paradoxically, their aspirations remain focused on standard and secure work. "A reaction to the growing uncertainties and insecurities in the labour market seems to be to hold aspirations for higher-status and more secure jobs" (Yates 2008: 8). These observations seem to resonate with Brannen's (2002) model of deferment in

which young people make assumptions about adulthood upon an unquestioning acceptance that it will resemble their parents' lives.

Elder (1985) in a seminal work on life transitions, argues that all change entails a potential loss of control. Key to how this risk is perceived and managed depends on past experiences, perceptions of self-efficacy, and the imagined future possibilities (see also Evans 2002). Raffo and Reeves (2000) argue that some types of social capital are more helpful in achieving aspirations than others, because they facilitate learning and the development of 'competence, self-confidence, self-esteem and identity' (2000: 151). Research shows that young people with certain typologies of social relations can have aspirations which transcend their objective reality – recognizing, however, that these aspirations are realistically rooted within the young person's practical situated knowledge base and that of their social network (Johnston 2000; Lawy 2002). These observations seem to resonate with Brannen's (2002) model of adaptability in which young people view the future as a risk to be calculated and controlled, and perhaps even a positive challenge. However, Kemshall et al. (2006) in their research with young people 'at risk', observe an overarching sense of young people's lack of knowing what their future might hold. There was a certain 'unrealistic' flavour to many of the accounts of young people's construction of future aspirations. Sometimes this seemed to be related to a feeling of apathy/ boredom, and at others to a sense of hopelessness and frustration.

Sullivan (2002) has argued that perception of 'possible self', that is, the connection between present self, motivation, behaviour and possible or future self' (p.4) is essential to personal change. Khane and Bailey (1999 in Sullivan 2002) describe a very successful intervention, the 'I have a Dream' program, in which the enhancement of social capital was promoted, especially through building trusting relationships in conjunction with individually tailored empowerment information and services. This encouraged a significantly larger number of at risk high school students to graduate from

high school and enter college than in previous years. A limited perception of 'possible self' is compounded by membership of a tight network of similar persons. Conversely, access to more diverse networks enables an increased self-perception of alternative self (selves), as well as providing important structural opportunities for change (e.g. employment, training etc) (Aguilera 2002).

Class, Ethnicity and Gender

Within the late modern view that structures appear to have fragmented (Giddens 1990, 1991), macro elements traditionally used in sociological analysis such as class gender and ethnic relations, still remain important to understanding young people's navigation through life. As Furlong and Cartmel (2007) assert,

“life chances and experiences can still largely be predicted using knowledge of an individual's location within social structures: despite arguments to the contrary, class and gender divisions remain central to an understanding of life experiences” (Furlong and Cartmel 2007:2, see also Holland 2007).

Within the previous accounts of social capital and young people's navigation through life, economic, political, and social conditions that shape young people's lives seem to be of importance. From the research which has been explored in this chapter, it emerges that young people's ability to access and draw on social capital's 'use' and 'exchange value' are still structured by gender, class, family background, income, ethnicity and locality.

Crompton (2010) asserts that there is no single 'correct' definition of the class concept. “Definitions of 'class' will vary not only depending upon the questions being asked, but also on account of differences in the theoretical frameworks adopted by different authors” (p.10). Whilst recognising that solely employment-derived measures of class are problematic, especially when researching young people's lives, this study seeks to focus on a notion of dynamic class processes, with an understanding that “class categories are

reformed, re-populated and/or re-configured” (MacDonald et al. 2005: 874). Class position is still highly relevant when it comes to access to these diverse resources which social capital can give. The studies show that young people from poorer backgrounds are still denied access to diverse groups and localities and different ‘leisure activities’ and opportunities to travel, through their class position.

In chapter one, I have highlighted that despite young people being optimistic about their chances in life, they may still face restrictions as a result of their social and economic background (Thomson et al. 2002). As such, when seeking to understand how young people subjectively perceive the unequal conditions of class and place that frame their biographies (MacDonald et al. 2005), one might actually be confronted with an ‘epistemological fallacy’ where individuals make sense of social inequalities in terms of highly individualised attributions of failure (Furlong and Cartmel 2007; Evans 2002). There might be an end of class consciousness but that does not mean that there is an end of class-related inequalities. Instead of emphasising cultural explanations and embracing individualist interpretations (Crompton 2010), the following youth studies retain a focus on institutions and structures and the significance of material structures.

Webster et al. (2005) argue that in order to understand growing up in poor areas “neither ‘deficient’ parenting nor lack of opportunity alone sufficiently explain experiences of poor transitions” (p.2). They identify that for many young people the structural context “provides few resources to resolve crises or overcome contingency, and that constrains choice” (p.2). This distinctively distances itself from a construction of working-class families “as lacking in personal skills and moral responsibility, destined to transfer disadvantage to their children in a ‘cycle of deprivation’” (Gillies 2005: 835). However, it is important to acknowledge that in the light of declining rates of social mobility in Britain, the significance of family has to be recognised: “It is not just the

work you do, but the work your parents do and did, that makes a major contribution to class fate” (Crompton 2010: 20).

For young people from poorer backgrounds, the access to different ‘leisure activities’, opportunities to travel and having a diverse access to different groups, is still denied to them through their class position (Walther et al. 2005). This access is not only financial but also dependent on the localities. Many deprived areas lack leisure amenities and young people choose to be at home, not because they do not want to participate, but because they cannot afford or do not have access to these activities (Leonard 2005). Kay and Bradbury (2009), for example are positive about the possibilities of youth sports volunteering to enhance bonding and encourage useful bridging social capital. However, they emphasise that the enhancement of social capital

“is shaped by a range of personal and structural factors, not least of all, the capacity of individuals to possess and utilise the material and symbolic resources to access and negotiate those social networks through which social capital might be best realised” (p.138).

The networks of some young people from more affluent backgrounds are more widespread, which in turn enables them to access heterogeneous networks in terms of social space and territory. There are examples that reveal that through tapping into the social and cultural capital of their parents, young people establish a countrywide network which they realised through the contacts of their parents. For other young people the networks expand through their membership of interest groups (such as music and sport).

“For transitions to work, it is crucial that the socio-spatial structure of networks extends beyond the immediate context of everyday life and contains exit options from social origin” (Walther et al. 2005: 225).

Contrary to this, Leonard (2005) found in her research with working class communities experiencing varying levels of economic disadvantage in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, that social capital was not a strong asset which could be easily transformed into other types of capital. The families which were lacking social capital were more afflicted by a lack of

economic and human capital, with a negative impact on the educational opportunities available to their children despite their enthusiasm for education (Leonard 2005).

Much of Putnam's and Coleman's work is based on a social capital paradigm which also includes values and norms. Nonetheless, views on the value accrued through social capital might also be dependent on class constructions. Happiness, for example, is differently constituted for working- and middle-class families (Walkerdine et al. 2001). Thomson et al. (2003) suggests that whereas middle-class families' orientation towards achievement is characterised by anxiety, the definition of success operated by working-class families often prioritises 'happiness'. This valuing of happiness facilitates parental interventions to protect their children from "difficult feelings and perhaps preserve their childhood as a time of happiness and freedom from worry and expectation" (Walkerdine et al. 2001: 134). Considering the emphasis on the 'exchange value' of social capital with an emphasis on social mobility and achievement, above the 'use value' of social capital (Leonard 2008), other kinds of social capital benefits which might not focus on achievement are likely to be seen in pathological terms as examples of limited or hindering forces to employability and social mobility.

Individual resources might not have a universal importance and they might play "very different roles for the middle-classes (for whom a 'can do' attitude appears to be essential) and high achieving working-class young people who forge more complicated and varied routes" (Thomson et al. 2003: 44-45). More understanding is needed in order to disentangle these different paradigms and their implications for social capital and transitions research. However, in line with Thomson et al. it might be argued that "given the relative absence of social mobility from the contemporary social system, it may be that policies that seek to encourage social inclusion should give more consideration to the defence of 'happiness' rather than simply reproducing a deficit model of working-class parenting" (2003: 44-45).

The relationship between social capital and ethnicity is not given particular attention in Coleman, Putnam and Bourdieu's analysis (Thapar and Sanghera 2010). Holland et al. (2007) also argue that many dominant writers have failed to examine how young people utilise social capital as a resource in ethnic identity formation, or indeed how ethnic identity is a product of social capital. Same-ethnic friendships generate particularised trust, emotional support, reciprocal care and mutual understanding, especially within the context of their feelings of generalised mistrust, social exclusion and discrimination experienced within wider society. They identified that British Caribbean young people for example, drew on ethnic-specific resources and experiences of bonding within family networks and communities to bridge out. As such, it could be argued that the closure of networks gives strength to social capital, as stated by Coleman (1988). Young people from different ethnic groups were able to use this strong social capital as a social, material and cultural resource in relation to the issue of school and adult transitions.

Research conducted with the Pakistani Muslim 'community' in inner-city Bradford (Thapar and Sanghera 2010), highlights how the educational aspirations of young Pakistani Muslim men and women are shaped by the complex interplay within the home and between the home and the community. Interpersonal relationships between siblings and between co-ethnic peers "facilitated educational aspirations amongst an ethnic group that has traditionally been perceived to be underachieving" (p.3). Older siblings influenced educational choices and quite often took an active role in the family dynamics, especially when the parents were unable to speak, read or write English "or engage in the language's socially exclusive nuances" (p.14).

However, Holland et al. (2007) also highlight that inter-generational poverty is sustained within working-class black neighbourhoods by young people themselves. Many prefer to remain in the 'comfort zone' of their black neighbourhoods, with poorly resourced schools, instead of choosing to go to

well resourced schools in white geographical areas with greater chance of educational success and social mobility.

Both Putnam and Coleman's discussions of social capital have been described as 'gender blind' (Morrow 1999; Holland et al. 2003; Gidengil and O'Neill 2006). It is again here where Bourdieu's (1986) work is better in acknowledging the inter-relationship between social capital and wider structural factors in society, and as Holland asserts, it is his ideas in this area that have influenced others "in questioning how underlying issues of race, class and gender influence individuals' social capital and the diverse ways they utilise this as a social resource in their everyday lives" (Holland 2007: 9).

Walkerdine et al. (2001) argues that educational attainment for girls in Britain is still deeply and starkly divided along traditional class lines, so that the possibility of entering the new female professional labour market is still incredibly difficult for young women from families who, in 1970s terms, were judged as working class through parental occupation and education.

Walkerdine et al. (2001) draw on a longitudinal study to illustrate the very different ways that middle- and working-class young women experience the imperative of self improvement, and engage with practices of self invention and self regulation that are central to the individualising process.

Narratives of upward mobility are lived as success and failure, hope and despair, for some young women entering the labour market in Britain at the turn of the millennium. The multiplicity and fracturing of past and present, belonging, not belonging, the dreams, aspirations and defences come to the forefront within these experiences (Walkerdine 2003). Thomson et al. (2003) argue that discussions of social capital and policy discourses that are centred on uncritical understandings of 'success' are in collision especially in the lives of young women. There is:

"On one hand a discourse of social mobility and individual success in which educational achievement is central; on the other a discourse of

community development, in which the creation and defence of social capital is integral. This is a tension that is experienced acutely by individual young women who must negotiate conflicting values” (Thomson et al. 2003: 38).

Lowndes (2006) drawing on Putnam’s work asserts that focusing on women’s growing community involvement as maintaining the stock of social capital is only a partial portrait of it. Her examination of men’s and women’s involvement in voluntary work and networks of informal sociability reveals clear evidence of gender-specific patterns of activity. Lowndes (2006) underscores the tendency of social capital analysis to focus on activities that are typically male – dominated. These assertions become even more complex when looking at the interaction between ethnicity and gender. Thapar and Sanghera (2010) in their study highlight that schools, college, community groups, community leisure centres and Mosques were the prime sites and spaces where young people socialise and enact their social capital. However the access to these sites were, within the Pakistani Muslim ‘community’ in Bradford gendered, with much greater, if not exclusive, access warranted to men.

Morrow (2006) found in her study with young people, in two schools, in relatively deprived wards in a town in South East England, that the definitions young people gave about their friendships were not particularly marked by gender. Informal social networks are central to children’s everyday lives, and seem to work differently for boys and girls, with girls explicitly recognising friendship as a source of emotional support, while boys on the other hand appeared to value their friends for shared activities and sport. Another important aspect where gender differences are salient is ‘safety’. “Issues of safety are one of the most difficult hurdles women have to overcome to develop trust of others in society compared to men” (Morrow 2006:141). Lack of safety leads some young people, especially young women, to experience constraints on their ability to develop networks through freely moving around and participating in activities with their friends.

Whilst the above studies refer to the impact of gender divisions on social capital, there has not been much empirical exploration of this in young people's lives. Considering social capital in relation to gender relations and women more generally, might promote a more nuanced understanding of the larger relationship between trust, norms and reciprocity, and social networks than currently exists (O'Neill and Gidengil 2006). Thus, Bassani (2007) calls for a better understanding of how gender has an impact on young people's formation of social capital and whether it has an impact on their access to resources through social capital.

“Once a gender perspective is applied, it becomes clear that social capital is imbued with gender inequalities and gendered hierarchies. This in turn, raises larger questions about the ways in which social inequalities in general affect both the accumulation and the investment of social capital” (Gidengil and O'Neill 2006: 5).

Social Capital and Youth Policy

“Social policy is ‘about’ how different societies and their governments interpret the concept of well-being and how they set about developing policies to meet a variety of social needs” (Ellison 2009: 17, see also Alcock 2003, 2008). It draws explicitly on the concept of well-being and not welfare “because wellbeing is about how well people are, not how well they do” (Dean 2006: 1). However policies are mainly a representation of particular “interests” such as employment interests, economic interests, social interests, equity interests, and educational interests (Raffe 2003). Within this, it is important to consider how concepts such as ‘need’, ‘want’, ‘equality’ and ‘justice’ are constructed both across time and in different economic, social, cultural and political contexts. As such, youth policy does not necessarily mirror youth; it mirrors a particular representation of youth based upon different interests (such as labour market driven transition policy) and assumptions which do not always match the experiences of the young people (Vaughan 2003).

In the last ten years, there have been vast developments in youth policy with some of the broader themes being about morality and social justice, social control and the relationship between welfare and work (Hill and Irving 2009: 17). Youth policy under the New Labour government had been dominated by a discourse in which young people and risk have been intrinsically intertwined, by determining the factors that will contribute to poor outcomes in adulthood, taking a reduced role in risk management and promoting personal responsibility (Wood 2009). More specifically, New Labour's policies towards young people had a strong emphasis on targeting those young people 'most at risk' or young people 'posing risk' (Kemshall 2002b; Kemshall 2009b).

Government social policy is seen as a mechanism through which opportunities are distributed to citizens and the individual is charged with taking these up in order to ward off risks (Wood 2009). A strong underlying principle of the 'risk discourse' was a focus on rights and responsibility. Lister (2006) asserts that a prime motto for third way politics was 'No rights without responsibilities'. In an attempt to establish and enforce these responsibilities through contractual regulation, there has been an enormous proliferation of legislation, regulation and guidance under New Labour.

"It was as if by classifying, codifying, monitoring, incentivising and target setting in almost every conceivable sphere of human interaction, government could achieve the complete set of beneficial outcomes" (Jordan 2010: 3).

However the problem with a focus on high contractual regulation is, that it can be counterproductive to these beneficial outcomes and inflict long term damage on existing cultural and moral codes of regulation (Jordan 2010).

In terms of the integration of social capital into social policy initiatives, it has been Putnam's conceptualisation of social capital that has been explicitly associated with New Labour's social policies (Szreter 1999).

"Social policy is now also seen as having the responsibility of creating, maintaining and, in certain circumstances, restoring social order. Its

brief has extended to building societies where there is respect for people and property and a regard for the common good and of helping to foster ‘social capital’” (Wilding 2009: 741).

Social capital was seen to inform a new comprehensive and participatory approach to development, which avoids both small government on the one hand and authoritarian top-down neo-liberalism on the other (Stiglitz 1998, 2000).

When examining the relationship between social policy and social capital, there are different approaches which can be adopted: either that social policy’s aim is to enhance social capital; or that social policy draws on the existing social capital of people or communities in order to achieve its goals. Within both approaches one has to be aware that social policy can diminish and counteract the enhancement of social capital (Boeck and Fleming 2005). In the following section, I will explore how these different approaches have been pursued within the previous New Labour government. Looking at the construction of young people either ‘being at risk’ or ‘posing risk’, I will consider how social policy might directly or indirectly enhance or harm social capital. I will also consider if particular youth policy initiatives reflect certain approaches to social capital. I will finish this section by exploring emerging insights from current government policies around the ‘Big Society’, with the awareness that any discussion can only be tentative and preliminary at this early stage of the Conservative-Liberal Democrat (ConDem) Coalition Government .

Young People ‘At Risk’

New Labour’s policy towards young people had a strong emphasis on targeting those young people ‘most at risk’ through early support and interventions to prevent the ‘risks’ of social exclusion for this group (Webster et al. 2006; Kemshall 2009b). The New Deal for Young People (NDYP) was introduced in Great Britain in January 1998 as one of the key parts of the government’s welfare to work strategy aiming to increase access to

subsidised employment, and to allow more individually tailored provision in the options period. The Green Paper (2001) *Towards full employment in a modern society* outlined how the New Labour government intended to achieve and sustain full employment and social justice across the country. The aim was to broaden welfare-to-work programmes to focus on those who are economically inactive, by reversing the underinvestment in education and training and to ensure that people have the skills they need in the modern labour market and to improve delivery of services.

A particular concern was that too many young people were falling through gaps in service provision and coordinated services were targeted around those young people deemed Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) and at risk of teenage pregnancy and drug use. Young NEET people found themselves subject to a raft of compulsory and voluntary interventions in which education becomes predominantly functional as preparation to work (Armstrong 2009). Within this, the notions of opportunities and options underpinned youth policy with an emphasis on and invocation of individual choice (Smith 2005). However, as explored in the previous section around class and social capital, an individualistic view of choices fails to recognise the bounded choices young people especially the restrictions young people face within deprived neighbourhoods and localities.

It could be argued that the ConneXions service is an example of how social policy is an important step towards enhancing bridging social capital through the role of the meaningful engagement with significant others. In an evaluation of the ConneXions service, Hoggarth and Smith (2004) recognised the importance of developing trusting relationships with skilled and knowledgeable adults, and highlighted that the relationships between the personal advisors and the young person were of central importance. These interventions seem to aim to nurture a dynamic social capital and the possibility of young people developing and engaging in practices which are outside of their safety zone. Raising aspirations, taking account of the views

of young people, community involvement and neighbourhood renewal are some of the key principles of the ConneXions service and seem to be relevant to enhancing social capital for young people as explored in the previous section.

The shortcomings of these services in enhancing social capital are that the places where these services were delivered, for instance, more traditional institutions such as schools, career guidance and employment services, do not always take into account the social context within which youth transitions happen. Hoggarth and Smith (2004) assert in their evaluation of the ConnXions service that the best efforts of individual workers are constrained by context and structural conditions (see also Smith 2007). A holistic view of young people's development is needed for interventions to have maximum impact. Individual workers or even agencies cannot do all that is necessary through their interactions with young people, whether individually or in groups: measures to achieve economic and social regeneration are also required.

Young people 'Posing Risk'

Wood and Hine (2009) identify that over the past ten years, there has been a greater emphasis on risk based social policy over traditional welfarist models. Within this, there is a concern that the term risk becomes entangled with youth, which often results in a demonisation of young people (Kemshall et al. 2009). This is particularly acute in the crime arena where young people are seen as problematic; and persistent young offenders have been singled out for much policy and practice attention (Kelly 2001). The association of crime with youth has persisted despite evidence that youth crime is falling (Armstrong 2004), resulting in what Goldson (1997) has called a 'moral panic' about children and young people either being seen as 'a risk' to others, through offending or other anti-social activity, or being 'at risk' and vulnerable

themselves. Young people seen as 'posing risk' are targeted through an expansive youth justice system (Kemshall 2009b).

The reframing of children as dangerous risk takers whose behaviour can result often in harm to themselves or to others, has led to an emphasis on predictive techniques and preventative social policy (Wood 2009; France 2009; Kemshall 2009b). Of special concern in terms of young people's social capital is the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 which was implemented following the publication of a White Paper entitled *Respect and Responsibility: Taking a Stand Against Anti-Social Behaviour*. The Act also did not only make young people but also their parents, regarded as being 'disorderly', 'anti-social' or 'criminally inclined' eligible targets for formal statutory orders (Goldson 2005). Linked to this policy which focuses on neighbourhoods and locality is also the Cleaner Neighbourhood and Environment Act 2005 which covers a wide range of 'nuisance behaviours' and 'incivilities', together with 'environmental offences'. Young people and quite often their parents who are deemed to have 'failed' or be 'failing', to be 'posing risk' and/or to be 'threatening' (either actually or potentially) are increasingly drawn into the formal youth justice/youth offending nexus implemented through Youth Offending Teams, Youth Inclusion and Support Panels and Youth Inclusion Programmes⁶ (Goldson 2005).

This bulk of policies is especially of concern when considering that for many young people it is mainly their neighbourhood in which they establish important relationships with family and friends. Rogers (2006) argues that these policies reflect the fears of general disorder and the potential criminality of youth embedded in the new agenda of "respect". Youths' often playful disorder in public space is being problematised: "laws tend to facilitate the control of children in urban spaces rather than to allow them to participate actively in the shaping of the environment" (Rogers 2006: 110). By

⁶ See glossary: Youth Offending Teams, Youth Inclusion and Support Panels and Youth Inclusion Programmes

demonising young people's immediate bonded relationships and their localities, there is a danger that these approaches do not recognise that bonded networks are essential for young people in order to develop a sense of identity, trust and wellbeing as highlighted in the previous section.

A strong emphasis of the New Labour policy agenda was to address social problems such as poverty and crime, to improve educational achievement and encourage volunteering and civic participation (ONS 2003) through the reinvigoration of the idea of community. This draws especially on the writings of Putnam (2000) for whom networks that are part of the social capital within communities are seen as crucial in establishing relevant norms, values and roles. These norms, values and roles respectively contribute to social stability, economic development and cohesion. As explored in chapter two, this conception emphasizes civic engagement, as in membership of local non-governmental organizations and norms of reciprocity and trust among community members. Williamson (2009) argues that the result is policy ambivalence towards young people. On the one hand, children and young people are to be listened to, engaged and encouraged to participate (Hine 2009) and on the other, an 'institutionalised mistrust' (Kelly 2003; Stephen 2006) of their capacity to grow up independently of intensive surveillance and support, has tightened the welfare net around young people (Hine and Wood 2009; James and James 2001).

The White Paper, *Strong and Prosperous Communities*, included a chapter on community cohesion⁷, signalling the government's intent to include cohesion in the assessment of local authorities' performance (DCLG 2006). This was measured against the Public Service Agreement (PSA) framework. PSA 21 (HM Treasury 2007) focuses on 'building more cohesive, empowered and active communities'. In its aims for the delivery it specifically mentions that in order to promote community cohesion, the Government will help

⁷ See glossary: community cohesion

young people from different communities grow up with a sense of common belonging. Key to ensuring empowered communities is giving children and young people opportunities to participate and influence decision making as confident and responsible citizens. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 introduced a duty on all maintained schools in England to promote community cohesion which came into effect in September 2007. From September 2008, the secondary curriculum for citizenship education included a strand on 'Identity and Diversity: Living together in the UK'.⁸

The inclusion of young people in decision-making and organisational structures has been one of the central themes of policy on children and young people of Tony Blair's Labour Government (see Every Child Matters, DfES 2003). Specifically the Green Paper for Youth, "Youth Matters" (DfES 2005), emphasises young people making a contribution as citizens. It encourages more young people to volunteer and become involved in their communities, "develop a stronger sense of rights and responsibilities", "improve mutual understanding between young people and the wider community" (p.39) and thus "demonstrate their responsibility for their communities" (p.40). Whilst not mentioning directly social capital, Youth Matters states that the vision entails expanding young people's social networks and building safer and stronger communities and shaping more positive attitudes towards young people (p.40).

Through the above section it becomes evident that New Labour's youth policy focus on social capital was strongly rooted in the parallel concept of 'community cohesion'. The theorising of social capital around responsibility towards the community, stronger communities and citizenship seems to portray a rather naive and optimistic view of 'community'. Strong ties within a community can be accompanied by the tendency to discriminate and exclude

⁸ Citizenship: Programme of study for key stage 3 and attainment target
http://curriculum.qcda.gov.uk/uploads/QCA-07-3329-pCitizenship3_tcm8-396.pdf
Last accessed 28/03/2011

those people who do not belong to that community (Narayan, 1999: 8). The issue of strong social cohesion within a community which itself is exclusive has led to the question “Can social cohesion be a threat to social cohesion?” (Jenson 1998: 36) and to the conclusion “that inclusion could also mean exclusion” (Bernard 1999: 18). Youth policy around community cohesion has failed to address that young people can be constrained by their communities and that many young people experience isolation and exclusion within a construction of ‘youth as a problem’.

Hodgson (2004) writes about what she calls ‘manufactured civil society’, which is when ‘perceived community needs are adapted to the criteria set by the state’, that is, local groups actually working to government agendas, not locally identified issues. She points out that ‘manufactured civil society undermines social capital rather than encourages it’ (p.157). The ‘manufacturing’ of social capital through youth policy offers subtle ways of regulating young people and their communities and achieving harmony and integration. This relates strongly to what I have mentioned at the beginning of this section by referring to the ‘contractual regulation’ pursued by New Labour. As Jordan (2010) points out, the less obvious side of the New Labour failure was the “establishment of a culture of individualism which makes people unable to recognise opportunities to act together to resist such affronts, either at the local, associative or community level, or as whole societies” (p.198), therefore tapping into the rich ‘use’ and ‘exchange value’ of social capital. The Productivity Commission (2003: 68) report on social capital points out that devising policies to create new social capital generally is problematic, and so local and national government should consider the scope for modifying policies that damage social capital, and look for ways of harnessing existing stocks of social capital to deliver programmes more effectively.

Future Directions: The Big Society

The Big Society⁹ is the ConDem coalition government's commitment to a stronger society. The purpose of the Big Society is to give families, groups, networks, neighbourhoods and local communities more power and responsibility. The idea behind the Big Society is that an increase in local groups, businesses, volunteers and social enterprises leads to individuals taking responsibility for the affairs in their local communities. Norman (2010) asserts that the Big Society is about reestablishing the connected society underpinned by ideas of social capital, networking and connectivity and notions of culture, identity and belonging. Within this, promoting diversity is a chief focus of the Big Society. This draws heavily on the work of Putnam with its emphasis on the 'community strength/civic wealth' aspect of social capital achieved through the active involvement, civic participation, enhancing diversity and sense of belonging within neighbourhoods (Meegan and Mitchell 2007).

Particularly relevant to youth policy is the aim within this to encourage people to take an active role in their communities. In order to achieve this, the ConDem Coalition Government has introduced a National Citizen Service (NCS) and an International Citizen Service. The aim is to engage young people and give them a sense of purpose, optimism and belonging and for young people to become active and responsible citizens, to mix with people from different backgrounds, and start getting involved in their own communities (Watt 2010).

The cabinet office minister Francis Maude told the Conservative Party conference (October 2010) that 'this programme will gradually help to build a bigger, stronger society, more cohesive, citizens with a stronger engagement with their communities, with a deep sense of social responsibility.' All these aspects resonate with the community cohesion and communitarian agendas.

⁹ <http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/media/407789/building-big-society.pdf> Last accessed 18/01/2011

Against this criticism, Norman (2010) argues that The Big Society is not just another way of promoting volunteering and philanthropy. He states that The Big Society is more about the recognition of the capacity for innovation of the third sector and that a more connected society would release social energy and capital.

Nonetheless, Jordan (2010) highlights two central weaknesses of the Big Society approach:

“First it takes time for cultures of self-organisation in communities and groups to develop and commercial interests might occupy the spaces left as previous systems are closed down. Second, because wider solidarities are so weak, new organizations will be homogeneous and narrow in their membership, reflecting the fragmentation of society into neighbourhoods of similar incomes, age groups and lifestyles. The devolution of responsibility to this level will favour the better off and more experienced and might contribute to greater inequalities of resources and power” (Jordan 2010: 203).

Whether in practice The Big Society is just another way to dress up community cohesion and communitarianism is still to be seen. However, my own view is that the discourse seems to resonate strongly with that of Putnam (see chapter two), in which voluntary associations and civic involvement are an important function of social order and the active creation of social trust and moral obligations. In my view, the Big Society seems to continue to pursue an agenda that seeks to provide subtle ways of regulating disadvantaged young people and their communities. It seems to me that these normative and integrationist policies, which seek to ‘manufacture’ the civil society through ‘techniques of social regulation’ will perpetuate the discourses of responsabilisation which are already heavily prevalent in debates about young people (see chapter one).

My Own Position

In the previous chapters and sections, I have explored the different approaches to social capital, but also the different findings within the

research literature looking at social capital and young people. What is noticeable is that there are different dimensions to social capital. Overall, I agree with Van Deth (2008) that the conceptualization of social capital covers both structural and cultural aspects, and the assertion that whilst social capital is contingent on social networks, it should not be treated as equivalent to or interchangeable with social networks (Lin 2008).

Following Bourdieu's work, I see social capital as an asset and a resource that requires active investment and thus becomes a means to maintain power positions within society. Thus, by focusing on the maintenance and persistence of different forms of inequalities, I hope that within this study, social capital can be used to explain differential access to resources and opportunities resulting from social connections. Rather than stressing that social capital is owned only by the professional classes, I will draw on Coleman's view that social capital is not limited only to the powerful, but also gives real benefits to poor and marginalised communities. Both Bourdieu's and Coleman's focus on the context within which inequalities are reproduced, will aid this study to investigate and acknowledge the inter-relationship between social capital and wider structural factors in society.

From Putnam's work, the importance of fostering norms of reciprocity and trust will also provide an interesting area of investigation. Using Moellering's insights, I will explore if trust is a key component of social capital as stated by Putnam. Putnam's work has much to offer this study, especially by recognising the different types of social capital bonding and bridging and the importance of trust. These distinctions will be used to look at the different network types and the resources which these types of networks might give to young people.

The distinction between the different effects and benefits of social capital (Lin 2008) is important for this study. The distinction between individual and collective benefits and resources which has been presented by Esser (2008),

will be useful in disentangling some of the debates around whether social capital is a private or public good.

Following the previous theoretical exploration and my own work on social capital and social exclusion (Boeck et al. 2001; Boeck and Fleming 2002, 2005), I distinguish two essential dimensions inherent in the concept of social capital (see also Berger-Schmitt 2002 and Rajulton et al. 2006):

1. The 'Resource' dimension which incorporates the goals of reducing disparities, promoting rights, equal opportunities and combating social exclusion
2. The 'Glue' dimension which deals with proactivity and participation and all aspects aiming at strengthening social relations, interactions and ties

By bringing these different perspectives together, I argue that there are different types of social capital which are important in different situations, or moments in our life. These types are shaped through:

- The types of networks (similar or diverse, bonding and bridging)
- Specific and shared norms and values
- The type of community (location, interest, identity, faith, etc.)
- Power and economic resources

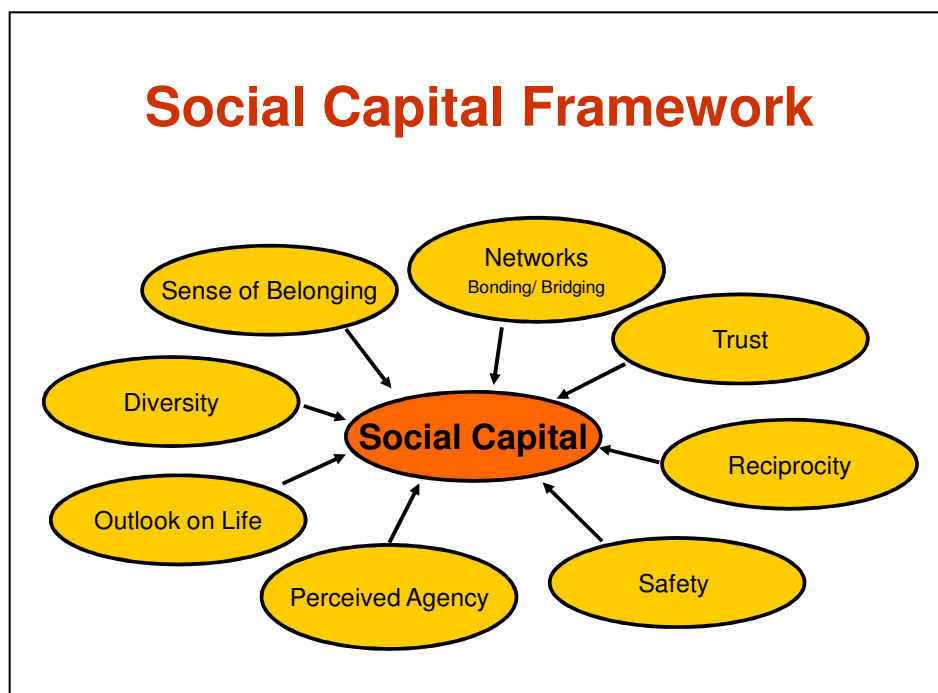
In order to fully explore social capital in young people's lives, I will focus on access to resources, whilst taking into account participation and integration. Originating with people forming connections and networks based on the principles of trust, mutual reciprocity and norms of action, social capital is created from the complexity of social relations and their impact on the lives of the people in them (Boeck and Fleming 2002). People engage with others through a variety of associations forming many different types of networks,

sometimes each of these networks has different sets of norms, trust and reciprocity (Field 2008). Therefore, for this study I define social capital as:

The glue, which holds groups and communities together and resources that stem from the bulk of social interactions, networks and network opportunities that either people or communities have within a specific environment. This environment is characterised by a commonality of mutual trust and reciprocity and informed by specific norms and values.

To aid the empirical investigation of social capital, I have developed a social capital framework that allows me to explore the different types, levels, or dimensions of social capital, and different performance outcomes associated with varying combinations of these dimensions (see Woolcock 1998; Narayan 2001; Morrow 2004; Schaefer-McDaniel 2004; Pichler and Wallace 2007; Esser 2008). The following diagram represents the social capital framework which will be adopted throughout this piece of research:

Diagram 1: Social Capital Framework



This framework contains the key features of social capital: networks and participation in networks, safety, trust, reciprocity and diversity (Onyx and Bullen 2000: 89; Putnam 2000:16). These components are also used by national surveys and the Office for National Statistics¹⁰, and are based upon existing research during which I have developed this multi-faceted framework (Boeck and Fleming 2002; Boeck and Fleming 2005; Boeck et al. 2001). It also contains factors which are seen as related to social capital, or which might influence the enhancement and development of social capital: sense of belonging, outlook on life as explored in this chapter and young people's agency which will be further explored in chapter four.

Conclusion of the Literature Review

In this chapter, I have explored how social capital has been applied to the study of young people's lives. It has been argued that young people's networks are forged within localities, communities of different types and groups of interest or identity. In this sense, this reflects Bourdieu's assertion that it is important to not only focus on aspects of inequality, but also on the context within which these inequalities are reproduced. He theorises this through the concepts of 'habitus' and 'field'. However, in contrast to Bourdieu, youth studies also stress the positive aspects of these contexts for young people's lives.

An important advancement within the study of social capital and young people has been made by assessing the resources and value attached to social capital. The distinction between individual and collective benefits (Esser 2008) is further disentangled by making the distinction between 'exchange' and 'use value' derived through social capital. The research also shows that young people's ability to access and draw on social capital's 'use' and 'exchange value' are still structured by gender, family background,

¹⁰ Office for National Statistics: Social Capital guide <http://www.ons.gov.uk/about-statistics/user-guidance/sc-guide/index.html> last accessed 18/03/2011

income, ethnicity and locality. Drawing on Bourdieu's work, some studies focus on the maintenance and persistence of social class and other forms of inequalities. These highlight that whilst young people are agents in generating their own resources, we also have to recognise that these resources are unequally distributed in society in terms of social mobility and creating access to opportunities.

In many cases, strong bonded networks are essential for young people in order to develop a sense of identity, trust and wellbeing. Thus, through closure of networks (Coleman 1997), young people will be able to tap into the use value of social capital. Using Bourdieu's analogy (in Forbes and Wainwright 2001: 805), these positive bonded networks enable young people to be like fish in water. When young people encounter a social world of which it is the product, it is like a 'fish in water', it does not feel the weight of the water and it becomes a safe, familiar and comfortable place to be.

Nevertheless Coleman's and Putnam's view of social capital is often seen as portraying a rather naive and optimistic view of community. They mainly focus on the benign functions of social capital without looking at its darker side, in which the privileged accumulate it to enhance their power over the oppressed, as described by Bourdieu. The youth studies have highlighted how young people can be constrained by their communities and how many young people experience isolation and exclusion within a construction of youth as 'problem'.

Whilst recognising the use value of bonded social capital, one of the main arguments within youth studies is that relying on tightly bonded networks within deprived localities, tends to provide access to a restricted social capital and thus diminishes young people's opportunities to make changes in their lives. This double sidedness of bonding social capital in young people's lives is a special contribution of the youth studies to the conceptual development of social capital. This also leads many scholars to be critical about the

distinction between bonding and bridging social capital, as developed by Putnam, and to argue that it is not strictly applicable to young people's lives.

The importance of a diverse set of networks in creating access to the 'exchange value' of social capital is being recognised by many scholars in youth studies. An important new aspect in terms of developing more diverse and trusting relationship has been found within the role of the meaningful engagement with significant others. It has been argued that this is strongly linked to the development of a dynamic social capital and the possibility of young people having aspirations, and developing and engaging in practices which are outside of their safety zone.

Youth studies which draw on Bourdieu's theoretical framework tend to acknowledge the inter-relationship between social capital and wider structural factors in society. These scholars would generally agree that class, gender and ethnicity divisions remain central to an understanding of the life experiences of young people.

Justification and Aims of the Study

The understanding of 'youth' as a stage in life course has provided new opportunities to capture and comprehend the complex lives that young people are living in late modernity (France 2009). Structurally, there is a recognition that young people face a range of social, cultural and economic risks that make contemporary life particularly challenging; and thus the continuing sociological relevance of class, gender and place in understanding the lived experience of young people (Furlong and Cartmel 2007; MacDonald 2005; Green and Owen 2006) needs further investigation. This should recognise that "individuals are social actors and make a contribution to their own lives and that their voices are important in helping us to understand these processes" (France 2009: 25).

Throughout the literature review, it has become evident that debates on social capital, its meaning and how it can be explored and measured are still rife (Casey 2004; Halpern 2005), particularly in relation to children and young people (Morrow 2002b, 2004; Leonard 2005; Holland 2008; Thapar and Sanghera 2010). A number of aspects and areas for further enquiry emerge through the literature review. Some of these are more conceptual aspects of social capital and others refer to broader discussions of social capital within the agency and structure debate. The most relevant to this study are:

- Children and young people do not feature prominently in Bourdieu's, Coleman's and Putnam's work
- In both Coleman's and Putnam's accounts, the agency of young people is rather muted (Leonard 2008)
 - A clearer understanding of the extent to which young people access and/or generate social capital and exhibit agency in its acquisition and deployment is needed (Holland 2005)
 - A clearer understanding of the resourceful ways in which many young people use their social capital to overcome contextual and economic constraints or exert their agency as individuals and within groups is needed (Gillies 2005; Henderson 2007; Cockburn and Cleaver 2009)
- The relationship between social capital and ethnicity is not given particular attention in Coleman's, Putnam's and Bourdieu's analysis (Thapar and Sanghera 2010)
- Both Putnam's and Coleman's discussions of social capital have been described as 'gender blind' (Morrow 1999; Holland et al. 2003; Gidengil and O'Neill 2006)
- The relationships that young people develop and mobilize remain overlooked in the main social capital literature (Thapar and Sanghera 2010)

- The distinction between ‘bridging’ and ‘bonding’ social capital is not clear cut, but rather ‘fuzzy’ (White and Green 2011; Holland et al. 2007)
- Young people’s outlook on life might not be constructed anymore in a linear way (Brannen 2002) and when discussing aspirational uncertainty amongst young people, it is important to consider wider-ranging structural uncertainties (Yates 2008)
- There are definitional problems that relate to the meaning and measurement of the different components of the concept. More clarity is needed in exploring concepts such as trust, reciprocity, sense of belonging and community, and how these can be measured in a meaningful way (Morrow 2002a)

Within a focus on young people’s agency, youth policy has framed young people as the active, autonomous and responsible entrepreneurs of their own DIY project (Kelly 2001). A growing body of academics are concerned about ‘techniques of social regulation’ with two inherent trends: on an individual level that of ‘moral engineering’ through a focus on individual change and at a community level through risk prevention (Kemshall 2006, 2002a) and building community strength and civic wealth through participation (Meegan and Mitchell 2007). Challenging this discourse of individualisation and responsabilisation, this literature review has given a brief overview which demonstrates the importance of exploring how young people navigate the contradictory problems inherent in choices between possible constructions of their own agency and the access to, possession and maintenance of social capital. There are several policy concerns which directly have an impact on young people’s social capital.

- An individualistic view of choices fails to recognise the bounded choices young people especially the restrictions young people face within deprived neighbourhoods and localities (Evans 2002)
- The shortcomings of youth services in enhancing social capital are that the places where these services are delivered do not always take into

account the social context within which youth transitions happen (Hoggarth and Smith 2004)

- By demonising young people's immediate bonded relationships and their localities interventions do not recognise that bonded networks are essential for young people in order to develop a sense of identity, trust and wellbeing (Rogers 2006)
- There is a policy ambivalence towards young people (Williamson 2009). On the one hand, children and young people are to be listened to, engaged and encouraged to participate (Hine 2009) and on the other, an 'institutionalised mistrust' (Kelly 2003; Stephen 2006) of their capacity to grow up independently
- Youth policy around community cohesion has failed to address that young people can be constrained by their communities. Inclusion could also mean exclusion (Bernard 1999)
- The devolution of responsibility to the community level within the 'Big Society' will favour the better off and more experienced and might contribute to greater inequalities of resources and power (Jordan 2010; 203)

There is a growing need for wide-ranging discussions about the increasingly polarised life chances of different sub-populations of young people and the extent to which public policy may address different manifestations of 'poverty' and 'social exclusion' (Williamson 2007: 24). Within this, whilst recognising that the poverty and economic marginality experienced by young people is not necessarily a *direct* product of their social networks and cultural practices, there is also a recognition that social capital is a social resource that can give access to opportunities, education and the labour market and can lead to collective efficacy which may work to influence children's and young people's well-being (Morrow 2002b). The exploration of how social capital is implicated in individual biographies of social mobility, shows that individual resources of ability and ambition do not necessarily translate into

success for all young people and a better understanding of the underlying processes is needed (Holland 2007; Bassani 2007).

Addressing all these points would be an extensive endeavour beyond the remit of this PhD study. However, they were of core importance as guiding factors for my research.¹¹ I intend to move away from frameworks that are heralded as total perspectives and therefore will attempt to bridge the gap between micro-macro, quantitative and qualitative approaches through a more complementary and interchangeable approach (Layder 2006), which will be explored in the next chapter. This might shed new light not only on the theoretical discussions through empirical investigations, but also on youth policy and practice implications.

Out of the previous considerations, the following aims for this study emerged:

- The first aim of this research is to investigate the concept of social capital through the exploration of its different aspects and components, taking into account the depth, richness and complexity of young people's social reality through a multi-dimensional research approach
- The second aim is to contribute to the understanding of young people's agency within the enactment and enhancement of social capital
- The third aim is to inform policy and practice development within and understanding that researchers do not only have an academic responsibility but also a social responsibility

The literature presented in chapters two and three and the identified aims raise a number of central research questions to be addressed throughout the rest of this thesis. These are:

¹¹ Some of the references are recent additions to the literature review which does not mean that some of the important points were not present at an earlier stage. A PhD is a work in progress over a long period in time.

- How is social capital enacted and experienced by young people?
- What are the networks young people have? With whom and where do they form their networks?
- How do young people construct interpersonal trust and what role does it play in the formation and enhancement of social capital?
- How are bonding and bridging types of social capital manifest in young people's lives? Is it a useful typology?
- Is agency as a socially situated process, shaped by the experiences young people have within their enactment of social capital? What is the role of young people's agency within the social capital formation?
- What is the inter-relationship between social capital and wider structural factors in society? Does class, gender and ethnicity impact on young people's social capital and the access to resources?

In the next chapter, I will outline the ontological and epistemological position which underpins this study. Within a critical realist perspective, I will look at the relevance of Layder's 'Domain Theory' (Layder 1997; 2006) to investigate the complexity of social reality and how this informs the exploration of young people's social capital. The chapter finishes with the exposition of a mixed methods research approach and the overall research design.

Chapter 4: Methodology: Ontological and Epistemological Considerations

Introduction

Within any social investigation, it is important to have a clear social ontology (Layder 1998; New 2001). Whilst social scientists are still divided over what constitutes a 'proper approach to social research', methods in social sciences have to be appropriate to the nature of the object to be studied (Sayer 2003: location¹² 119). In terms of the approach for this study, the first question which arises is whether there is a specific research strategy which is better suited than others for tackling the exploration of social capital and young people. In order to guarantee the quality of a research project, Denscombe (2007) asks for these choices to be reasonable and to be made explicit. The exploration of the complexities of the concept of social capital in the literature highlight that careful consideration should be given to the choice of an appropriate research strategy (Denscombe 2007; Silverman 2005; Bryman 2006; Denzin 2009). Prout (2005) calls for the need to recognise that in a complex society such as ours, social relations are heterogeneous,

“that is, they are made up from a wide variety of material, discursive, cultural, natural, technological, human and non-human resources. Childhood, then, like all phenomena, is heterogeneous, complex and emergent, and, because this is so, its understanding requires a broad set of intellectual resources, an interdisciplinary approach and an open-minded process of enquiry” (Prout 2005: 2).

I will explore in the following section the ontological and epistemological approaches adopted in this research which also reflect my own world view: my own set of assumptions about the social world to be investigated, my previous research experiences and reflections within the field (Boeck et al. 2001; Boeck and Fleming 2002, 2005; Boeck et al. 2006). I will set the scene

¹² This is refers to the location in e-books and will be adopted throughout the document.

by exploring critical realism and Layder's 'Domain Theory' (Layder 1997, 2006), with a section on the structure and agency debate, which lies at the core of these approaches. Considering some of the epistemological challenges, I then develop my research paradigm, drawing on adaptive theory and using a mixed methods design. The chapter concludes with an overview of the design and a consideration of the two methods used within this study.

Critical Realism and Domain Theory

There are a number of challenges in researching the complexity of social reality, or in other words the 'textured' or interwoven nature of different levels and dimensions of social reality (Layder 1997, 2006). In order to have a tight framework which recognises the conceptual complexity of social capital and the contextual complexity of young people's lives, I am drawing on the work of Layder and his 'Domain Theory' (1993, 2006). Layder challenges some of the sociological orthodoxies in research methodology, in line with his realist methodological perspective, which seeks to foster the interconnections between theory and research in sociology. Coming from a realist perspective, the ontological presupposition is that two 'radically different kinds of thing' exist in the social world: society and people, which are mutually dependent, yet independently identifiable (Bhaskar 1989: 33). Sayer (2003) explores the "nature of realism" and asserts that the view of the social world within 'realism' is one which is stratified and differentiated, recognising "the emergent powers both of social structures and of people" (New 2001: 43). It does not only consist of events, but also of objects and structures which have powers to generate events, and as such it is 'socially produced' (Sayer 2003: location 881).

This research aims to explore the complexity of the social reality through a model of society which is layered or 'stratified'. This includes macro (structural, institutional) phenomena as well as the micro phenomena of

interaction and behaviour (Layder 2006) and “the fact that social phenomena can rarely be understood only by reference to entities within the immediate vicinity of the action” (Prout 2005: 62). Within his domain theory, Layder (2006) proposes the four 'domains' of psychobiography; situated activity; social settings; contextual resources. The domain of psychobiography focuses on personal attitudes, values, and understandings of identity and behaviour. It is concerned with the internal mechanisms shaping the personality. Situated activity is characterised by the social interaction and the communication situations between people. It is also about the impact of the face to face in social life. Social settings are the locations where situated activities take place. They can be formalised organisational environments, but also, in the lives of young people, settings such as the school, youth groups and the neighbourhood. The context is about the impact of social structures on social life and looks at the contextual resources with a focus on power, domination, discourses and practices that underlie inequality on a society wide basis (Layder 2006). These four domains take into account the depth, richness and complexity of social reality and its variegated nature (Layder 2006: 273), recognising within the ontological position the stratification of social reality (New 2001: 44).

Structure and Agency

The ontological status accorded to 'agency' and 'structure' is central to this study. Layder's (1997, 2006) focus on the structure and agency debate is located within the broader macro-micro debate and his concern on how best to approach the relationship between the individual and society. Layder is like Bourdieu (1986) and Giddens (1986), concerned to address the structure and agency debate as a central issue. Giddens (1986) brings together structure and agency in his model of structuration. Within this, people's life opportunities and life chances are not predefined by the structure, but actually reproduce the structure through being part of the socialisation processes. As agents, people have the capacity to change things and to rise

above, to challenge and to change the structure which oppresses and disadvantages them. Bourdieu (1986) views agency in terms of situational agency, which sheds light on the person in the environment and on structural constraint, including the behaviours and practices of privilege that tend otherwise to be lost as background in the study of the poor (Fram 2004).

Critical realists allocate independent powers to structure and agency. Concerning the issue of duality of structure and agency, Bhaskar's work underlines their interdependent and dynamic nature, in which social structures do not exist independently from the activities they govern, nor do they exist independently of the agents' conception of what they are doing in the activity (Bhaskar 1979: 48 in Outhwaite 1998: 288–289). Whilst recognising this interdependent and dynamic nature, Parker and Stanworth (2005) suggest that there is a clear ontological distinction between structure and agency, and thus “an adequate account of agency depends on giving both agents and structure their due, and at all costs avoiding reducing the powers of either in the three forms of conflation”. Conflation occurs when the identities of two or more concepts become confused, until there seems to be only a single identity. Examples of such conflation are that the notion of structure is derived from agency (upwards conflation) or agency from structure (downwards conflation) or by making them logically identical (central conflation). Layder (1997) also distances himself from a duality model of structure-agency. Through the “binding together of agency and structure and macro and micro elements” (p.228), Layder rejects within his domain theory attempts at synthesis, but instead argues that “social life comprises varying and distinctive characteristics, mutually interdependent and interlocking” (p.2).

In considering young people's lives, agency can be understood as the input from young people as individuals to the dynamic processes of transition and change (Furlong and Cartmel 2007). The agency of young people is seen as a predominantly individual, creative and proactive process of social

engagement. Past habits and routines are contextualized and future possibilities envisaged within the contingencies of the present moment. This 'socially situated agency' is influenced but not determined by structures (Evans 2002: 148). Agency is seen as a socially situated process, shaped by the experiences of the past, the chances present in the current moment, and the perceptions of possible futures. Evans (2002) asserts that the influence of social structures is not direct, nor is it deterministic. Young people's experiences of life are complicated by the fact that they can react and respond to structural influences, that they can make their own decisions with respect to a number of major, as well as minor, life experiences, and that they can actively shape some important dimensions of their experiences. This can be referred to as '*bounded agency*': Young adults manifest a sense of agency, but there are a number of boundaries or barriers that circumscribe and sometimes prevent the expression of agency (Evans 2002: 261).

Thus, by focusing on the interplay between structure and agency, research has used the notion of 'navigating life' (Vaughan 2005; Boeck et al. 2006; Diepstraten et al. 2006), which takes into account the contextual environment of people's lives. Navigating life transitions is seen as trying to cope, manage and make informed choices in everyday life circumstances, sometimes relying on affect and emotion (Slovic et al. 2004), whilst also being exposed to outside forces such as the social, economic, political and cultural environment. It also introduces the notion of the social actor as a navigator, navigating uncertain and sometimes unpredictable decisions in an uncertain world (Boeck et al. 2006). I would argue that this notion of 'navigating life' not only takes into account young people's agency, but also the situated activity and settings within broader structural processes, thus it sits well with Layder's 'Domain Theory'. I will use this notion throughout this study.

Epistemological Position

Within the different epistemological positions which are commonly invoked, two broad groups can be identified: on one side are the interpretivists, post modernists, social constructionists and relativists, and on the other side are the positivists, modernists, and empiricists (Lawson 2002). The positivists, modernists and empiricists assert that social phenomena can be explained 'scientifically', based on regularities from the data obtained. Most researchers who take this standpoint aim "not to disturb the world they are studying: their aim, instead, is to trawl their data collecting net quietly through the social world" (Graham and Jones 1992: 239) and use tools such as surveys or questionnaires to depict and understand the subject matter and numerical approaches to reporting and analysing the data gathered (Ward and Boeck 2000).

Standing in contrast to the above are the interpretivists, post modernists, social constructionists and relativists who follow the interpretative tradition, in which an understanding of the social world and the subject matter studied is generated from the people. This second tradition is more concerned with understanding social phenomena from the viewpoint of the people themselves (Guba and Lincoln 1994; Denzin 2009). The argument is that human beings "act toward things on the basis of the meanings that the things have for them" and that "the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with one's fellows". The meanings are "handled in, and modified through, an interpretative process used by the person in dealing with the things he encounters" (Blumer 1986: 2). Thus, people's active response to social reality possesses meaning which cannot be interpreted solely by a snapshot survey. Through a process of engaging with people, the motivations behind their reactions and actions towards particular situations can be explained (Ward and Boeck 2000).

Moving beyond single perspectives, critical realism proposes that it is much more appropriate to talk about a 'multi-dimensionality' of the objects of social sciences (Sayer 2003; Layder 1993, 2006; Bhaskar 2008), in which the researcher has to assess different constituent processes within a whole, rather than isolating them. Because of this multi-dimensionality, it is also difficult to abstract single processes, or to identify particular constituents and their effects. In an attempt to propose a 'multi-dimensional approach' within social sciences, Layder (2006) argues that in social sciences, one should not only deal with one dominant sociological paradigm, but "a number of competing (or complementary) frameworks of ideas" (Layder 1993: 53). Hartman (2005) points out that the recognition of the inadequacy of models, which emphasise one aspect of the social world at the expense of another, had already been exposed fifty years ago by Mills, in what he defined "the sociological imagination" as "the capacity to range from the most impersonal and remote transformations to the most intimate features of the human self – and to see the relations between the two" (Mills 1959: 7).

A realist researcher works epistemologically under the premise that our knowledge of the social world is fallible and theory-laden, therefore we never construct our knowledge from scratch; scientific knowledge is a product of the socio-historical conditions in which it functions (Bhaskar 1998). Consequently, "our knowledge of the world around us will depend on the way that we look at it" (Agar 2005: 34). Further to this, it has to be recognised that adult views of children and young people differ from children's and young people's views of themselves (Waksler 1991: viii). However, this does not mean that it cannot be explored empirically, and the knowledge gained can successfully explain and inform practice. I am therefore focusing on children and young people as reliable informants concerning their own everyday experience (Farrell et al. 2004), and on young people's own subjective accounts and constructions of their social world, which lie at the heart of this study (Morrow 2002: 179-180; James and Prout 1997; Prout 2005).

Epistemological Challenges within the SC debate

Forbes and Wainwright (2001) assert that social capital is a multifaceted and ill-defined concept, for which there are a number of competing definitions. Their assertion is still relevant to date, especially because research on social capital expands into numerous arenas and applications and thus, “both the conception and the operationalisation for social capital have become diverse and multidimensional” (Lin and Erickson 2008:1).

Whilst recognising that there is growing evidence that social capital can have an impact on different economic, political, social and health outcomes, it is however important not to start with such empirical presumptions, especially within a still under-researched field such as young people and social capital. When trying to explore the impact or the relationships of social capital with any other social, economic or health outcome, one has to be careful not to make loose empirical assumptions. Grootaert (2001) refers to Putnam’s concept of social capital as narrow, by viewing it as a set of 'horizontal associations' between people. He points out that two empirical presumptions underlie this concept: networks and norms are empirically associated, and these have important economic consequences. Similar assumptions are made with horizontal conceptualisations, or even more complex conceptualisations of social capital (Grootaert 2001:10).

Whether social capital should be treated as a private or a public good is another common challenge which has been explored in the literature review (chapter two). Treating social capital as a public good and examining its relationship to health, economic and other social factors presents the researcher with complex epistemological challenges. Various authors point to the problems of reconciling the concept of social capital as a collective phenomenon, with data collected at the individual level (Kawachi, Kennedy and Glass 1999; Wilkinson 1999; Forbes and Wainwright 2001; Hawe and Shiell 2000).

“... there are two fundamental issues in traversing the path from individual to total social capital. One is how to cardinalise (give a measure to) the individual social capitals in order that they can be set against one another. The other is, having done this, how to make interpersonal comparisons between individuals—how much does my social capital count relative to yours?” (Fine 2001: 178).

The Office for National Statistics¹³ states that, in many surveys, respondents are asked a range of questions that cover a variety of issues. Commonly the focus is on:

- Levels of trust: for example, whether individuals trust their neighbours and whether they consider their neighbourhood a place where people help each other
- Membership: for example, to how many clubs, societies or social groups individuals belong
- Networks and how much social contact individuals have in their lives: for example, how often individuals see family and friends

Forbes and Wainwright (2001) question how well complex packages of psychological and social thoughts and actions can be transferred to the analysis of whole populations. They call for further clarity and methodological sophistication. They suggest that a way forward could be to start with the individual and develop the analysis upwards (Forbes and Wainwright 2001). A strong case has also been made for integrating qualitative data within this process to allow for a much fuller appreciation of the utility and meaning of these theories within different communities (Popay et al. 2005; Blaxter et al. 2001; Blaxter et al. 2006).

¹³ Office for National Statistics: Social Capital guide <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/CCI/nugget.asp?ID=314>
Last accessed 15/01/2011

Methodology

Taking into account the above ontological and epistemological positions and challenges, the first task was to find a research design which would enable me to simultaneously answer confirmatory and exploratory questions, and therefore verify and generate theory in the same study. I also needed a design which would give me the contextual depth without losing greater breadth, in order to make better and more accurate inferences, reflecting on the complexity without simplifying it.

“...a methodology that examines and engages with the small everyday details of life as well as the big questions, and that is prepared to ‘get its hands dirty’. It is a constant process of finding, creating or identifying problems – problems in society that are worth investigating (because they are general problems, or problems with political outcomes), and problems for the researcher in the construction of a research method, and of the theoretical underpinnings of that method” (Webb et al. 2002: 72-73).

Taking on board these challenges, my focus was on looking at the different types, levels, or dimensions of social capital and different performance outcomes associated with varying combinations of these dimensions (Woolcock 1998). I also distanced myself from positivist correlations such as low trust produces low social capital and high trust, high social capital, or the view that social capital in deprived areas is low and in middle class areas high. One of the questions critical realism addresses is how we conceptualise, theorise and abstract and what approach to take towards causation. In terms of causation, realist perspectives argue that some relationships have causal powers which might not produce regularities. This is why there is less weight put on quantitative methods and more on qualitative methods, based on the recognition that “many things are going on at once and they lack the possibility, open to many natural scientist, of isolating out particular processes in experiments” (Sayer 2003: location 155).

Having recognised the stratification of reality, the research design appropriately has to be at several levels. Having argued for the ‘multi-

dimensionality' of the objects of social sciences there is a need to "combine actors' own accounts of their actions with other ways of measuring the social world" (New 2001: 43). Through an exploration of the interaction between agency and structure, I aim to throw light on the complexity of social processes behind the social capital formation and its impact on young people's navigation of life transitions. This acknowledges the importance of meaning and identity in shaping actions, but also looks outside the realm of subjective perception, to examine the material and socially constructed influences shaping agency (Lawson 2002). The focus in this research will be on the interaction between the domains of self, situated activity, social settings and context. The enactment and enhancement of social capital is seen as a process which has to be negotiated in a continuous interaction between these domains (Layder 1997, 2006). This will be explored in the next sections.

My Research Paradigm

When considering the insights gained in the previous sections and in chapter three: social capital and young people, it becomes clear that within the exploration of social capital and young people, I cannot simply transfer the social capital frameworks developed from adult data to the social world of children and young people (Leonard 2008; Baier and Nauck 2006). As described in previous sections, within the growing body of research which focuses on young people and social capital, the 'extent to which young people access and/or generate social capital and exhibit agency in its acquisition and deployment' has been highlighted. In previous research and evaluation work (Boeck and Fleming 2005), I have observed that the processes of social capital formation are not fixed entities. They depend in part on the context of interaction and are created, developed, modified and changed within the actual process of formation. Therefore, in accordance with my ontological and epistemological positions explored in this chapter, I am concerned with understanding the process of 'interaction', the context of

those interactions and the structural influences which are interwoven with these processes. In order to achieve this, I am drawing on Layder's (2006) adaptive theory.

Adaptive Theory

Within his Domain Theory, Layder (2006) challenges some of the sociological orthodoxies in research methodology through the formulation of his adaptive theory. In order to bridge the divide between theory and research, Layder proposes his adaptive theory with an aim of connecting empirical research with his theoretical explorations around the four different domains. Layder asserts that adaptive theory is neither positivist nor interpretivist and as such it is able to "incorporate and reconcile the equally valid insights of objectivism and subjectivism" (Layder 2006: 293) through a 'disciplined epistemological inclusiveness'.

Therefore, in this study I have drawn on prior theory around social capital by using the literature review and my own previous research not only to inform possible lines of enquiry and explanations, but also to lend order and pattern to the research. The challenge within this was not to impose theory but to adapt theory to the order and pattern contained in the emerging data. I therefore had to be aware that if the fieldwork is being interpreted "in terms of a prior framework favoured by the researcher", then it will lead to a biased outlook. In this context, knowledge cannot progress since the data of research is always interpreted as reinforcing or verifying the existing perspective of the researcher" (Layder 1993: 52).

The adaptive theory approach holds the promise of a "healthy theoretical 'anarchy' wherein communication between frameworks is encouraged, and as a result innovative and synthetic forms of theory and research strategies are produced" (Layder 1993: 53). However, Layder also warns and emphasises that so far, these promises have been largely unfulfilled. In my

work, I am especially interested in drawing out the complexity of the issues, rather than giving single answers. A constant challenge in formulating this PhD thesis has been to have a coherent approach on the one hand, and to highlight fluidities and complexities on the other hand.

Layder's (1993) theoretical constructs could help me to have a well defined focus without losing sight of the complexity of the phenomenon to be researched. Thus, this more comprehensive outlook would have several consequences:

1. To enable me in this research to address the problem of the division between macro and micro levels of analysis in sociology, by concentrating attention on the organic links between them. (the research and theory it produces have a textured or interwoven quality)
2. To enable me to understand children and young people as agents who have powers, or lack of powers, to influence and organise events – to engage with the structures which shape their lives (Alanen and Mayall 2001: 3)

Layder's Research Map

My exploration of social capital draws on a framework which brings together different aspects which are either constituent, or have an influence on social capital (see previous chapter). As a result, I do not solely focus on the networks of young people, or solely on issues of belonging or trust. The exploration is about looking at different types of networks, that is, bridging and bonding, which are enacted in situated activities and within specific settings. All the associated factors, such as school influence, outlook on life and safety are not independent factors and within my research framework, I see them as associated to social capital and interconnected (Boeck and Fleming 2002, 2005). Another important aspect to take into account is that young people are not a homogeneous group. There are individual differences in personal histories, dispositions, lifestyle, values and norms, which reflect

the view that “what goes on in a place is not fixed, but is a contingent outcome of the interactions between agency and structure” (Mohan and Mohan 2002: 196).

In order to investigate this interconnectedness in a systematic way, I use Layder’s research map (1997, 2006). This map will be used for the data collection and for the presentation of the findings. Its contribution lies in the way in which it can disentangle the multi-layered elements of social capital, and overcome the challenges of presenting the findings of this mixed methods research, including the qualitative and quantitative dichotomy. The following chart represents Layder’s research map, as presented in 1996, which I will use. However, theoretically I will also draw on the further development of this framework in Layder (2006). It highlights that within my overall research subject which is social capital and young people, the different research elements are: self, situated activity, setting and context. The column with the title ‘research focus’ is a short summary of the aspects within each of the research elements.

Diagram 2: Layder’s Research Map

| Layder’s Research Map | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Research Subject | Research Element | Research Focus |
| Social Capital | CONTEXT | Macro social forms (e.g. class, gender, ethnic relations) |
| | SETTING | Immediate environment of social activity |
| | SITUATED ACTIVITY | Dynamics of face to face interaction |
| | SELF | Biographical experience, social involvements and dispositions |

Through a focus on the **'Self'** (Layder 1997, 2006), the research aims to explore young people's own perceptions of their agency with considerations of trust and safety, young people's outlook on life, and their subjective perception of the school experience. The **'situated activity'** will be examined through the focus on the environments where young people tend to interact and form their social capital networks, without dismissing the fact that these **'situated activities'** are intrinsically linked to the **'settings'**. The organisations, where young people were accessed for this research, are being used as a means for me to look at **settings**. In Layder's (1993, 2006) understanding, **settings** might refer, in a more crystallised way, to hospitals, factories, schools or other formal organisations. But he also refers to more intersecting and cross cutting forms of social organisations. By looking at these different forms of organisations, he argues that it is possible to start to analyse issues of power and control and **context** (Layder 1997: 98).

Whilst I will use this research map, I am also aware that it is a heuristic device and thus is "an artificial construct to assist in the exploration of social phenomena"¹⁴. The exploration of the different research elements becomes a form of preliminary analysis. In the context of the investigation of social capital and young people, Layder's (1993, 2006) framework aids analytical clarity and through the analysis of the interconnectedness of the different elements, it will also have explanatory value as a model.

¹⁴ "heuristic device" *Oxford Dictionary of Sociology*. Ed. John Scott, Gordon Marshall. Oxford University Press, 2005. [eNotes.com](http://www.enotes.com). 2006. 8 Feb, 2009 <<http://www.enotes.com/oxsoc-encyclopedia/heuristic-device>>

Research Design and Methods

In this section, I will explore the rationale for choosing a mixed methods design to answer the research questions. Denscombe (2007: 108) asserts that the Mixed Methods approach has three characteristic features which set it apart from other strategies of social research:

1. Emphasis on practical approaches to research problems (Pragmatist)
2. Use of qualitative and quantitative approaches within a single research project
3. Explicit focus on the link between approaches (Triangulation)

A primary justification for mixed methods is pragmatism (Morgan 2007). Howe (1988) argues that epistemology should not be placed above practical issues, nor the conceptual over the empirical. It is argued that “the practical and empirical take precedence over the ontological and the epistemological” (Denmark 2002: 152). Rejecting an either/or attitude regarding positivism and constructivism, pragmatism adopts a ‘compatibility theory’ in which any contradictory ontological or epistemological assumptions are less important than ‘situational responsiveness and a commitment to an empirical perspective’ (Greene and Caracelli 1997: p.9 in Healy 2008).

Within this concept of pragmatism, the argument is that there is no such thing as a ‘universal method’ and that the distinction between qualitative and quantitative method is no longer relevant (Danermark 2002), thus, the focus is on quantitative and qualitative methods being compatible (Howe 1988). Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) summarise the view that pragmatism forms a paradigm distinct from others (such as positivism, post-positivism and constructivism) and that this paradigm allows the use of quantitative and qualitative methods in social and behavioural research.

Denzin (1978) discusses the idea of ‘across methods triangulation’ involving both quantitative and qualitative methods. Denzin (1978) uses the term “triangulation”, which is about combining data sources to study the same social phenomena, especially in order to assess the consistency of findings (Madill et al. 2000). Within this, ‘mixed methods’ is viewed as the collection and analysis of two types of data rather than the integration of two approaches to research (Healy 2008). Commonly used are data triangulation (different analytical statistical treatment of the same data set) and methodological triangulation (gathering different sorts of data) (New 2001; Tashakkori and Teddlie: 2003).

Layder (1993, 1998) also discusses and advocates multi-strategy research, however as Denscombe (2007) highlights, he with other academics such as Bryman (2006) and Silverman (2005) might not accept pragmatism as the philosophical foundation of the mixed methods approach. In line with Layder’s adaptive theory, which advocates a disciplined epistemological inclusiveness, I see methodological pluralism as a realist response to social complexity (New 2001), as discussed in the ‘ontological considerations’. Whilst being aware, that different methods are subject to various claims concerning their epistemological underpinnings (Heath et al. 2009), my overarching rationale in using a mixed method design is that

“complex social phenomena require different kinds of methods so as to best understand and make inferences about these complexities. Such social phenomena cannot be fully understood using either purely qualitative or purely quantitative techniques. We need a variety of data sources and analyses to completely understand complex multifaceted institutions or realities. Mixed methods can provide that” (Tashakkori and Teddlie 2003: 16).

Creswell and Clark (2007) assert that within mixed methods research, there are assumptions “that guide the direction of the collection and analysis of data and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches in many phases in the research process” (p.5). Using this design enabled me to follow the theoretical considerations of the ‘domain theory’. Layder (1993, 2006)

emphasises that whilst quantitative research has been associated traditionally with 'theory testing', it also has a 'significant role to play in theory building research'. He endorses that quantitative and qualitative data can be used in a 'complementary fashion' (Layder 1993:4).

Within the above mentioned general rationale, there are several other considerations highlighted by Creswell and Clark (2007), Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) and Mertens (2003):

- The research has to simultaneously answer confirmatory and exploratory questions and therefore verify and generate theory in the same study
- One method might give greater depth, the other greater breadth and hopefully, they give results from which one can make better (i.e. more accurate) inferences
- It provides the strengths that offset the weaknesses of both qualitative and quantitative research
- Personal interpretations made by the researcher might be deficient in qualitative research and there is a difficulty in making generalisations

The combined quantitative and qualitative enquiry is advocated to aid the exploration of social capital within young people's lives as a process which has to be negotiated in a continuous interaction between the different domains of self, situated activity, social settings and context

Overview of the Design

Within the adaptive theory approach, the design cannot be a single decision at the beginning of the research. As with theoretical sampling (Glaser and Strauss (1967: 45), I considered that it is more appropriate to use what I would call 'theoretical designing' within mixed methods research. As with 'theoretical sampling', within 'theoretical designing' the exact design of each of the phases of research are controlled by the emerging theory. Therefore, the design becomes an ongoing process rather than a distinct and single

stage (adapted from Bryman 2004: 305). Thus, whilst having a clear idea of the overall mixed methods design, the detailed design of the second phase was decided after the first phase and informed by the emerging findings and the need to further explore some concepts and some existing theories.

The crucial decisions regarding the design were made after the first explorative phase, when the qualitative results were contrasted with existing literature and decisions for further exploration made. I used an integrated qualitative methodology with a range of methods, recognising the distinctive perspective, which each of them provided (Denscombe 2007). My overall design is an integration of several designs presented by Creswell and Clark (2007), and the mixed model design developed by Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003: 689). The resulting interactive design incorporated sequential and concurrent data collection and analysis; at every stage, there was the possibility of modifying one of the approaches based on the other. In total, there were three distinct phases within the research. The more detailed description of these phases and how they were undertaken in this piece of research will be considered in the next chapter.

The diagram that follows represents the research design as it was undertaken with the outer circle indicating the different phases.

Exploratory Phase One: This exploratory phase consisted of the qualitative (QUAL) data collection. Discussion groups and interviews were broadly analysed, and categories and emerging themes were established. Following the graph, it is noted that the survey questionnaire was developed through the combination of the preliminary findings with insights and emerging themes from the theoretical considerations.

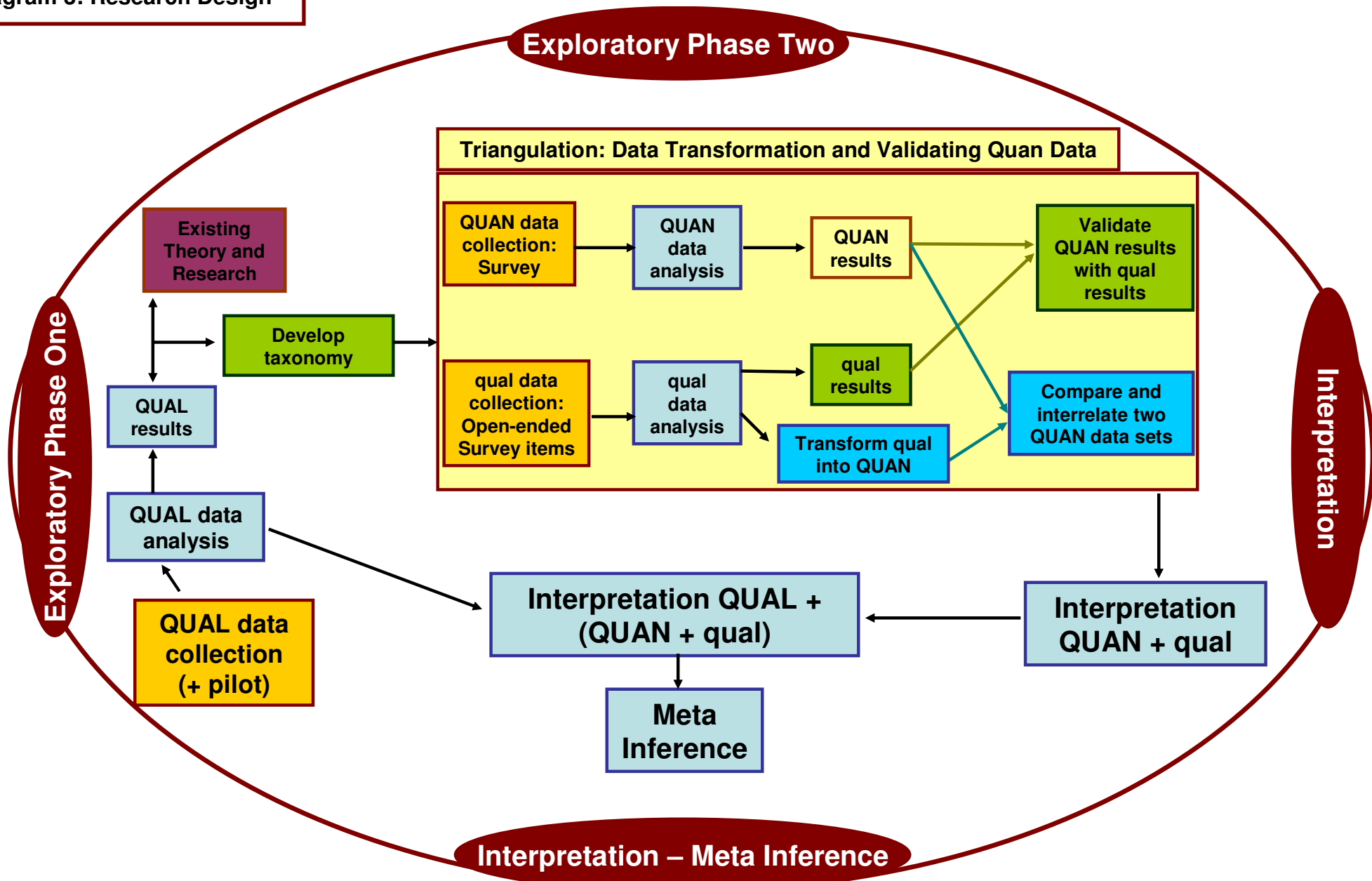
Exploratory Phase Two: The top of the circle represents the next stage of the research and highlights that triangulation was embedded within the exploratory phase two. Two types of data were collected: quantitative data

(QUAN) and open-ended survey items (qual = qualitative data). In subsequent iterative processes explored in the analysis chapter, quantitative results were validated with qualitative results and qualitative data from the survey was quantified and analysed with the original quantitative data from the survey.

The analysis of this phase leads to the Interpretation and Meta Inference which is depicted at the bottom of the circle. The combined (QUAN + qual¹⁵) survey results are integrated with the qualitative analysis of the Exploratory Phase One and leads to Interpretation and Meta Inferences.

¹⁵ QUAN + qual indicates a quantitatively –driven, quantitative and qualitative simultaneous design

Diagram 3: Research Design



Methods

A basic requirement of social research is to obtain data from people. Social scientists and applied researchers therefore employ different methods of data collection to understand social phenomena (Bryman 2004; Silverman 2005). In social science research, focus groups may be used as the sole data collection method, or they may be combined with other qualitative or quantitative methods such as in-depth interviews, observations, or surveys (Bryman 2006; Crabtree et al. 1993; Wolff et al. 1993). The use of focus groups and a survey questionnaire allowed me to be consistent with my ontological principles, aiming to describe reality within its multiple contexts and trying to uncover issues of inequality and oppression in relation to race, gender, age, class, or any other form of social differentiation.

Focus Groups (Discussion Groups)

In research with young people, some scholars attempt to bridge micro-macro dualities by focusing on social capital as a community level attribute. Their construct of social capital includes micro-social individual behaviour and macro-social structural factors (Holland 2005; Morrow 1999; Morrow 2001; Morrow 2004; Schaefer-McDaniel 2004; Farrell et al. 2003). By prioritising the social context of children's everyday lives, their focus is on the social relationships, social interactions and social networks in context, rather than children's individual behaviours. Through using qualitative methods to investigate young people's perspectives on their social context and environments, they are able to explore the implications of children's and young people's accounts for their general well being.

A particular value of focus groups lies in the depth and richness of the qualitative data gathered (Kitzinger and Barbour 2001), providing vivid descriptions and clear insights into problems and opportunities (Ward and Boeck 2000). Focus groups are a valuable research tool, although they are not appropriate for every project (Jowett and O'Toole 2006). However, the appropriateness of using this method in the exploration of the 'textured' or

interwoven nature of different levels and dimensions of social reality (Layder 1997, 2006) is that “the data generated by this method confront the researcher with the multi-levelled and dynamic nature of people’s understandings, highlighting their fluidity, deviations and contradictions” (Kitzinger 1994: 172).

Following the considerable expansion of the use of focus groups as a method of data collection in social science research, they have been used both to inform surveys and as a method of data collection in their own right (Morgan et al. 2002). Whilst a focus group can be treated as a carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest (Krueger and Casey 2009), they can also be treated as unstructured group interviews in which the researcher encourages discussion amongst the participants based on particular topics that are supplied by the researcher. These kinds of unstructured group interviews rely on in-group interaction and the researcher takes more of a role of a moderator (Peek and Fothergill 2009; Morgan 1997; Schutt 1996). Therefore, rather than using the term focus group, I prefer to use the term discussion group.

Generally, it is agreed that discussion groups are a good means of gathering a breadth of information from research participants as they discuss various topics with one another (Peek and Fothergill 2009), and reflect on young people’s personal experiences (Morgan et al. 2002). In exploring meanings based on people’s everyday experiences, discussion groups can also provide and capture the “fluid and contextual nature” of a particular issue or concept (Pösö et al. 2008: 73).

A typical trait of discussion groups is that they have the potential to address the balance of power between researcher and researched, and the empowerment of under-represented groups (Kevern and Webb 2001; Kitzinger 1994; Morgan, 2002). Pösö et al. (2008) assert that this shift in

power gives the participants the potential to direct group interviews in directions they would like them to go.

According to Morgan, the weakness of discussion groups is that they are driven by the researcher's interests, and thus they are "less naturalistic than participant observation" (Morgan 1996: p.14). Individual interviews can explore more of the subtleties of a research topic, but they place greater burden on the interviewee to explain himself or herself to the interviewer. However, for this study, the strength of discussion groups is that they can produce concentrated amounts of data on the topic of interest, providing insights of group interaction and comparisons between participants (Morgan 1996). These strengths are especially valuable for this study, when trying to consider the networks of young people and exploring within a group of friends the characteristics and dynamics of their networks.

Surveys

The aim of the survey, with its qualitative and quantitative components, was to enable the examination of the interaction between the micro, meso and macro aspects of the construction of the social environment, in line with Layder's assertion that 'social reality is a series of interdependent layers each with its own distinctive characteristics' (Layder 1993: 8). It is important to highlight that the survey was not designed to 'measure' social capital, but to further the investigation of the different domains, and how these domains interact with each other.

It is argued that official survey data tend to misrepresent the lives of the most disadvantaged groups in society, by the use of language which reinforces the stereotypical images of such groups (Forbes and Wainwright 2001; Shirlow et al. 2005; Murtagh et al. 2008). The content validity of traditional items used to 'measure' social capital has to be questioned because many facets of young people's lives are not reflected. Thus, the data used by many theorists

may not be as representative or as inclusive as supposed (Forbes and Wainwright 2001; Fine 2001) and whilst it may be possible to describe general trends from survey data, Forbes and Wainwright (2001) contest the possibility of deriving deep explanations from them.

In line with Layder's Domain Theory, my own study needs to consider that surveys need to be tightly embedded within the mixed methods design.

Therefore, my research recognises that

“complete explanations of social events and processes cannot be reduced to the intentions and beliefs of agents without reference to structural forms, or to structural properties without reference to the intentions and beliefs of agents” (Scott 2007: 143).

Indicators

I have noted that the definitions of social capital vary between different disciplines and scholars. Grootaert (2001) emphasises that this makes it inherently difficult to propose a list of indicators for social capital.

“Meaningful use of indicators requires a conceptual framework within which they can serve to assess a current state, to measure linkages between policy and outcome variables, and to assess policy options” (p.18).

Social capital has been turned into various constituent factors.

Operationalising them in the field has often proven to be methodologically and conceptually difficult (Forbes and Wainwright 2001). As a result there are several processes where empirical assumptions are being made:

Firstly, social capital is turned into various constituent factors such as social networks, reciprocity, trust, participation, engagement, etc, but too often, without conceptual clarity about what these highly ambiguous and interpretive concepts might mean (Muntaner et al. 2000). Secondly, each of these factors is associated with a set of indicators (Portes 1998; New Economics Foundation 2000; Kay 2006). Within this, there might be an inherent danger of ending up measuring the presence of the indicators, which

does not actually tell us whether social capital is present or not, and hence what the dynamics behind it might be (Boeck and Fleming 2005). The problem in this process is that the translation of intangibles into tangibles is dependent, amongst other things, on social, cultural and economic aspects of people's lives (Bourdieu 1977).

Following the ontological and epistemological consideration I had to be aware that the indicators to be used within this piece of research needed to reflect the close relationship between structure and agency; as such

“first, both agential and structural elements of the action being observed or being accessed through an account by a respondent are reflected in the indicator; second, such an indicator refers to real and not reified properties of both structures and agents” (Scott 2007: 150).

In the next chapter, I will explore how this was applied in practice within this piece of research.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have argued that within any social investigation it is important to have a clear social ontology. As such, a question arises as to whether there is a specific research strategy which is better suited than others for tackling the exploration of social capital and young people. Drawing on critical realist approaches and especially Layder's 'Domain Theory', this study has adopted a view of the social world that is stratified and differentiated. Layder's four domains take into account the depth, richness and complexity of social reality and thus, children and young people are seen as individuals at the centre of multiple systems.

Recognising that in a complex society such as ours social relations are heterogeneous, this chapter has argued for an interdisciplinary approach and an open-minded process of enquiry. Within this, the ontological status accorded to 'agency' and 'structure' is central to this study. The agency of

young people is seen within this study as a socially situated process, shaped by the experiences of the past, the chances present in the current moment and the perceptions of possible futures.

Since social capital is a multifaceted and ill-defined concept, for which there are a number of competing definitions, it has been argued that the focus within this study should be on examining the different types, levels, or dimensions of social capital and the different performance outcomes associated with varying combinations of these dimensions. This study aims to throw light on the complexity of social processes behind social capital formation and its impact on young people's navigation of life transitions through an exploration of the interaction between agency and structure.

Therefore, in accordance with my ontological and epistemological positions, I have pointed out that my exploration of social capital draws upon a framework which brings together different aspects which are either constituent, or have an influence on social capital. To investigate this interconnectedness in a systematic way, I use Layder's research map within a multi-strategy research design. This chapter shows how the resulting overall design is an integration of several designs incorporating sequential and concurrent data collection and analysis through the use of discussion groups and a survey questionnaire. I have also argued in this chapter that this approach has allowed me to be consistent with my ontological principles aiming to describe reality within its multiple contexts and to uncover issues of inequality and oppression. In the next chapter, I will look at how these insights have been applied throughout the research process.

Chapter 5: Methodology in Practice: Research Process

Introduction

One of the challenges when writing up a mixed method research design is to decide whether the traditional subsections of a research report will be applicable to each of the components of the research process, or if each of the components will have distinct and different considerations to deal with (Creswell and Clark 2007). I have chosen to present in this section what I consider to be the overarching issues of the whole process. I integrate here the theoretical underpinnings with the experience of conducting the research. As discussed in the previous chapter, within the research process, data was connected, merged and transformed (Creswell and Clark 2007: 7). However, this was not an a priori decision, but happened through an inductive process which I have called 'theoretical mixed methods designing'.

Coming from a youth and community work background, I believe that throughout the research process the relationship of knowledge to practice should be "interactive rather than passive and purely reflective" (Sayer 2003: location 354). The development of knowledge – theorising, speaking and writing – should therefore not be elevated to some sort of privileged context above those of 'making and doing'. This leads to the use of 'knowledge in context', whereby as a researcher, I have to consider carefully the relationship between the 'subject' (the observer or investigator) and the 'object' (the 'thing' which is studied). Within this, it is clear that the 'object' does also include subjects and secondly that the subject should be seen as a "creative agent who brings about change", thus the researchers not only have an academic responsibility but also a social responsibility. "Social science should not be seen as developing a stock of knowledge about an object which is external to us, but should develop a critical self-awareness in

people as subjects and indeed assist in their emancipation” (Sayer 2003: location 883).

These perspectives and aims are also reflected in critical social research (Harvey 1990; Hammersley 2005), which attempts to dig beneath the surface and tries to unleash structural influences and how power and discrimination affects people’s lives, and in transformative-emancipatory approaches which advocate the creation of a more just and democratic society as an important goal for conducting research (Mertens 2002, 2003, 2007). Social action research (Boeck and Ward 2000; Ward and Boeck, 2000) and anti-discriminatory research (Truman et al. 2000; Truman 2000, 2001; D’Cruz and Jones 2004; Cant and Taket 2008) with its participative emphasis and its commitment to social justice also influence my personal approach.

I am aware that this approach does not come without criticism. The attempt to both produce knowledge and to bring about social change can be viewed as considerably increasing the danger of bias (Hammersley 2009):

“... social scientists, whether realists or non-realists, have no distinctive expertise to determine what is good or bad about the situations they seek to describe and explain; or what, if anything, should be done about them. This is because even where value judgements rely on research evidence they also necessarily depend upon other factual assumptions *and upon value principles that are plural and often in conflict*” (p.7).

This assertion leads me to the important consideration of bias within the research, which I will discuss in the next section.

Bias

The term 'bias' is by no means straightforward in meaning. Hammersley and Gomm (1997) point out three main areas of the research where predominantly bias can happen.

- Bias through the particular position of the researcher
- Bias in the data collection process

- Bias in the analytical process

The next section will be devoted to discussing the first two areas: the position of the researcher and the data collection process. Bias in the analytical process will be discussed in the next chapter.

Bias through the Position of the Researcher

This type of bias refers to the adoption of a particular perspective from which some things become salient and others merge into the background (David and Sutton 2011). Hammersley (2009) warns of the increasing pressures on social scientists to try to solve policy problems, which in his view, exceeds their capabilities. Having been involved in recent years in research commissioned by local authorities, I can see a certain validity to this concern. I do agree that it is important to acknowledge “the limits to what social research can offer” and this should be “recognised by both researchers and their audiences” (p.8). However, I do not agree with his assertion “that the claim made by critical realism that social science can move beyond those limits is not only false but encourages bias” (p.8).

As social scientists, we inevitably will have our own position from the onset of a research project, and I would argue that a certain ‘bias’ in this sense is acceptable (David and Sutton 2011). I hope that this has been made explicit throughout this thesis so far. This is also about the transparency of the research process and the researcher to make sure that the audience knows what approach he or she is adopting. The reader of the research should be given “valuable information on which to base judgment about how reasonable the writer’s claims are with regard to the detachment of involvement of self-identity, values and beliefs” (Denscombe 2007: 301).

Another important counterargument comes from the ontological position adopted in this study: “It is because critical realism holds to a depth ontology that it can be transformative” (Banfield 2004:59). This claim rests on the

recognition of Layder's domains and that all the domains are real. Since they are part of the social investigation, they will give insights on institutional, contextual and political impacts, which in turn will lead to insights and recommendations. As such I endeavour, within the constraints of this PhD thesis, to strive for a commitment to social change. This should permeate the entire research process, from problem formulation through to the drawing of conclusions, and on to the use of the results.

I will discuss bias through the adoption of particular methods later in this chapter. In qualitative approaches, interviewer bias is not only about how the questions are being asked and how they are responded to, "it refers to the whole character of the interviewer and the impact this may have on the responses of the interviewee" (David and Sutton 2011: 125). In the section about ethical considerations, I will also explore how my own self and the research process have impacted on the interviewees and how I have tried to overcome potential bias through this interaction.

Sampling

Considering the guiding principles of this research around the commitment to social justice, the sampling was informed by concern to reach young people who experience discrimination or oppression and to describe reality within its multiple contexts, uncovering issues of inequality and oppression.

Mixed methods sampling involves combining well-established, qualitative and quantitative techniques (Teddlie and Yu 2007). Because of the overall exploratory research strategy, I have chosen 'non-probability' sampling in both phases (qualitative and quantitative) of the research. Purposive sampling techniques "may be defined as selecting units (e.g., individuals, groups of individuals, institutions) based upon specific purposes associated with answering a research study's questions" (Teddlie and Yu 2007: 77). This technique is not just an easy 'cop out', trying to avoid the difficulties of

accessing a representative, cross-section of people in the whole population, but rather that a focused and “hand picked sample” would contribute better to the exploration of the subject (Denscombe 2007: 17). This ‘purposive’ sampling was informed by the literature review, my own judgment (Teddlie and Yu 2007: 3) and my experience within the research field. Furthermore, careful consideration was given to who was likely to provide the best information (Denscombe 2007). As such, some relevant questions had to be asked:

- Are there groups which are critical for this research? (Denscombe 2007)
- Are there groups which can provide important information that cannot be obtained as well from other choices? (Maxwell 2005)
- Are there any groups which can be compared? (Teddlie and Yu 2007)

The overall sample was drawn from the Midlands area, in the 13-19 age range, with a special focus on young people in their mid-teens. The rationale for this age range stems from the acknowledgment that it is an age of greater state regulation than others by various government initiatives, “aimed at tackling social exclusion ‘in the bud’, including anti-truancy measures, measures to tackle school exclusions, and policies targeted at reducing teenage pregnancy” (Heath et al. 2009: 6). Connexions¹⁶ has also been targeted at young people aged 13 to 19.

In order to get access to a cross section of young people, I approached youth groups and schools within the Midlands area. I wrote letters and made phone calls to youth workers and schools with whom either I or some of my colleagues had previous contact. The list of youth settings was collated through some of my existing networks and names which were given to me through these networks. I approached five different schools in Leicester, Birmingham, Nottingham and Wolverhampton and one college in Leicester.

¹⁶ The Connexions service was established in 2001 with the aim of providing a comprehensive service to meet young people's needs for information, advice and support. Through multi-agency working, Connexions provides information, advice and guidance (including careers advice and guidance), together with access to personal development opportunities. It is aimed at young people aged 13 to 19.

In the end, only one school and one college in Leicester decided to participate. The school which participated was a grammar school, which was initially chosen because it would provide me with access to students from wealthier socio-economic backgrounds, and thus aid 'comparability' with less affluent participants in the research.

Emerging from the 'social policy' section of the literature review is the focus on young people 'posing risk'. As it was noted in this section, this group of young people are quite often targeted through policy programmes. The YIPs and YOTs were chosen because they would provide a sample of young people considered as being 'at risk' of offending or offenders, and thus I consider this group as critical for this research. The social capital of these young people is quite often labelled as 'negative', 'anti-social' social capital, or sometimes considered to be totally lacking (Rupasingha et al. 2000; Singhal et al. 2006). The comparison of this group with other young people could provide important insights into whether the social capital of young people 'at risk' is different to other young people's social capital, and if so, what are the processes and aspects which underlie these differences.

Twenty one organisations participated, of which thirteen were youth groups, five YIPs, YOTs and YISPs, one Grammar School and one College. The locations of these groups were spread throughout the Midlands area in Leicester, Leicestershire, Nottingham, Coventry, Wolverhampton, Grantham and Market Bosworth. The total sample using all research methods was 574 young people. I conducted 16 in-depth interviews with 14 young people (some young people were interviewed twice) and 17 discussion groups with 60 young people (several discussion groups were held with the same participants). The total survey sample was 500 young people. The following table gives an overview of the sample:

Table 1: Research Sample

| Methodology | Sample |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| 17 Discussion Groups | 60 Youth groups |
| 16 in-depth interviews | 14 YIP/YOT |
| Survey | 89 YIP/YOT |
| | 228 School/College |
| | 183 Youth organisations |
| Total | 574 young people |

Sample of Interviews and Discussion Groups

50% of the young people who participated in the interviews and discussion groups were female and 40% male. The majority of the young people in the qualitative phase of the research identified themselves as White British (76%) and 17% as ‘mixed race’ or ‘dual heritage’ and 7% as Caribbean.

I chose to utilize acquaintance and friendship groups because of the possibility of observing the interactions of these groups and through this, to direct the questions in order to uncover some of the processes in the social capital formation (Kitzinger 1994: 40-41). That young people might have a problem in disclosing private or confidential information when acquaintances or friends are included in the same group (Brannen and Pattman, 2005; Peek and Fothergill 2009) was not of major concern considering the topic of the enquiry.

Survey Sample

49% of the young people who participated in the survey were female and 51% male. A small number (2%) of young people stated that they were disabled. The majority of the young people who completed the survey questionnaire identified themselves as White British (63%) followed by Asian

of Indian origin (14%), 'mixed race/dual heritage' (9%) and Black of Caribbean origin (5%). The following table gives the full breakdown:

Table 3: Ethnicity of Research Participants

| Ethnicity | Percentage |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| White of UK origin | 62.8% |
| White of Irish origin | 1.8% |
| White of Other origin | 1.2% |
| Black of Caribbean origin | 5.4% |
| Black of African origin | 2.6% |
| Black of Other origin | 1.4% |
| Asian of Indian origin | 13.6% |
| Asian of Pakistani origin | 0.2% |
| Asian of Bangladeshi origin | 0.2% |
| Asian of Chinese origin | 0.8% |
| Asian of Other origin | 1.0% |
| 'Mixed race' dual heritage | 9.0% |
| Total | 100.0% |

In terms of the organisations which were accessed for the survey, the following is a breakdown of the sample into the major groups.

Youth Clubs

Young people contacted through youth clubs made up 36.6% of the total sample. There was a balanced gender representation with 41.5% male and 58.5% female and an age range from 13-17 years old. This group had also a majority of White British representation (75%). The youth clubs were accessed mainly in relatively deprived areas.

YIPs and YOTs

Young people contacted through YIPs and YOTs made up 17.8% of the total sample. There was a greater representation of young men (68.5%) in these groups than young women (31.5%) and an age range from 14-17 years old. This group had also a majority of White British (63%) but also a high Mixed Race (25%) representation. Young people from YIPs and YOTs also mainly came from relatively deprived areas.

Grammar School

Young people contacted through a Grammar School made up 27.0% of the total sample. There was a balanced gender representation with 54% male and 46% female and an age range from 11-13 and 16-17. This group had also a majority of White British representation (67%) and 19% Asian.

College

Young people contacted through the college made up 18.6% of the total sample. There was a balanced gender representation with 47% male and 53% female and an age range mainly between 16-17. This group had a majority of Asian representation (46%) and 32% of White British.

Socio Economic Background

Whilst it is difficult to establish exactly the socio economic background of the young people contacted through the Grammar School it is fair to say that came mainly from families which were able to pay the tuition fees¹⁷. The Grammar School was ranked above 30 out of the top 50 Independent Schools at A-Level¹⁸. League table positions are largely determined by the

¹⁷ Whilst there are a number of bursaries (financially assisted places) available, the tuition fee with effect from the Trinity term 2009, was of £3,190 per term for all pupils (source not disclosed because of confidentiality).

¹⁸ Secondary School League Tables: The Top 50 Independent Schools at A-level* *Thursday, 19 January 2006* <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/secondary-school-league-tables-the-top-50-independent-schools-at-a-level-523587.html> accessed 16/01/2011

intake of the schools “with the most socio-economically advantaged areas achieving the best results” (Muijs and Chapman 2009: 35). As such it is argued that league tables might be more an indicator of the most middle class schools than telling much about the quality of a school (James et al. 2010).

Young people contacted through YIPs and YOTs came from some of the most deprived areas of the country. Following the insights gained from chapter three, I would argue that locality inevitably influenced these young people and thus whilst not knowing exactly the class of these young people, the low educational attainment, child poverty and low health of the areas will have a negative impact on these young people. Whilst recognising the dynamic class processes (MacDonald et al. 2005), I have drawn upon the above mentioned insights, but also will look at existing data about the accessed areas using the Index of Multiple Deprivation.

Deprivation was assessed by searching information on city and county council websites, which mainly refer to the 2004 or 2007 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). Because of the year of conducting the research both indexes were seen as appropriate to use. IMD is measured at the Lower level Super Output Area (LSOA), which is a geographically smaller area than electoral wards, and consists of an average of 700 households or 1,500 people. LSOAs allow better comparison between different areas.

To ensure confidentiality, I am not naming the organisations or neighbourhoods through which the young people were contacted. Hollingworth and Archer (2010) also assert that not to divulge the names of schools and local areas are common practice, so as not to contribute to the public pathologisation of places or schools in those places. High levels of deprivation were prevalent in all the neighbourhoods accessed for this study. The most deprived areas on several levels within the IMD were those through

which young people from YIP's, YOT's and YISP's were accessed. All these areas were:

- Within the top 20-30% most deprived SOAs nationally on the measure of deprivation linked to education, skills and training
- Amongst the 10% most deprived SOAs in England on the measure of the number of children who are in income deprivation
- Amongst the neighbourhoods with the highest proportion of lone parents claiming income support, and has the highest rates of child poverty
- Amongst the worst 20% worst performing SOAs in the Education, Skills and Training
- The most affected SOA in by barriers to housing and services

Leonard (2008) made the attempt to include class in the survey by asking young people what school they attended, on the basis that most middle class children in Northern Ireland attend grammar schools, whereas most working class children attend secondary schools. However, this measure was considered to be too crude an indicator of social class, and therefore, analysis of the data was restricted to gender and religious breakdowns, which indicate little variation in responses.

This will be analysed further when looking at the interaction between situated activity and settings. However, throughout this research, I will be mindful that these settings will tell only a partial story in terms of socio-economic positions and dynamics. Using organisations as 'settings' was not without problems; when comparing the different organisations I am not comparing like with like. My assumption is that the organisations might say something about young people's socio economic position. However, whilst some of the findings were very clear in this respect, in other instances I was aware that without very concrete evidence, some findings lead to speculations and further research is needed.

In terms of ethnic diversity and percentages, whilst I contacted groups from different ethnic backgrounds, I had difficulties in approaching Asian groups. It also has to be noted that consideration had to be given to resources and time. As a result, the sampling had to be restricted to a specific area and access negotiated within a limited period of time, suitable for this PhD study.

Ethical Considerations

Liamputtong (2007), in her considerations of research with vulnerable groups, emphasises that ethical considerations should not only be part of the research process, but also be considered before and after the research. The ethical considerations were not only applied to the research process, but also when choosing the methods of the research. Within this, the qualitative phase of the research placed emphasis on finding out how young people refer to their reality in order to give them the right to define themselves and not to have negative labels imposed upon them. In order to prevent this from happening, I did not attach any a priori concepts such as 'negative'/ 'positive' or 'high'/ 'low' social capital to young people's descriptions of their interactions with other young people. I also avoided referring to 'pro social' or 'anti social behaviour' (Squires and Stephen 2005), all of which are contested concepts and would easily lead to stereotyping young people's sociability (Crawford 2009).

This is why researchers need ethical approaches which are situational, contextual and relational (Mauthner et al. 2002), within a research environment which is based on respect for what children and young people themselves have to say (Thomas 2002). This is very much in line with Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child: young people have rights, including the right to be heard, the right to define the issues facing them and the right to take action on their own behalf.

Overall, this research adhered to the Statement of Ethical Practice for the British Sociological Association¹⁹. When devising the information leaflets and consent forms for the research participants (see Appendices I and II), I followed this statement and focused on:

- Clarity of Information for Participants
- Consent
- Confidentiality and Anonymity
- Health, Safety and Security
- Feedback and Complaints
- Anti-Discriminatory Practice

In terms of ethical consideration within the research process, I also used the more traditional areas of ethical principles presented by Bryman (2004), as an overarching point of reference:

- The context of the research
- Power relations
- Whether there is harm to participants
- Whether there is lack of informed consent
- Whether there is an invasion of privacy
- Whether deception is involved

In the next sections I will describe how I addressed each of these areas, by drawing on my research experiences. I will give some concrete examples of how I approached these considerations and how I overcame some of the problems.

¹⁹Statement of Ethical Practice for the British Sociological Association, March 2002; <http://www.britisoc.co.uk/NR/rdonlyres/801B9A62-5CD3-4BC2-93E1-FF470FF10256/0/StatementofEthicalPractice.pdf> Last accessed 16/01/2011

The Context of the Research

An important aspect of research with young people is the consideration of the impact of the contextual and personal aspects in which the interaction happens. The research does not operate in a vacuum and this will have ethical implications for the research. The research started in the last quarter of 2002, under the shadow of the tragic deaths in Soham of Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman. Public concern about child safety had risen and the call for enhanced CRB checks brought with it a huge backlog of applications.

The increased consciousness among the general public about paedophilia and child abductions was noticeable during the whole qualitative research process, not only in 2002, but also during 2003. Within this context I had some difficult interviews and strong reactions from young people, which quickly led me to reconsider my interactions as a male researcher with young people and how I phrased some of the questions. The following diary entries highlight some of the difficulties (the entries are edited in order to preserve anonymity and confidentiality):

15th of October 2002

Meeting 14th of October with young people in (name of council estate). I am still aware of the difficulty of approaching young people regarding research. I have noticed that several young people joked about abduction... it is definitely more in the consciousness of young people than it has been in my previous research experience. How does this influence the research process and the research outcomes?

17th of March 2003

13 SC: very difficult interview.

When asked about where he hangs around he got annoyed... why do you want to know this? Are you a paedophile? He stopped and didn't want to answer what he considered to be personal questions...

I then continued to ask him about what he enjoys doing and what he is good at and he started to open up and told me that he enjoys driving. This led to a good interaction where I felt that my youth work skills came in handy...

I addressed these concerns by making it clear from the beginning of the interview that I did not want names of places and people. This was not only relevant because of the concern about 'paedophilia' but also because of the interviews with some young offenders. It gave a clear message that this research had nothing to do with their personal circumstances around risk taking. In order for young people to have more control over the research process, I also located the tape recorder next to them and told them that they could switch the tape recorder off whenever they liked. Whilst none of the young people took advantage of this control, they nevertheless referred to it jokingly on several occasions. In order to protect myself and my own integrity I made sure that there was always another member of staff nearby and that the door was open.

One of my perceptions whilst interviewing and having discussion groups was that some young people calculate carefully their response and the response the adult gives to them. Sometimes I could perceive a certain sneaky or defiant look, almost testing how I would react. One realises in that moment that the interview and focus groups are not simply a process of question and answer; it is a process of interaction, dialogue, negotiation of relations and testing out of power. However, power and power relationships are multilayered and sometimes the interview and especially the discussion groups could feel like a little battlefield. Wray-Bliss (2003), drawing on Foucault, constructs researcher and researched as interdependent. The power relations are less linear, more insidious, but the researcher still has to be aware that power relations are reproduced within research practices. According to these dynamics, young people decide what type of information they disclose, or whether they disclose any information at all.

Overall, I found that it was important to build an environment of trust. A central tenet is respect for and a positive view of young people, which leads to honest communication with the research participants. This will help to build trust and contribute to the levelling of power imbalances in a research project

(Banks 1999). I am not stating that power imbalances do disappear, but an awareness of these dynamics is important.

Harm to Participants

The health, safety and security of participants were of principal concern within this research. I obtained all the relevant legal checks that are required by the government in order to work with children. Currently, this is the process of 'Enhanced Disclosure' as managed by the Criminal Records Bureau. I also took every precaution to ensure that participants did not encounter harm or damage (for example, stress and duress). I made available contact details for locally based information and advice services, should follow up discussions about emerging issues be appropriate after the research process had been completed.

All participants in the research process were given a named contact, principally the first supervisor, where they could provide feedback or submit complaints about their experiences during the research. However, most importantly, before meetings, I met with a named worker from the organisation and discussed the research with them. Drawing upon their experience, we discussed the best way to create a safe environment within which the research could take place. Most of the workers were very interested in the topic and contributed refreshments and snacks for the discussion groups. They also were present when I met the young people and introduced me to them. In some instances, especially in youth work settings this worked really well. However, in other settings like the YOTs and in one school, this was more difficult, because the research was framed within quite 'formal' environments, sometimes in environments where the young people did not want to be in the first place (such as the YOTs). The interactions with the young people in those instances were more difficult and it took longer to create a more 'trusting' environment.

The Interview Process

Questions asked of young people can potentially open up all sorts of emotions and vulnerabilities. Within the social capital framework, trust and safety proved to be especially sensitive, and I had to be aware that these issues, when discussed in a group, might have emotional impacts, or might spark reactions from the rest of the group, which happened on a few occasions. It was useful to start the session with some ground rules which came from the young people themselves.

In one discussion group, one of the young men said that he did not have anybody close and that he trusted only 'social services'. Some of the young people started to giggle and his younger brother – a very outgoing young man – said that he was very close to his family. Confronted with this situation, I referred the group back to the ground rules, but it took a while until the young man felt sufficiently comfortable to open up again. However, I also felt that I had to be careful in my own mind not to jump to any conclusions about potential problems within the family. In another focus group, a young woman was quite withdrawn when discussing the issues of trust and safety, and made references to indicate that she did not feel safe at all. Whilst respecting her confidentiality, I approached her after the discussion group and discussed the issue with her. She did not want to go into details, so I asked her if I should ask the youth worker to have a chat with her about this. She agreed, and the whole issue was taken up by the worker. In order to protect myself and my institution, I approached my own supervisor about this and made a log for future reference.

Other questions had a quite positive impact on the young people. Some of them told me after the interview that they had never thought about these things and that they enjoyed talking about them with their 'mates'. The same feedback came from several youth workers, who wanted to take the

discussions further, as it had benefited the young people in thinking about their relationships with those around them.

The Impact of the Research Questions

Asking questions and ‘being questioned’ ought to be distinguished in the research process. Of course, one should be careful in phrasing questions and make a special effort to make the questions understandable and friendly. However, it is difficult to put oneself into the ‘shoes’ of the other person. The following transcript demonstrates how ‘being questioned’ might affect the young person:

You are asking shit questions.

What makes them shit?

Because they are personal questions ain't they?

You don't like them because they are personal, so why is it a problem to ask personal questions?

I don't like speaking about me.

*(Interview 12, White, male, offender,
aged 17)*

As a researcher, one has to be aware that the difficulty or apathy young people show when invited to engage might come from the questions themselves. Some young people might never have reflected on some of the topics raised, and this might open up all sorts of personal questions and issues about their relationships with others. These considerations are especially relevant within the claim of developing critical self-awareness in people and assisting in their emancipation (Sayer 2003), as highlighted at the beginning of this chapter. In order to overcome some of the inconsistencies with the paradigm, I kept in touch with some of the workers, offering to provide feedback, or another session with the young people in a more

informal manner. This was taken up by two workers who invited me to meet the young people again. In these sessions, I was able to have a certain 'closure' after the research.

Informed Consent

Information sheets were provided for participants and in the case of children, information was made available to parents/carers/guardians. This information sheet (see Appendix I) meant to communicate the following:

Rights of participants

- The commitment on behalf of the researcher to preserve anonymity
- The right to consent to be involved and to leave the research at any time during the research process
- The right to decline involvement in specific parts of the research project (such as declining to answer certain questions)
- The fact that the right to decline in participation does not in any way impact upon their attendance or engagement in the project or school where the researcher made contact

The Purposes of the Research

- The purpose of the research (including aims and objectives) was communicated, in all cases, with absolute clarity by the researcher

The Dissemination of the Research

- The intended use of the research was made as clear as possible in all information sheets

Further to the provision of this information sheet, I made myself available to discuss any issues concerning the research project. This was only taken up by two parents.

All participants in the research process were asked to give their written consent to participate in the research project (see Appendix II). Ethically and legally, it is hard to establish a definitive position on children and age of consent. However, consent must come from young people as they are legally entitled to challenge, where others have consented on their behalf (Masson 2000). For the reasons of good practice, it may seem sensible to obtain consent from those with parental responsibility as defined by Chapter 41 of the Children Act 1989²⁰. Those with such responsibility may be in a position to clarify information or support participants. However, I also had to be aware that in some cases, relations with those with parental responsibility might have broken down. Therefore, second consent was provisional, but not essential, in light of the principles discussed above. Being aware that the duty of the researcher is to judge the extent to which people understand the implications of involvement in research, in pursuit of good practice, I involved young people in the preparation of the research information and the consent forms.

The young people's reactions to taking part in the research was varied, which interestingly also reflected the organisations from which they had been contacted. Those contacted through youth work settings where I already had a relationship with the worker, and where young people seemed to have a positive and trusting relationship with the worker, did not want any further explanation and also sometimes signed the consent forms without even reading them. In these circumstances, I had a short conversation with them to highlight the importance of 'informed' consent. Young people who came from more formal organisations, especially those approached through YIPs and YOTs tended to be more cautious and asked about the consent form and the meaning of the different aspects to which they were agreeing.

²⁰ Available at http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts1989/ukpga_19890041_en_1

Confidentiality and Anonymity

The participant's right to anonymity was preserved throughout the duration and dissemination of the project. All original data, interview materials and transcripts, consent forms and other documents that contained references to personal details were stored in secure conditions, accessed only by the researcher. The provision of consent, further confirmed in the continued discussion with participants, assumed that data could be used for the research project and for the completion of this PhD thesis.

Exemptions of Confidentiality: Child Protection Issues

Under the provisions of the Children Act 1989, those working with children have a duty to be alert to cases of abuse or potential abuse. As a consequence, I made the participants aware that:

- During research, information may be disclosed that if kept confidential, may result in harm or intent of harm to others. In these cases, the protection of children and others should override commitment to confidentiality. At the outset of the project, this will be communicated clearly to participants
- In case of such disclosures, researchers should encourage young people to approach relevant authorities or support services
- With the provision of clear information about the research and guidance on confidentiality, it is hoped that the potential for disclosure will be minimal

Invasion of Privacy

Being aware of the relationships between researcher and researched, one has to ask why young people should participate in a research project at all. In one interview, one of the young men said that he was participating in the

research because he wanted to contribute to the community. My immediate reaction was to question myself as to what message I was giving to the young people; was I promising an impact which might not happen? Does this research really contribute to the community? And what do young people get out of the research? Do practitioners tell young people about potential outcomes of their participation which are not based on any real fact, but only mentioned to attract participation? This is not a question about instrumentality – what do they get out of it – but more an ethical question. I consider it to be unethical if the framing of outcomes and impact is misleading young people.

Before starting each session, I tried to talk to the young people about these considerations, and addressed several issues:

- Who is the beneficiary? I explained to young people that this is complex. The University and the researchers benefit because this piece of research was within an ESRC funded project; I would benefit because it would contribute to my PhD thesis. However, I also explained the importance of policy impact and how we would try to achieve this through publications and in practical terms, through teaching students, who will work with young people and practitioners, who are already working with young people. This was part of the dissemination strategy
- How will the data be used? I explained that the data will be used to write reports, articles and leaflets and for teaching and training
- What impact does the research have? Being part of a larger ESRC funded project would make it more likely that the findings will have an impact at an academic level, but I explained that I was also keen to pursue a policy and practice impact. However I made it very clear that I could not predict what kind of impact this research would have

Use of Vouchers

I decided that it was appropriate to offer young people vouchers as a small 'thank you' and a gesture for valuing and appreciating their contribution to the research (Sime 2008). This was aided through the financial provision since this PhD was part of an ESRC funded project. However, one has to distinguish between different motives for using vouchers:

- Is it an incentive?
- Does it become bribery?
- Does it affect the responses of young people?
- Does it affect the image and perception of the research?

I have noticed that sometimes, the motives were confused and this can be seen in one of the transcripts, which highlights the fact that the voucher was presented as a reward, and thus became quite instrumental:

Take your time and think about it and if you want to meet with us that's fine and if you come back for the 6 weeks, that's even better and if you do that we can come to some agreement about the vouchers and the reward system.

I wanted the vouchers this lesson

We give them out at the end

What vouchers do you get? How many vouchers?

After one interview I made the following note in my diary:

Interviewee 12 was totally disengaged, keen in claiming his vouchers, but not so keen in contributing to the research. Last interview was crap... why do I give the voucher? Is it just a contract? But anyway, why should the young people participate in the first instance?

I would argue that overall the use of vouchers was justified as a ‘thank you’ for the voluntary participation in the research. Whilst there were instances where the use of vouchers became quite instrumental overall it did not seem to pose a risk in compromising the findings (Sime 2008).

The Different Phases of the Research

In the following section, I will describe in detail the process of data collection within each phase of the mixed methods design. I followed Creswell and Clark’s (2007) assertion that as a method, mixed methods research should focus “on collecting, analysing, and mixing both quantitative and qualitative data in a single or series of studies”. Its central premise is that “the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone” (p.5). In the following section, detailed explanations will be made as to how I arrived at the type of design, the methods used and the sampling strategy in this study.

Exploratory Phase One

The first phase of the research is based on the view that a qualitative exploration is needed to develop or inform a survey questionnaire, but also that within a mixed methods research project, qualitative data and quantitative data can complement each other (Creswell and Clark 2007: 75; Tashakkori and Teddlie 2003; Bryman 2006). The purpose of the first phase was to explore with young people, through interviews and discussion groups, the meaning of the different components of the social capital framework and the context within which their interactions happen. Whilst being explorative, I also drew on the theory and existing examples of social capital research. As highlighted in chapter three in the consideration of the epistemological challenges, the tangibles chosen for research with adults are often viewed as inadequate for research with young people and do not necessarily represent their reality, nor allow their ‘voices’ to be heard. Therefore this part had several aims:

- To explore social capital in the context of young people's lives
- To identify variables which reflect or can further explore young people's experiences of social capital
- To reflect on young people's accounts rather than imposing an adult led set of variables

Orientation (October-November 2002)

Researchers often find themselves confronted with quite a defined remit. This implies that certain people are seen as the key relevant people in the subject area and that certain research issues are already pre-defined (Ward and Boeck 2000). In order to be flexible and not to be too predetermined, I started the research with a pilot which was framed as an 'orientation'. The aim within this orientation was not to seek general confirmation of something I had already decided to do, or hope for small changes in questions or procedures. Ward and Boeck (2000) refer to the orientation phase as a period for the researchers to 'get a first taste of the research project' in its broadest sense.

As a first step, I used existing research and investigations of social capital to come up with a multi faceted framework for empirical investigation. The elements of this framework were: networks, sense of belonging, trust, safety, reciprocity, diversity, outlook on life and perceived agency (see chapter three). The next step was to start to explore in this orientation phase with young people the meanings they attached to the different components of this framework. However, it was also a way to find out how young people would react to different research exercises and different questions and to carefully consider what impact it had on them. As highlighted from the conversation with my supervisor on 03/12/02:

"...the pilot has genuinely been an orientation... and now you know that if you talk to young people in a certain way it doesn't work...If you use these sorts of questions they do not understand you, and you have to constantly change the interview schedule depending on

the age of the child, their maturity, their intellectual ability and sometimes you don't know those things when they are sitting in front of you."

For the orientation, the location of Leicester was a pragmatic choice. Whilst starting to negotiate other research sites, I already had access to these sites through personal contacts with the workers. I chose to conduct the discussion groups in youth work settings because of the informality of these environments which fitted in with the explorative nature of the pilots and because of the close relationship I had with the workers. This was an important decision because within the pilot, I had to be prepared for non anticipated eventualities where the intervention of the youth worker might have been needed. The same rationale was applied to the YOT interviews which were especially new territory regarding my own previous research and work.

By conducting the pilots in mixed gender and ethnic groups, I was able to get a certain depth and breadth, but also a unique 'banter' between the different people, for example, sometimes young women would talk about the young men and vice versa, which would spark lively debates. The interviews were chosen to help me anticipate some of the difficulties in conducting interviews with young offenders, or 'young people at risk'.

During this orientation, I noticed that the exploration of social capital with young people was quite fluid, and quite often the different aspects of my social capital framework was mentioned by the young people without any prompts. What was important was then to ask the question 'why'. Through the process of asking the question 'why', young people had the opportunity to explore the context and sometimes challenge the taken-for-granted explanations (Ward and Boeck 2000; Mullender and Ward 1991). During this investigation, I also decided that group exercises would help to explore the subject and also enable some focus in some sessions which were in danger

of becoming quite 'chaotic'. The use of these exercises will be described in the following section.

Qualitative Exploration (November 2002 till March 2003)

The focus of this phase was on the analysis of the '**self**' and '**situated activity**' (Layder 1997, 2006). As such, it looked at young people's own perceptions of their agency with considerations of trust and safety, young people's outlook on life and their subjective perception of the school experience. The '**situated activity**' was explored through the focus on the environments where young people tended to interact and form their social capital networks.

Access

One way of gaining access to 'hard to reach' young people was through the ISSPs and contacts which had been passed on through the manager of the Leicestershire YOT. I got a very good response from them and after organising a morning of interviews, I realised that my interviews took over some of the activities which the young men should have been part of. Staff were quite overstretched in their daily work and having somebody in to alleviate a couple of hours was welcomed. However this has major ethical implications and I had to question how voluntary the participation of the young people was, since the hours spent with me counted on their ISSP. The same ethical concerns arose when gaining access through schools. Morris-Roberts' (2001) research on the ethics of working with young people suggests that working within the context of a school where adults are given authority makes it very difficult for children and young people to refuse to take part in research (Alderson and Morrow 2004; Valentine et al.1998).

For future interviews, I was very direct about the voluntary nature of the research and several decisions were made:

- The responsibility and authority concerning the ISSP programme lies within the team and not the researcher
- The young people were told clearly that participation was voluntary
- If they were to decide to walk out of the interview or focus group it would be the responsibility of the team to deal with this, without any consequences for the young person regarding their involvement in the programme
- The staff have to be present at all times during the research process

However, despite these considerations and after having had some difficult moments in which some young people did not engage at all with my questions, they started to enjoy the interview and some of the young people did return for several interviews.

Access gained through the different youth work settings was quite different. Youth workers had spoken to the whole group of young people before the interview and gathered a group which was willing to participate voluntarily. In all of the settings, the workers were in charge of the organisation and the participation of the young people. The youth workers did not disappear suddenly and the youth work session with young people who did not want to participate in the research went on as normal. Whilst I was invited to talk to the young people who agreed to be part of the research, the workers were fulfilling their roles as youth workers with the rest of the group; they did not delegate any of their responsibilities to me.

Methods ‘in Practice’

I have used a combined methodology comprising discussion groups and in depth interviewing. The discussion groups and interviews have been used to explore with the young people the meaning of the different elements of the social capital framework. Through this I explored young people’s views and experiences of the situated activity and their perception of their own agency.

Rather than conducting strict focus groups which would have to be carefully planned in order to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in research (Krueger and Casey 2009), I was aware that too structured an environment would not be helpful and saw my role as that of a moderator (Morgan 1997). Encouraging discussions amongst the participants (Peek and Fothergill 2009), I used in the different discussion groups a combination of drawings, exercises and general discussions. Different qualitative methods in research with young people are well established. Researchers have used visual methods including photograph and drawing maps of their environments (Morrow 2000; Backett-Milburn and McKie 1999; Backett-Milburn et al. 2003). This is perceived to be a respectful and sensitive inquiry approach which enables young people and children to describe and discuss their perceptions, experiences and understandings related to places and spaces in their lives. These are not seen as ‘quick fix’ approaches, but valuable alternative methods that offer complementary insights and understandings that may be difficult to access through reliance on a single method of data collection (Darbyshire et al. 2005; Punch 2002).

The general opening questions were to ask young people to tell me where they would ‘hang around’ and with whom they tended to socialise. After this, depending on the group dynamics and interactions of young people, I would either further explore the different aspects of social capital through a dialogue, or use some exercises to get the discussion started. I used three exercises with young people: timelines, concentric circles and ‘film posters’ (Berdan et al. 2006).

In order to investigate trust and safety with a special focus on ‘radius of trust’, I used ‘timelines’ in which young people posted stickers on a line to identify which were the places they considered safe and which they considered unsafe, and which people they tended to trust and which people they tended to distrust. The questions I would typically ask were:

- Who do you trust?
- Who trusts you?
- Where do you feel safe (and why)?

Concentric Circles consisted in drawing on a sheet of paper several concentric circles and then each of the young people explored individually their networks and who they consider closest and less close. They were asked to locate themselves in the centre and then I would ask the following questions:

- Who are the people closest to you?
- Who are the people less close to you?
- Who supports you?
- How often do you see them?
- Can you call on them for help?
- Who is important and why?

The film poster is an exercise in which the group is divided into two and each group is asked to draw a film poster of their community without any words and only a title. The group then shows their poster to the other group who have to guess what the story tells. These exercises were mainly used to start the discussion of the different topics rather than only relying on the drawings or writings of the young people, which sometimes were quite succinct. However reading out what young people drew or wrote enabled me to explore the different views and encourage all the young people to participate. This also enabled me to record all what was said, which aided the transcription of the discussion groups and the data analysis.

Changes to Methods

On one occasion, while having a conversation with a case worker about some other issues just before the start of the group discussion, he told me that one of the participants was severely autistic and had attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. This obviously raised not only an issue of exposing the young man to the rest of the group and making him very vulnerable, but also exposing anybody else in the group to a potentially difficult group dynamic. Doing group exercises and paying special attention to the young man helped, but it still resulted in a very draining experience where the research information was seriously limited due to the amount of interruptions.

In a couple of discussion groups with young offenders, there were quite strong power imbalances between the members, with the older boys bullying the younger ones. This created an unhelpful environment where in the end participants did not contribute and others just took over, highlighting the fact that sometimes participants 'hold back' or are selective in their sharing because they know others in the group (Agar and MacDonald 1995).

Because the young people were recruited voluntarily through the organisations, it was not possible to control the group composition to match carefully chosen categories of participants which is generally known as segmentation (Morgan 1997). This would have helped to overcome some of the bullying attitudes of some members of the group. However because I did not have any control over the recruitment of the participants, whilst my initially chosen qualitative method was discussion groups, because of the group dynamics, I chose to continue with individual interviews. These proved to be in many cases very good and I also used some of the exercises. However, in a couple of instances the interview hardly lasted more than 20 minutes because of the lack of engagement and interest. Compared with the discussion groups in this study, it could not be said that the interviews did not provide as many insights because of the lack of group interaction at times

(Morgan 1997). However, it could be argued that because of the lack of interaction with other young people, there was less of an exploration and development of the arguments in the interviews, which was more noticeable in the discussion groups (Krueger and Casey 2009)

With some interviewees and groups, I had a couple of sessions rather than just a one off and this worked well. It allowed some of the young people to work their way through the interview process, establish trust and thus to get to the point where they were happy to talk to me and to give me a certain amount of detail. On other occasions, young people found it hard to concentrate and they preferred to have several short interviews.

Logistics

When working with an organisation which organised several individual interviews, I encountered a management problem of young people having to wait for 'their turn'. On several occasions, young people turned up at the same time at the interview venue. Whilst I tried to make sure to stagger the interviews to avoid people arriving at the same time, this was not achieved all the time. In one organisation, young people had to wait in the kitchen area with nothing to do. There were mixed responses from the workers. Whilst some had anticipated this and were available and chatted with the young people, others just left them on their own. In order to prevent this from happening, I made workers aware of this fact and encouraged them to organise the interviews with plenty of time in between each slot, and at least to have some refreshments available for the young people.

Another logistical problem was that some interviews were held in the homes of the young people. Whilst some workers were very aware of the confidentiality issue and went into another room, I had one worker who did stay in the room during the interview. Because of issues of 'working relationships' within the YOT, I did not consider it to be appropriate to

challenge the worker's presence. However, it was obvious that the young person had a difficult relationship with the worker, who also came across as quite patronising. Afterwards, the YOT worker told me that she did not like the young person. This made it clearer why the interview did not go ahead.

In general, home interviews were more difficult because of noise and people being around. However, in order to gain access, I had to sacrifice the ideal interview environment for the access I gained to the young people.

It has to be noted that when workers try to create a good environment for the young people, this will not always be beneficial for the research process. In one discussion group with young people in the age range of 11 to 15, the worker decided to provide some refreshments and bought pizzas and chips. We agreed that he would bring the refreshments after the discussion group had finished. However, he decided to bring it when we had a little break. After this, the young people were more concerned with eating than in continuing with the discussion group. The whole dynamic was damaged and whilst rescuing what I could, I had to organise another day to follow up with the group discussion.

Major logistical problems were presented with the organisation of discussion groups in schools and colleges. How, when and where would these discussion groups be conducted? Some teachers decided to conduct the discussion group during the citizenship lessons and take a group of young people out of the class into another room. However, logistically, this was difficult because of the interruption of the session and the problem in finding alternative places where the discussion group could be conducted. In another school, the discussion group was conducted after school during the youth activities, which proved to be more feasible and worked out very well, since the after school provision was less structured and there was an appropriate room in which to conduct the session.

These examples are only a selection but highlight several things:

- The researcher cannot always anticipate the location and the settings in which the interview will occur
- The process of the interview within an organisation is also dependent upon the relationship the young people have with the workers
- In formal settings such as schools and colleges the structural constraints might have an effect on the voluntary participation of the young people
- In youth work settings the informality can work in favour of the research process but also can seriously hamper the smooth running of the research

Exploratory Phase Two (May 2003- August 2003)

By integrating qualitative data collection with quantitative data collection, it was hoped that the survey questionnaire would complement and extend the findings from the qualitative data. The aim was to test some of the assumptions and to investigate further some of the emerging themes (Denscombe 2007). Several considerations underpinned the choice of a survey questionnaire:

- By choosing to administer a survey, I hoped that this would help me to review and explore further the findings of the first phase
- Another rationale for choosing the survey was to establish relationships between the different aspects of the social capital framework and to test if I could infer or establish any significant correlations
- It was also about investigating if there were any emerging typologies or groups of people with similar characteristics. It would also enable me to analyse and to compare between the different groups
- By doing so, it would hopefully give me the breadth which the qualitative data does not provide

Devising the Survey Questionnaire

In terms of devising a survey questionnaire, Bourdieu (1984) points out that many of the questions within large surveys are culturally alien to, and lack meaning within, working class and rural communities and are biased toward the educated middle classes (Bourdieu 1984 in Forbes and Wainwright 2001). This has also been observed in research in 'deprived' areas of Leicester and London (Boeck and Fleming 2005). Participants in these studies criticised some social capital surveys for not reflecting their reality and imposing alien and alienating concepts. The 'it depends' when replying to the questions is more the norm than the exception (Forbes and Wainwright 2001).

As I have highlighted in chapter four, the challenges I faced when devising the survey were that most existing measures have been developed for adult samples and may not be suitable for adolescent respondents; surveys must be relevant to different youth subcultures and to both genders; questions must be developmentally appropriate and not perceived as judgmental or condescending (Nichter et al. 2002). I addressed these challenges by using the information from the qualitative analysis to inform the development of the quantitative instruments. I also used a template from an earlier survey which had been undertaken in Leicester. The questions from this survey were developed with local residents: adults and young people (Boeck et al. 2001) and the survey was tested for its reliability.

Questions

In the previous chapters, I have established the concepts which are either seen as constituent or related to social capital. These are: networks, trust and safety, reciprocity, sense of belonging, diversity, outlook on life, perceived power. These concepts were explored in the first phase of the research. The initial analysis of the QUAL data combined with theoretical approaches informed the formulation of some further survey questions (see

Appendix III for the full survey questionnaire). I will illustrate this with the questions around trust.

Questions addressing the radius of trust or social trust are quite standardised within different government surveys (HOCS, HSE, GHS, ONS): “Generally speaking do you think that most people can be trusted?” Within the discussion groups, young people would refer to an array of people they would trust or not trust. Informed by theoretical explorations which assert that a narrow radius of trust is characterised by a fear of the **unknown** – and people who are different from themselves (Uslaner 2003), I also added some qualitative questions to further explore the radius of trust.

I trust (*who, which types of people?*):.....

I don't trust (*who, which types of people?*):.....

More importantly, I used the findings of the first phase of the research around conceptualisations of young people's accounts on trust to formulate a question in the survey. The aim was to further investigate the types of trust derived from the meaning young people attach to them and which are not being examined in other social capital research:

Trust means: (*choose one*)

- 1 People do not tell others what I have told them
- 2 People do not stab me in the back
- 3 Sticking up for each other
- 4 Being able to tell somebody what really bothers me
- 5 Feeling comfortable with somebody
- 6 Other (*please tell us*)

Another question which arrived from the accounts of young people was the importance for them to feel trusted. As such, the following open ended questions were devised.

Is there any adult person in your life who you think trusts you?

(Please tell us).....

People who trust me are:.....

Mertens (2007) argues that a researcher's commitment to social justice should affect his or her research questions. Mertens states that it is useful to raise questions "about the assumptions that underlie research and the contribution of research to enhancing human rights" (Mertens 2007: 224). Arguing for "meaningful types of communication which maximises the information flow", Sayer (2003) encourages the researcher to learn from the views of the research participant and not to strictly adhere to preconceived questions. Whilst drawing on some already existing questions, the mixed methods research enabled me to modify questionnaire items and add new items based on the information gathered.

Pilot

The questionnaire was piloted within one youth group and several young people gave feedback on the formulation of the questions in order to come up with wordings which were acceptable to them. So, for example, young people preferred the more informal word 'mates' rather than the formal word 'friends' to be used. Young people were only unhappy with one of the initial questions which was about 'who is the most important person in your life?' The enquiry came out of some of the statements around trusting people within the discussion groups. However, young people felt that within a survey questionnaire this question was not appropriate and they felt uncomfortable having to pin point one person to be the most important person. They also questioned the notion of 'important' and the meaning behind it. The questionnaire was also tested for its length, and it was agreed that around 15 to 20 minutes would be an acceptable length for the young people to spend on filling in the schedule.

In the end, the questionnaire addressed all the concepts concerning social capital with two or more questions; either by using elements of the ONS social capital pool of questions; or new questions arrived at through the qualitative enquiry. However, involving young people in the design of the questions was at times a difficult process and with hindsight I would agree that “the wording of the questions is one of the most difficult features of questionnaire design. It is also one of the most important to get right” (Denscombe 2007: 162). Young people wanted, within the likert scale, the option of ‘I don’t know’. However, this hindered me in using some of the questions within my analysis, especially within procedures based on mean values within the likert scale.

A clear distinction was made between factual information and opinions to be gathered by the survey questionnaire (Denscombe 2007: 155). Factual information was around finding out young people’s networks and their type of networks; opinions, attitudes and preferences were explored around trust, sense of belonging, outlook on life, power and diversity.

Access and Logistics

As discussed at the beginning of this chapter, access for the survey was gained through youth organisations, YIPs and YOTs, a Grammar School and a College. All the organisations and groups which participated in the first stage of the data collection also participated in the survey questionnaire.

An important consideration was how to administer the survey. This was relevant because I used several different access points, namely youth work organisations, schools and colleges and YOTs. For instance, at the school and college, I debated if I should administer the questionnaire in a classroom by handing it out to young people and hope for returns, or whether it would be done like an examination situation, without my presence.

I realised that administering the survey in a classroom would get a higher return. However, my previous work with YOTs and schools made me aware that simply by entering these organisations, I would be perceived as being part of the establishment, which would bring the associated norms and values young people attach to the staff, as well as the perception of compulsion.

Despite this, my initial plan was to go to the classroom and start by explaining to the young people that they could leave the room if they did not want to answer the questionnaire, or that they could ask me anything, so that the survey would not be perceived to be an examination. I proposed to the teachers that I would project the questionnaire onto the wall, and explain the questions in the teacher's presence. This would have enabled me to help the young people understand the questionnaire, but not lead them to answers.

However, none of the teachers who agreed to participate were keen on me attending the sessions. Their position was that the only viable way to administer the survey during school hours was not to allow pupils to leave the classroom. I stressed that the survey was voluntary and that if young people did not want to respond, they did not need to do so, which was agreed to by the staff. It was interesting to note that a small number (less than 20) young people were quite ingenious in getting around this issue by only answering the demographic (first page) questions and not the rest of the questionnaire. I speculate that this was to make sure that it looked as if they had replied to the survey so that there would be no further repercussions for them. Overall, judging from the quality of the open ended questions, I was quite impressed by how seriously young people had taken the exercise.

Bias in the Data Collection Process

Different methods might bring about bias, such as the quantitative measurement of some phenomenon or the accurate estimation of a

population parameter (Hammersley and Gomm 1997), or in qualitative approaches, interviewer bias. One position argues that to reduce ‘observer-induced bias’, it is recommended to use surveys which ask each respondent the same questions under controlled conditions (Kuper and Kuper 2003). However Sayer (2003) argues that this approach sacrifices the explanatory depth and disregards that respondents interpret the questions in different ways according to the context in which they see these questions: that the same questions can have a very different significance for different respondents. As a result, Sayer (2003) concludes that “the belief that traditional, highly-formalised interviews or questionnaires minimize observer-induced bias could not be more misjudged” (location 4616).

The domain theory (Layder 1997) underlines the importance of listening to respondents’ subjectivities, emotional viewpoints and local narratives. In less formal and more interactive interviews, the researcher has a much better chance to hear respondents’ own accounts of the meaning and significance of different situations and circumstances (Sayer 2003). These subjective factors are not seen as biased or as undermining the objectivity of sociological accounts. However, these accounts need to be embedded within the exploration of all of the four interconnected domains (Layder 1997). I would argue that the mixed methods design which allows for ‘standardised questions’ but also in depth exploration – whilst not eliminating bias – will help to minimise some of the bias.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the research process. I have argued that coming from a critical realist position, the researcher does not only have an academic responsibility, but also a social responsibility. Thus, within a commitment to social change, I have argued that ethical considerations should not only be part of the research process, but also be considered before and after the research. Apart from the more traditional guidelines adopted from the

Statement of Ethical Practice for the British Sociological Association, I have argued that the principles and practices of youth work can become an important tool for the building of trust and the levelling of power imbalances in a research project with young people. The considerations of the contextual and personal impact of the research on young people are especially relevant within the claim of developing a critical self-awareness in people and assisting in their emancipation.

I have explained the sampling strategy and highlighted the purposive sampling techniques which were informed by the literature review, my own judgment and my experience within the research field. This was followed by the description of the process of data collection within each phase of the mixed methods design and looked at some of the logistics and hurdles which had to be overcome. It has been argued that these different phases aided the exploration with young people of the meaning of the different components of the social capital framework and the context, within which their interactions happen. Phase one focused on the 'self (psychobiography)' and 'situated activity' and phase two aided through the integration of the qualitative data collection with the quantitative data collection to explore all of Layder's four interconnected domains: psychobiography, situated activity, settings and context.

In the next chapter, I will present how these phases were interwoven and connected through the data analysis, and illustrate how the advantages of using a mixed methods design come to shine through the integration of the different data sets.

Chapter 6: Analysis

Introduction

In this chapter, I will discuss the process of data analysis. I will set the scene by describing how within a general framework of ‘adaptive theory’, data-driven and theory-driven approaches are integrated in order to maximise the findings and achieve a good balance between reliability and validity.

Considering validity and bias, I will argue that the use of mixed strategies of data analysis can facilitate cross-checking and triangulation. This will lead me to explore causation within a critical realism (CR) perspective and make the argument that within CR, the goal is not to generalize to a population, but to obtain insights into a phenomenon, individuals, or events. I then explain the three stages of the cyclic analysis of the data by using the example of ‘trust’. Within this, I will look at the qualitative and quantitative analyses and show how the data sets were integrated.

Validity and Bias

Content and thematic analysis can be data-driven, as in grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Kearney et al. 1994, Wright 1997), or theory-driven (Krippendorff 1980; Weber 1990). Glaser and Strauss (1967) react against what they call theoretical bias, through research that forces data into ready-made categories. Those who defend data-driven approaches argue that they have greater validity because “they are more flexible and open to discovery of themes or ideas not previously considered, resulting in theory that is “grounded” in the data” (Namey et al. 2007: 139). Within this, it is argued that grounded theory helps to diminish bias through its rigorous inductive analysis and relatively unbiased coding (Dey 1993, 1999).

Those who consider theory-driven approaches more reliable tend to argue that ready-made categories are more likely to bypass the bias of the coder. There is a danger that “coding without the guidance of theoretical concepts runs the risk of being short-sighted” (Dannemark 2005: location 3292). They would criticise data-driven approaches as empirically biased, because of its “tendency to regard established theories as an impediment rather than a resource”. “Empirical data is always categorised data, and theoretical concepts are the scientific instruments necessary to find alternatives to common-sense categories”. In both approaches, there might be a conscious or unconscious tendency on the part of a researcher to produce data, and/or to interpret them, in a way that inclines towards erroneous conclusions which are in line with his or her personal commitments (David and Sutton 2011).

Within a general framework of ‘adaptive theory’, data-driven and theory-driven approaches are integrated (Layder 1993, 2006) in order to maximise the findings and achieve a good balance between reliability and validity (Namey et al. 2007). As discussed in chapter four, my overall design is an integration of several designs presented by Creswell and Clark (2007) and the mixed model design developed by Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003: 689). Notably, the central mode of inference (explanation) in critical realist research is retrodution. This advocates using induction (theory emerging from data) and deduction (theory guiding data), to investigate the potential causal mechanisms and the conditions under which certain outcomes will or will not be realised (Layder 1998).

Within this, mixed-methods triangulation can be seen as the manifestation of retrodution (Downward and Mearman 2007). As a caveat, it is worth pointing out that Sayer (2003) and Dannemark et al. (2005) reject the typical idea in triangulation that qualitative insights are validated by quantitative analysis. Their view is that quantitative analysis is unable to provide causal narratives as understood by CR and thus does not add validity to the analysis (Downward and Mearman 2007). In my analysis, whilst not dismissing these

positions, I will follow Layder's adaptive theory with the view that the use of mixed strategies of data analysis can facilitate cross-checking and triangulation (Denscombe 2007; Shaw 2003). It is hoped that the validity of the results will be increased through triangulation within the mixed methods design. Using different sources helps to counteract the method bias, but also the "inquirer bias, bias of substantive theory" and "biases of inquiry context" (David and Sutton 2011: 296). The interactive design within this study incorporated quantitative and qualitative, sequential and concurrent data collection and analysis: at every stage, there was the possibility of modifying one of the approaches based on the other; thus the data sets are integrated not only within the data collection process, but also in the data analysis.

In this chapter, using the example of my investigation and analysis of 'trust', I will show how I have integrated these approaches at different stages. In the first stage of the research process, analysis was quite general and descriptive with initial exploration of the concepts within the social capital framework. The findings, which were then contrasted with some theoretical considerations, led to the devising of the survey questionnaire which contained quantitative and qualitative data. In the second stage, quantitative data was analysed and qualitative data from the survey questionnaire was quantified. The analysis gained greater clarity and explanatory power in the third stage as qualitative and quantitative/qualitative data from the questionnaire was integrated, which led to meta inferences (Tashakkori and Teddlie 2003). Thus, a fundamental task within social research is about explaining social phenomena by revealing the causal mechanisms, causal conditions or causal relations underlying these social phenomena. Causal analysis is about explaining why what happens actually does happen (Dannermark et al. 2005). I believe that it is here, that the true advantage and added value of mixed methods research comes into consideration (see Bryman 2006; 2007). This leads me to consider in the next section some important aspects of causation within a CR perspective.

Causalities

In terms of exploring causalities, there is an important distinction to be made between “the way in which people cause things to happen – by doing things – and the way in which structures cause things to happen – by motivating or discouraging, constraining and enabling certain sorts of human action” (Carter 2005 location 501). Sayer (2003) asserts that in the realist view, causality is about “the ‘causal powers’ or ‘liabilities’ of objects or relations, or more generally their ways of acting or ‘mechanisms’” (location 2064). Causal powers not only inhere in single objects of individuals, but also in social relations and structures which they form, which is especially relevant in this study with its focus on networks and their embeddedness in localities. Notably, powers and liabilities exist whether they are exercised or not. This insight is of special relevance within this study, especially when considering young people’s agency – or perceived agency – in enhancing their social capital and drawing on its resources. Thus, young people and their networks might have the causal powers to enhance social capital and draw upon the resources, but whether causal powers are activated or exercised is influenced by different mechanisms. These causal mechanisms depend upon the conditions in which the mechanisms work and are not always linear. Thus, a crucial element in causation is the context within which certain causal mechanisms might or might not operate.

Causation within a CR perspective is not seen as a relationship between separate events i.e. cause and effect. Realist explanations go beyond and behind associations, looking at social structures and practices as causal mechanisms that generate these relationships (Carter 2005).

“Mechanisms are not only existent when A leads to B, but also when A does not lead to B: this is a cardinal point in critical realist causal analysis. The mechanism has to be triggered to operate and it might even not ever be triggered and when it is triggered the conditions or circumstances determine whether it will operate at all. To make matters even more complex, the actual effects also dependent on the conditions. [...] The outcome of this – that is the events- is therefore a

complex compound effect of influences drawn from different mechanisms, where some mechanisms reinforce one another, and others frustrate the manifestations of each other” (Dannermark et al. 2005: 1440-1447).

Byrne (2009) asserts that a critical realist perspective on causality is that, “what happens is not the product of any single cause, but rather of the interaction of multiple causes” (p. 56). Therefore, quite often a researcher will be confronted with situations in which many things are happening at the same time which cannot be isolated or easily disentangled. “Processes of change usually involve several causal mechanisms which may be only contingently related to one another. Not surprisingly then, depending on conditions, the operation of the same mechanism can produce quite different results and alternatively different mechanisms may produce the same empirical result” (Sayer 2003: location 2133).

Therefore, analysing quantitative and qualitative data from a CR perspective is not about looking at relationships between two events, but “to ask what ‘makes it happen’, what ‘produces’, ‘generates’, ‘creates’ or ‘determines’ it, or, more weakly, what ‘enables’ or ‘leads to’ it” (Sayer 2003: location 2054). To pursue this, I found it useful to draw upon the constant comparative method (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss 1987). All the data sets were explored, searching for patterns, differences, similarities and clusters (Coffey and Atkinson 1996; Dey 1993; Miles and Huberman 1994). Through constant comparison, i.e. categorizing, coding, delineating categories and connecting them, I was able to check the data, looking for negative or deviant cases, which helped to confirm or deny initial hypotheses aiming to develop rigorous and valid theory (Boeije 2002).

Generalisation

As I have stated in chapter five, I have used purposeful sampling in which “individuals, groups, and settings are considered for selection if they are ‘information rich’” (Onwuegbuzie and Collins 2007: 287), and “maximize understanding of the underlying phenomenon” (Onwuegbuzie and Leech 2007: 242). This sampling strategy sits well within a research approach which recognises and aims to research the complexity of social reality, or in other words the ‘textured’ or interwoven nature of different levels and dimensions of social reality (Layder 1997, 2006). However, within this, it is “necessary to clarify and make explicit the ways in which research findings might generalise, and the limits and constraints on generalisation” (Ranyard 2009: 4).

Forbes and Wainwright (2001) warn about “artificially inflating the generalisability” of data collected at an individual level. When employing data at the individual level, any social-capital-building interaction with others must be inferred by using proxies for social capital (Campbell and Yonish 2003: 88). Whilst some kind of generalizing typically occurs in both quantitative and qualitative research (Onwuegbuzie and Collins 2007 p.283), Sayer (2003) argues that it would be a mistake to view generalisation as an end in itself. Critical realist research is not concerned about generalisation in terms of a search for order and regularity. For Sayer, the “value of generalisations depends upon the qualitative nature of the objects to which they refer. They can only support, but never replace qualitative methods such as structural analysis” (Sayer 2003: location 2037). The goal is not to generalise to a population, but to obtain insights into a phenomenon, individuals, or events. In this sense, one can aim to make conceptual and ‘analytic generalisations’ (Miles and Huberman 1994), especially when “the mix of social, political, cultural, economic, ethnic and gender circumstances and values is similar across settings” (Guba and Lincoln 1994: 114).

Stages of Analysis

There were three stages to the cyclic analysis of the data:

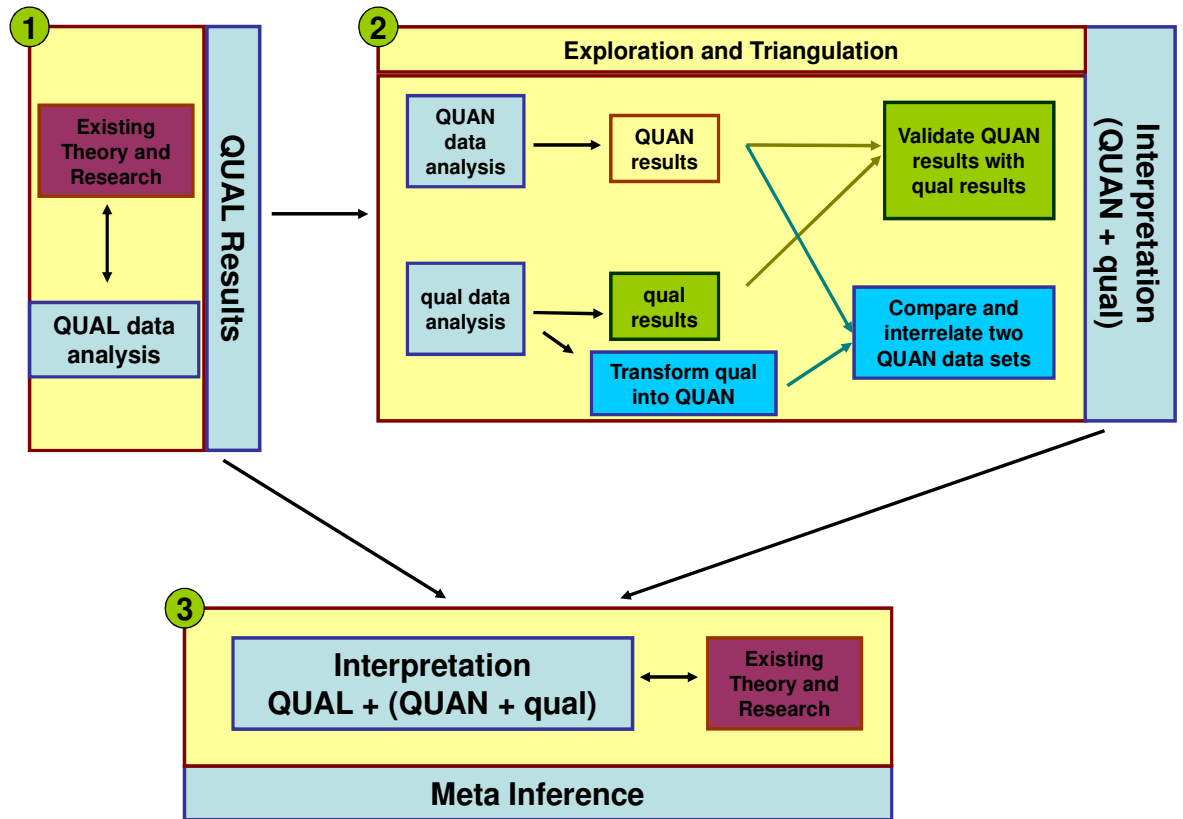
Stage One: This stage consisted of the analysis of the qualitative (QUAL) data. Following the graph, it can be seen that through the combination of the preliminary findings with insights and emerging themes from the theoretical considerations, the survey questionnaire was developed.

Stage Two: Triangulation was embedded within this stage. Two types of data were analysed: quantitative data (QUAN) and open-ended survey items (qual = qualitative data). In subsequent iterative processes, quantitative results were validated with qualitative results and qualitative data from the survey was quantified and analysed with the original quantitative data from the survey.

Stage Three: The analysis of this stage leads to the Interpretation and Meta Inference which is depicted at the bottom of the graph. The combined (QUAN + qual²¹) survey results are integrated with the qualitative analysis of the first stage and leads to Interpretation and Meta Inferences.

²¹ QUAN + qual indicates a quantitatively –driven, quantitative and qualitative simultaneous design

Diagram 4: Data Analysis



The next part of this chapter will be devoted to discussing these stages in more detail by using the example of 'trust'.

First Stage of Data Analysis

After transcribing the discussion groups and interviews, they were imported into NVIVO 8. The first stage of the data analysis involved reading through the transcripts and getting familiarized with the accounts of the young people. During this process, some of the accounts were still very fresh and salient, but other accounts also came to the forefront and I started to make annotations recording my initial thoughts. The next diagram shows the advantages of using NVIVO within this process. Whilst coding the transcript, it is possible to see the 'coding stripes' and also 'drag and paste' chunks of text into the emerging and existing nodes.

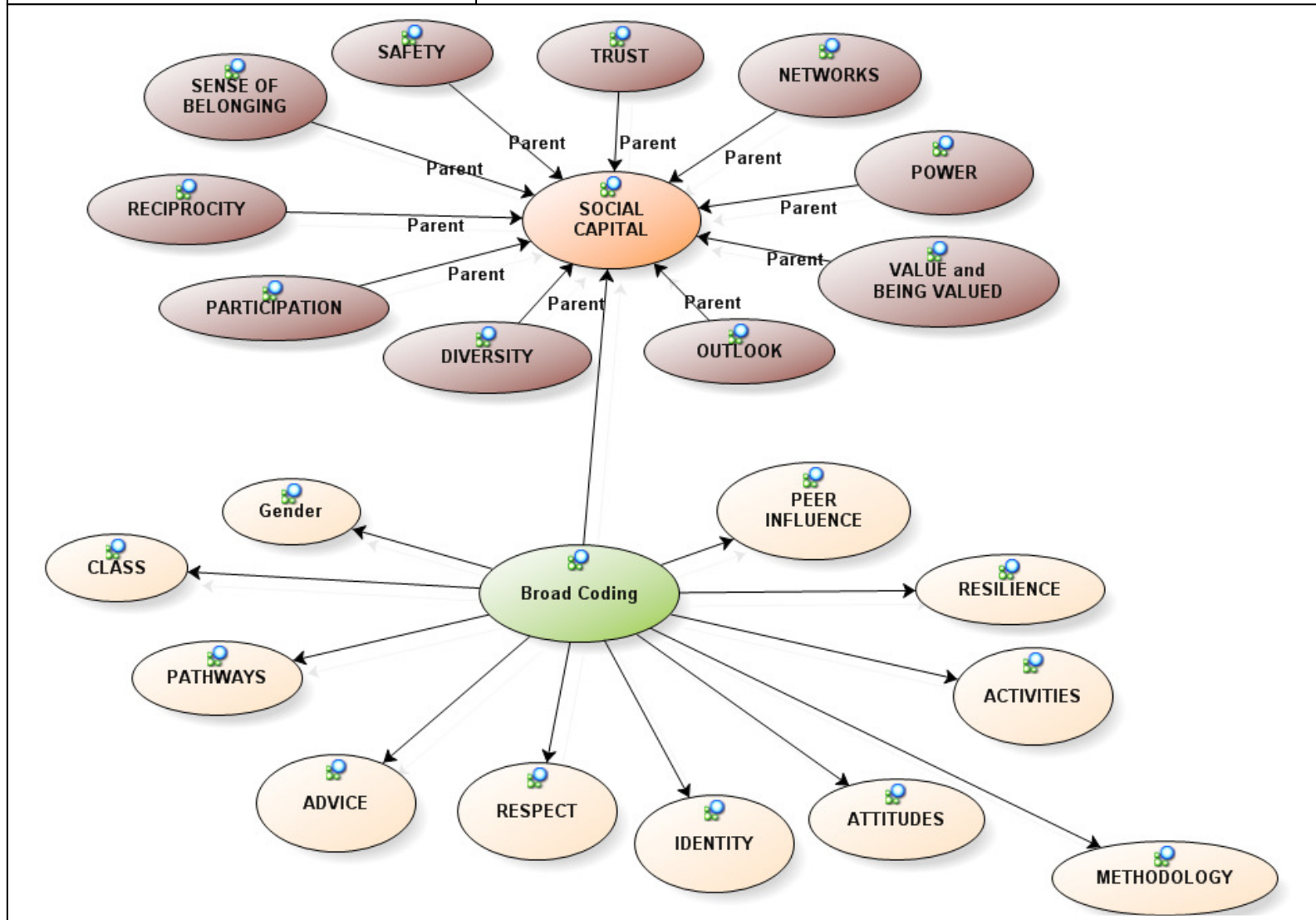
Diagram 5: Example of NVIVO

The screenshot displays the NVivo software interface. On the left, a 'Nodes' pane lists various categories such as 'ACTIVITIES', 'ADVICE', 'ATTITUDES', 'IDENTITY', 'METHODODOLOGY', 'OVERVIEW', 'SOCIAL CAPITAL', and 'POWER'. The main window shows a text document with several paragraphs of text. A coding density chart is overlaid on the right side of the text, with vertical bars of different colors (green, red, purple) indicating the density of codes applied to different sections of the text. The chart labels include 'Coding Density', 'SOCIAL CAPITAL', 'the neighbourhood', 'OUTLOOK', 'IDENTITY', 'LIKES~INTERESTS', 'SKILLS', and 'PERCEPTION OF SELF'. The status bar at the bottom indicates '423 Items', 'Nodes: 36', 'References: 176', and 'Line: 1 Column: 0'.

Since the analysis of this stage of the research was meant to lead to the formulation of the survey questionnaire, the analysis needed to be done relatively quickly in order to continue with the research within the given timeframe. First, the empirical material contained in the discussion groups was coded at a very general level in order to condense and organize the data into analyzable units (Peek and Fothergill 2009). Segments of the discussions, ranging from a phrase to several paragraphs, were assigned codes based on emergent or a priori themes from the social capital framework defined in the initial stages of the project (see chapter five). In some instances, the same text segment was assigned more than one code. However, other themes started to emerge and these were also put into new, emerging categories. This initial, open coding (Huberman and Miles 1994; Noaks and Wincup 2004; Strauss and Corbin 1990) resulted in a list of themes, categories, accounts of behaviours and opinions related to the research topic.

The following NVIVO model shows how, through broad coding, several nodes were being created and how under the broad concept of social capital, I used the same concepts as in my original social capital framework. However, another concept 'valued and being valued' emerged strongly in the accounts of the young people. Some of the accounts and reactions to the research methodology, like answering the questions or the reaction to the questions, were put into a node called 'methodology'.

Diagram 6: Broad Coding (NVIVO model 1)



The process of describing ('thick' description) was done through an initial focus on how young people described their situations and interactions within the social capital framework, focusing on each of the different categories and unpacking some of the meanings they attached to it. At this stage, the list was also informed by the theories and concepts arising from the literature review. The next stage was to use Dey's (1993) different steps of qualitative data analysis, focusing especially on 'describing' and 'classifying' within the concept of social capital. The next step was to classify the data through assessing its characteristics and breaking it up into segments. The resulting categories were then assessed and reorganised through a process of redefining, or what Dey (1993) calls 'splitting and splicing'.

Example of Coding Types of Trust

Within the academic deliberations around social capital, Field (2008) points out that a number of writers have suggested that in order for people to cooperate, they need to trust one another and expect that if they cooperate they will not be exploited or defrauded (p.62). However, there are different views within the social capital debate as to whether trust is a constituent part or a consequence of social capital (see chapter two). Within these debates, trust seems to be closely related to bonding and bridging social capital, but without agreement between the different academics. Concepts explored in the literature review (see chapter two) which influenced the analysis were:

- Thick and Thin Trust (Putnam 2000)
- Radius of Trust (Fukuyama 2001) with 'not trusting people one doesn't know' as a sign of a narrow radius of trust (Uslaner 2002, 2003)
- Granovetter's (1973) writings about the 'strengths of weak ties'

During the first phase of the research, young people referred to different types of trust in relation to different people, such as parents, 'just friends' and good mates'. Although there quite often is an almost 'taken for granted' trust in the parents '...because they are your parents...', many young people

would use trust in the context of socialising with other young people and feeling comfortable with them. However, some young people would refer to trust as 'parents or friends who wouldn't stab you in the back'.

This initial analysis of the QUAL data combined with theoretical approaches informed the formulation of some further survey questions around trust:

- Questions addressing the radius of trust (social trust) are quite standardised within different government surveys (HOCS, HSE, GHS, ONS), e.g. 'Generally speaking do you think that most people can be trusted?'
- I also added some qualitative questions to further explore the radius of trust

I trust (*who, which types of people?*):.....

I don't trust (*who, which types of people?*):.....

More importantly, I used the conceptualisations of young people's accounts on trust to formulate a question in the survey. The aim was to further explore the types of trust derived from the meaning young people attach to them, concepts which are not being explored in other social capital research:

Trust means:

- 1 People do not tell others what I have told them
- 2 People do not stab me in the back
- 3 Sticking up for each other
- 4 Being able to tell somebody what really bothers me
- 5 Feeling comfortable with somebody
- 6 Other (*please tell us*)

Second Stage of Data Analysis

The use of mixed strategies of data collection within the 'Exploratory Phase Two' aimed to aid further exploration (Creswell and Clark 2007), but also to achieve triangulation and to facilitate cross-checking and validation (Denscombe 2007). Two types of data were collected: quantitative data and open-ended survey items (qualitative data). Once the survey was completed, the data was inputted into SPSS. This phase has a quantitative emphasis which is further explored through the embedded qualitative data (QUAN + qual).

The next sections highlight the different statistical techniques which were used to explore: significant differences between groups, relationships among variables and groupings of cases. It is important to note that this analysis was an iterative process, in which as already mentioned, the qualitative data of the survey was quantified and analysed with the original quantitative data of the survey and quantitative results were validated and further explored with qualitative results.

Screening and Cleaning the Data

The data screening process involved checking for errors and making sure that the scores within each of the variables were not out of range. Mistakes were then located within the data file and corrections were made. In some cases the mistake was quite straightforward and it was just about correcting an error made in the data input. At other times, some young people filled in several options when only one option was asked for. This data was registered as 'missing data'. However this only happened on very rare occasions.

After a general analysis and exploration of the data by using descriptive analysis within SPSS and looking at simple frequencies, I started to apply several specific analytical tools which are described in the following sections.

Exploratory Factor Analysis

Exploratory factor analysis is an analytical tool of quantitative data, which is not designed to test hypotheses or to investigate significant differences. It tries to uncover the underlying structure of a relatively large set of variables. Bryman (2004) asserts that “factor analysis is a statistical technique used for large numbers of variables to establish whether there is a tendency for groups of them to be inter-related. [...] The groups of indicators are called factors and must then be given a name” (p.539). There is no prior theory and one uses factor loadings to deduce the factor structure of the data (Pallant 2007). I have thus used factor analysis as a data reduction tool in order to reduce the many questions within the questionnaire into a core set of composite themes. The benefit in doing so is that often a number of questions might measure the same or very similar characteristics and could therefore, if used separately, over emphasise the importance of the particular theme. Factor analysis is not a test of differences between groups of subjects.

“Rather, factor analysis represents a complex array of structure-analysing procedures used to identify the interrelationships among a large set of observed variables and then, through data reduction, to group a smaller set of these variables into dimensions or factors that have common characteristics” (Pett et al. 2003: 2).

In my analysis, I have followed Pallant’s (2007) three steps involved in factor analysis, which I will explore below:

1. Assessment of suitability of the data for the factor analysis
2. Factor extraction
3. Factor rotation and interpretation

Assessment of Suitability of the Data

The first step was to consider if the sample size was suitable for a factor analysis. It is suggested that ‘it is comforting to have at least 300 cases for

factor analysis' (Tabachnick and Fidell 2007: 613 in Pallant 2007: 181). Since my sample size was 500, it was seen as appropriate for this test.

Whilst interval data are assumed in factor analysis, using categorical data in factor analysis is not of uncommon practice (Vermunt and Magidson 2008). Field (2009) asserts that it is possible to do factor analysis on non-continuous data (p.650). Kim and Mueller (1978: 74-5) note that categorical data may be used if it is thought that the assignment of binary, ordinal or nominal categories to the data do not seriously distort the underlying metric scaling.

Taking this into account, I considered the suitability of data by looking at the strength of the inter-correlations among the items. Gorsuch (1983) notes that categorical variables with similar splits tend to correlate with each other. He recommends examining the factor loadings of categorical variables, assessing whether common loading reflects a substantive correlation. Following Pallant (2007), I used an inspection of the correlation matrix for evidence of coefficients greater than 0.3. This value is presented as part of the output from the factor analysis and meant that I had to run the analysis with different amounts of variables until I reached the 'suitability' of the items to be involved. Throughout this process, some of the variables were included in the factor analysis and others were left out.

Factor Extraction

For the factor extraction, I used the 'principal components analysis', which is the most commonly used approach. "This involves balancing two conflicting needs: the need to find a simple solution with as few factors as possible; and the need to explain as much of the variance in the original data set as possible" (Pallant 2007: 182). Therefore, I continued with my exploratory approach and experimented with different numbers of factors until I reached, as recommended by Pallant, a 'satisfactory solution'.

In order to achieve this, I used within SPSS the Catell's scree test "which involves plotting each of the eigenvalues²² of the factors and inspecting the plot to find a point at which the shape of the curve changes direction and becomes horizontal" (Pallant 2007: 182). I opted in most of the cases to retain all of the factors above the elbow.

Factor Rotation and Interpretation

In order to interpret the factors, I rotated them, which shows, without changing the underlying solution, which variables 'clump together' (Pallant 2007: 183). Within an orthogonal approach of rotation, I used Verimax and compared different sets of similar factors with each other. When the solutions were too dissimilar or too difficult to interpret, I continued to explore the data with different variables until I could find "the clearest and easiest to report" (Pallant 2007: 183).

Kim and Mueller (1978) assert that one of the difficulties of using categorical data is that the resulting factors may be that much harder to interpret. However, generally in factor analysis, there is subjectivity, artistry, and "laying on of hands" involved in this method. In my case, the outcomes of the statistical analysis packages were then interpreted in the light of the theoretical insights and the insights gained through the qualitative data analysis (Pett et al. 2003).

The table below lists the factors which were arrived at through the factor analysis. These factors are organised under the broader themes within this study. Those factors which have been used throughout the analysis appear in green because of their relevance and statistical significance. The names given to these factors were arrived at through my own interpretation, and next to them I describe their characteristics, which are derived from the variables which form part of the factor analysis.

²² I used the default setting of SPSS selecting as many factors as there are eigenvalues over 1

Table 4: Significant Factors for the Study

| NETWORKS | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Varied Networks | Networks based on different groups (such as after school, interest, faith, youth groups). They tend to meet their friends through these groups |
| Area networks | Networks based on socialising on the streets and having met their friends on the street. |
| Family Networks | Networks largely around family and extended family |
| Diversity | Have different types of friends and enjoy being with people of different life styles |
| SAFETY | |
| Street safety | Feel safe on the street, local park and city/town centre |
| Street unsafe | Don't feel safe on the street, local park and city/town centre |
| Home/ school safety | Feel safe at home and at school |
| RECIPROCITY AND TRUST | |
| Reciprocity and Trust | Most people can be trusted, they feel trusted, adults listen to them and feel that people are usually ready to help each other |
| Trust/Being Trusted | Generally feel that most people can be trusted and they are being trusted by adults and adults listen to them |
| AGENCY | |
| Agency/ Influence | Can speak out if they disagree with what adults have agreed on and they can influence decisions in their life |
| SCHOOL EXPERIENCE | |
| Challenging/ positive | School challenging and positive |
| Fun/ enjoyable | School fun and enjoyable |
| Confusing/ difficult | School confusing and difficult |
| Disappointing/ waste of time | School disappointing and waste of time |
| SUPPORT | |
| Being valued by Adults | Being valued by Adults |
| Family and Friend support | Family and Friend support |
| Significant Adults | Feel valued by adults and would involve police or teacher if they get bullied |
| Rely on Family and Friends | Involve family and/or friends when bullied |
| Rely on Authority | Involve teacher and/or police when bullied |
| Rely on Themselves | Try to talk to the person when getting bullied |
| Powerlessness | Feel that there would be nothing they can do if bullied |

These factors were subsequently used in looking for differences between groups and to further analyse the data through cluster analysis.

In order to check the reliability of my analysis, I reanalysed all the findings which are presented in the next chapter without using factors. The clusters derived through this analysis were the same as the ones arrived at through

the factor analysis. I also correlated the clusters with the individual variables which are part of the factors. In this analysis, all the significant differences which were observed through using the factors were confirmed.

The decision to present the findings by using the factor analysis was because this type of analysis helps to simplify and clarify the conceptual themes within the questionnaire into a more easily understandable form and manageable number (Pett et al. 2003).

Exploring Significant Differences

Using Variables

In order to examine differences between the different variables and demographic groups, I used several tests. For nominal data, Chi-square tests were used to explore the relationship between two categorical variables and more than two groups. For ordinal data, Mann-Whitney tests were used to examine the relationship between two independent groupings and Kruskal Wallis for more than two groups. Significance was set at $< .05$. Phi and Cramer's V, the size of relationship, was considered as: low = $< .3$; medium = $.3 - .6$; high = $> .6$. In order to check for accuracy in the analysis, I consulted with two academic colleagues within my Faculty who are trained in statistical data analysis.²³

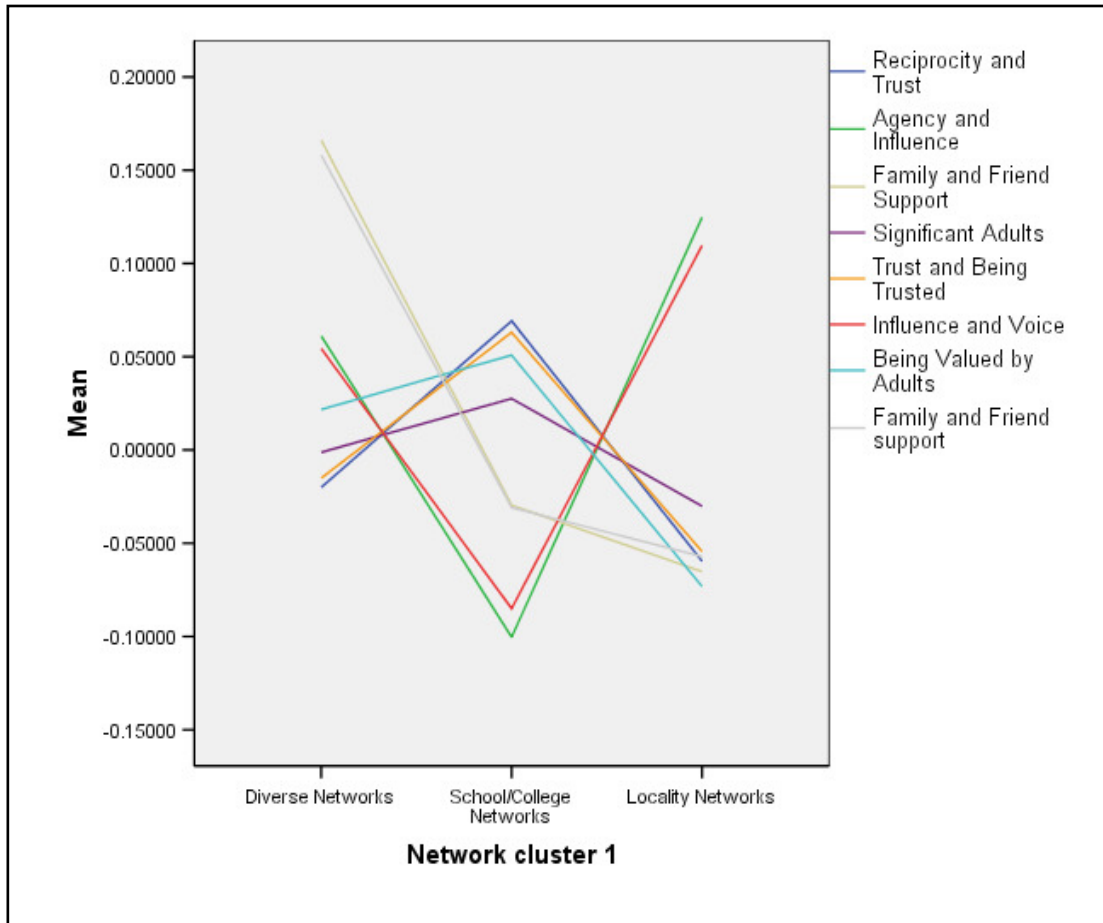
Using Factors

Whilst numerical values obtained through data analysis provide useful information concerning the sample and variables, some aspects are better explored visually (Pallant 2007: 65). I used line graphs for the personal exploration of the factors as I found them visually easier to interpret. These

²³ It should also be noted that the "statistical significance does not necessarily imply social significance" (Denscombe 2007; 259) and as such I had to assess if the statistical differences could be also considered as meaningful differences in young people's lives. However I could not find any academic article or book which explored this kind of difference.

graphs also helped to further redefine the factors when, as can be seen below, some of the factors had very similar means. I used the appropriate bar charts to present the data in my findings section.

Graph1: Factors and Mean Scores between Network Clusters



In the above example (of an early stage exploration) I compared the mean scores of continuous variables (factors) of three groups: diverse network group, school /college network group and locality based network. Therefore I tested the statistically significant difference through the use of one-way analysis of variance: ANOVA (Field 2009).

Cluster Analysis

Cluster analysis is an exploratory data analysis technique. Everitt et al. (2009) asserts that cluster analysis comprises a range of methods for

classifying multivariate data into subgroups. As such, it reveals groupings within a collection of data. By organising multivariate data into such subgroups, clustering can help to reveal the characteristics of any structure or patterns present. Because of its potential to reveal groupings, it has been predominantly used in medicine, psychology and market research.

The Cluster analysis followed the following steps:²⁴

1. Establishing the cluster centres
2. Creating a line chart profiling the segments and defining the new cluster variable

Establishing the Cluster Centres

Within the cluster analysis, I used K-means clustering, which allows one to partition the data set into k clusters. In order to determine the “best” value for k, I ran the clustering algorithm several times with different values for k (Ghosh 2003: 250). The final selection was based upon the evaluation of recurring and dominant clusters. Two clusters stood out in the various clustering algorithms: locality based networks and school/college based networks. However, because in several ‘runnings’ of the analysis there was a group which did not fit exactly within either of these two strong clusters, I opted at the end to use K=3. ANOVA tests on each clustering variable. These were not used as actual statistical tests, but as indicators of which cluster variables were most important in the formation of clusters.

Profiling the Segments and Defining the Variable

I used line graphs to explore the clusters. The mean scores of the factors – which were chosen to establish the clusters – were inspected against the cluster centres. This helped to create a profile of each of the segments. Different clusters were analysed, however the most relevant for this piece of

²⁴ I attended a training course organised by Leicestershire County Council which was based on “Market Segmentation Using SPSS” SPSS (UK) Ltd www.spsstraining.com

the study was the cluster which emerged when exploring the ‘situated activity’. After interpreting the line graphs the three clusters which emerged were:

- Area based networks
- Group based networks
- School/College based networks

As a critical reflection, I would say that I found the cluster analysis quite useful but very subjective and at times confusing. I guess part of it is because by altering numbers of clusters and changing the variables, different combinations appear. As a result, I compared several clusters and started to narrow down what kind of variables I would use for the cluster. When the solutions were too dissimilar or too difficult to interpret, I continued to explore the data with different variables until I could find “the clearest and easiest to report” (Pallant 2007:183).

In the cluster analysis I could have applied two of the main approaches of rotation: orthogonal and oblique. After consultation with statisticians I only used Varimax as the rotational technique for the orthogonal approach. There are different underlying assumptions behind these approaches but in most of the explorations the two approaches come up with very similar solutions. Further explorations of the data could be pursued using both of the approaches.

Quantifying the Qualitative Data

The qualitative data from the survey was transcribed and imported into NVIVO 8. It was also possible to import all the demographics from the SPSS data into NVIVO. As a result, each of the qualitative replies had its equivalent in SPSS. The qualitative data of 500 survey respondents was then coded and analysed in NVIVO 8.

Not all of the 24 open ended questions from the 500 participants could be coded because of time limitations and choices had to be made based on salient themes within the analysis. I will discuss this in the next section.

Third Stage of Data Analysis

The intention of this third stage was to interpret the survey results (QUAN + qual) together with the QUAL analysis of the Exploratory Phase One and further analyse the data sets.

Meta Inferences

Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003: 35) use the term 'meta inferences' to describe this stage as a mixed methods term. They assert that the definitions for 'infer' include making conclusions, as well as both the term "cause" which is associated with the quantitative orientation, and the term "induce" (the root word for induction), which is associated with the qualitative orientation. "Inference is a term that can be used by QUALs and QUANs alike because it refers to the inductively or deductively derived conclusions from a study" (p.35). Bearing this in mind, the third stage of the data analysis was a cyclic process of data analysis, in which data sets were compared looking for internal validity and for further insights in the analysis of Layder's (2006) domains.

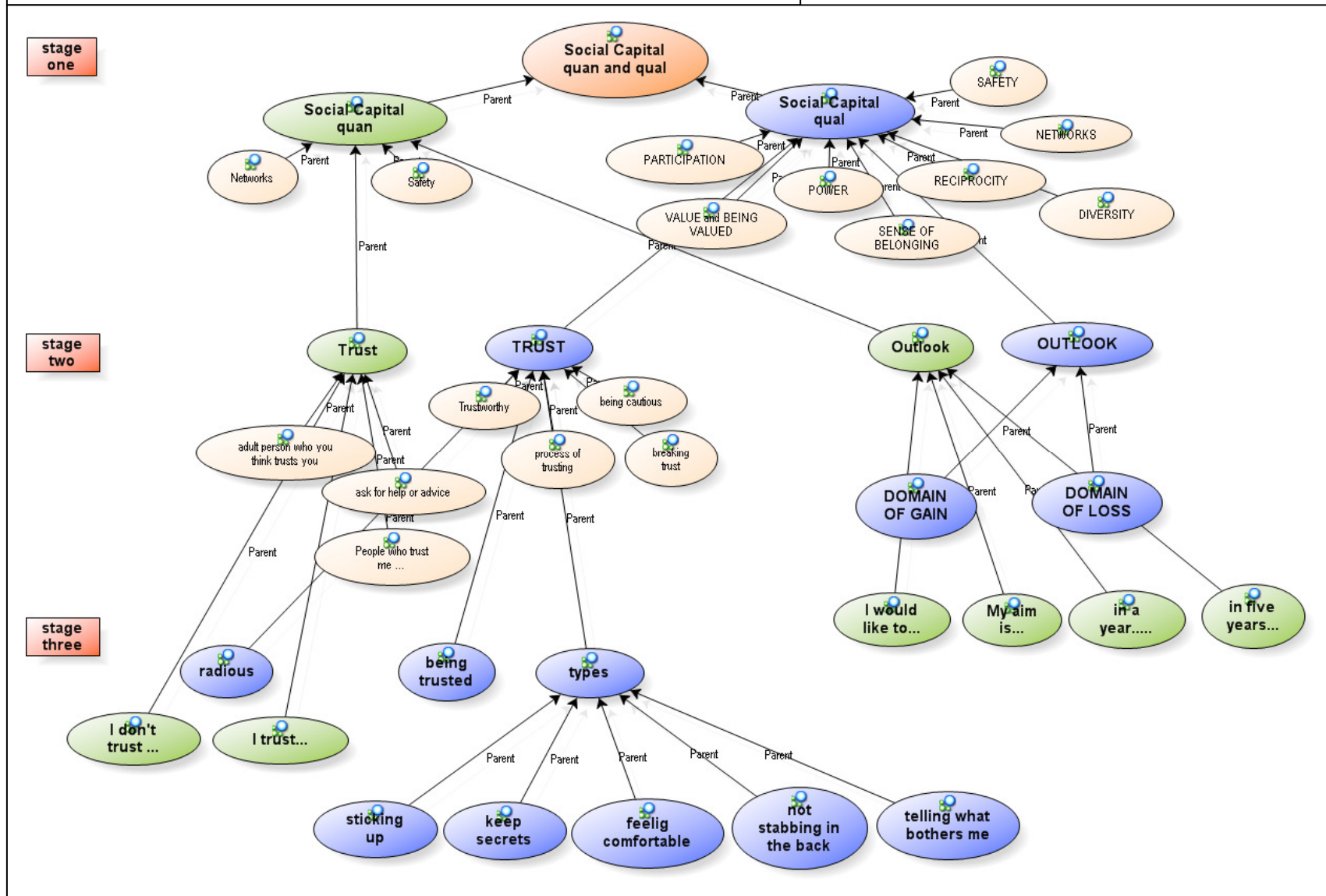
The first stage of this analysis was to explore visually the two qualitative data sets (qualitative data from discussion groups and interviews with qualitative data from the survey questionnaire). With the aid of models I created in NVIVO a conceptual framework for my analysis. This helped me to have an overview of the available data.

Bearing in mind my previous explorations and findings and some theoretical perspectives, I then chose to concentrate on a further investigation of 'trust' and 'outlook on life'. The following chart is the graphical representation of this

process which aided my analysis. Each of the parent nodes are presented with their child nodes²⁵. Stage two shows how the comparison of the data around 'trust' and 'outlook on life' helps to organise the two data sets (qualitative data from discussion groups and interviews with qualitative data from the survey questionnaire). The advantage of NVIVO is that one can then click on each of the circles to open up the data associated with each of the nodes. This aids the analysis and exploration. The following NVIVO model represents the data analysis process which helped to create a conceptual framework and organise the two data sets.

²⁵ A 'parent node' is a top tree node or case which is above other nodes in a hierarchy. A 'child node' is a node below a parent node.

Diagram 7: Process of Data Analysis and Conceptual Framework (NVIVO model 2)

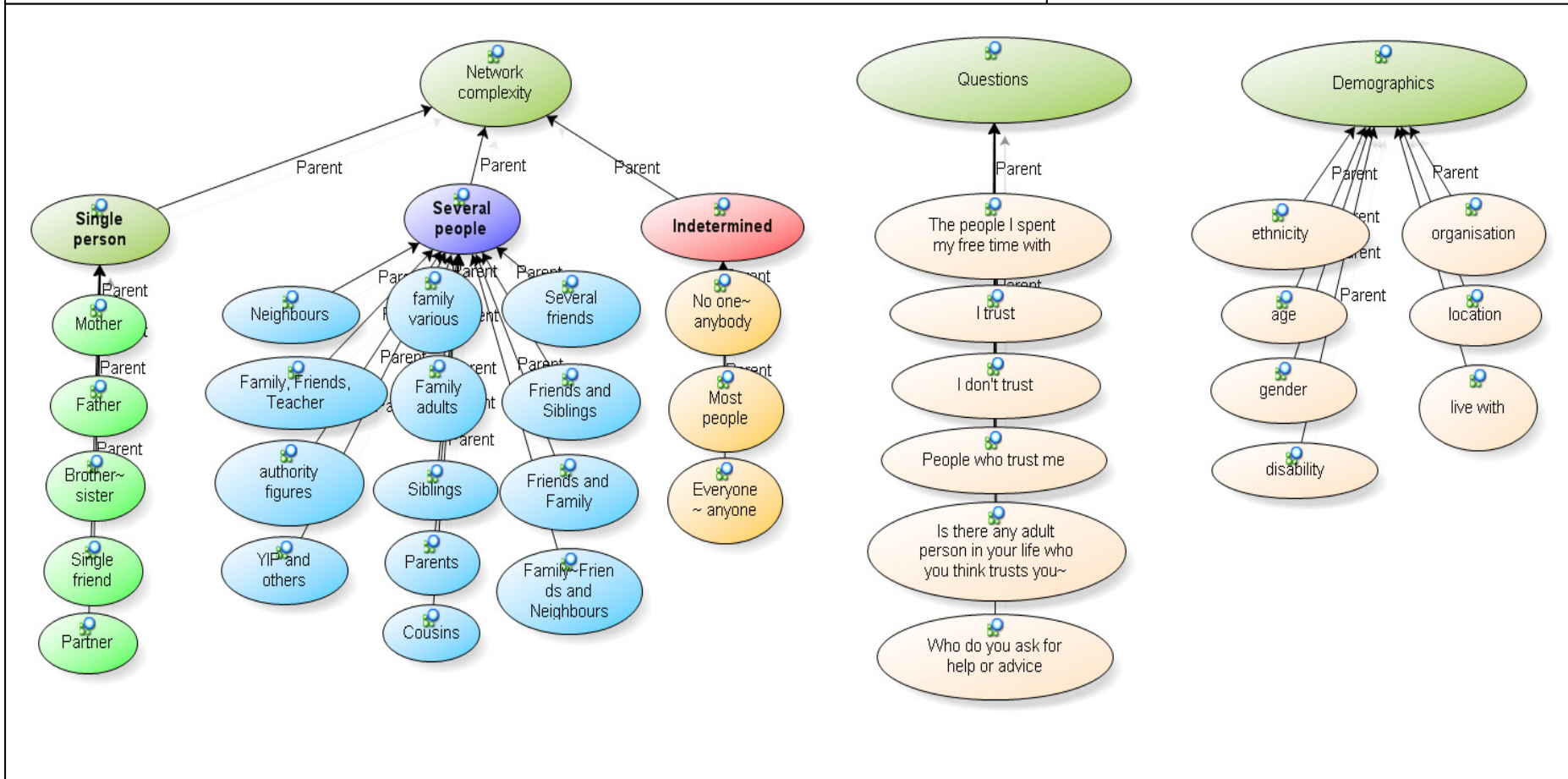


The next stage was to compare the emerging insights gained from this analysis with the survey results. This helped to check for 'internal validity'. Internal validity is defined as "the power of a study to support an inference that certain variables in it are linked in a relationship" (Krathwohl 1998: 271). In order to check for internal validity, I started a new analytical process to see whether assumptions about trust and 'outlook on life' and their relationship to social capital hold true.

At this stage, I proceeded to code the answers to 10 open ended survey questions from all the 500 participants. All the questions were concerned with the type of people young people trust, relate to, or spend time with. Each of the answers from the 500 respondents to the 10 open-ended survey questions were coded into a node called 'people', which contained the different categories of people they had described. The next step was to classify the data through assessing its characteristics and breaking it up into segments. The resulting categories were then assessed and reorganised through a process of redefining, or what Dey (1993) calls 'splitting and splicing'.

Through this process, I created the parent node 'network complexity' with the child nodes: single person, several people and indeterminate. Each of these child nodes contained the relevant categories of people used by the survey respondents. This tree node was then used to analyse the qualitative data of the survey questionnaire. The following NVIVO model shows the newly created node, which was then compared with the demographic data and the relevant research questions, in order to discover characteristics or differences between the groups.

Diagram 8: Analytical Framework for 'Trust' and 'Network Complexity' Data Analysis (NVIVO model 3)



Using my list of codes, I also examined the association between different a priori and emergent categories (Peek and Fothergill 2009). Finally, through the process of constantly comparing these categories with each other, the different categories were further condensed into broad themes. In order to compare, look for differences, similarities and extreme cases, I used matrix coding, and the AND/AND NOT compound query within NVIVO to explore the data.

Divergent Inference

Comparing my discussion group and interview data with the survey findings, I discovered some inconsistencies which I have classified as: Divergent Inference (Erzberger and Kelle 2003). Rossman and Wilson (1994) highlight that inconsistencies between qualitative and quantitative findings might be a consequence of the inadequacy of the applied theoretical concepts. It might, therefore, be necessary to revise and modify the initial theoretical assumptions and to draw on further theoretical concepts that have not yet been related to the domain in question (Tashakkori and Tddlie 2003). This was especially the case for the exploration of the concept of 'radius of trust'.

Using matrices within the NVIVO package, I discovered that a distinct group within my sample referred in the question "I don't trust..." to "people I do not know and strangers". Because the literature refers to 'radius of trust' as related to bridging and bonding (Putman 2000; Granovetter 1973; Fukuyama 2001), I used this as one of the characteristics in defining 'bonding social capital'.

I therefore used this variable to single out those people who I thought would have a more bonded social capital, with the aim of exploring further who they were and what other variables would be associated with this group. The inference from this was to hypothesise that young people with localised and street networks might have a more bonded social capital characterised by

tight networks and a small radius of trust. However, by comparing this with my data from the first stage of the research, I discovered that this hypothesis was too simplistic and did not reflect the fluidity and dynamic nature of social capital which I perceived in the accounts of the young people. In order to check for internal validity, I started a new analytical process to see whether the previous assumptions on 'radius of trust' and its relationship to social capital hold true. So far, the theoretical assumption was that bonding social capital was related to a narrow radius of trust and the interaction with a small number of people.

I conducted a node search through the union of text which contained all the young people who replied to the question **I don't trust** (*who, which types of people*) as:

- people I don't know
- no one
- everyone
- most people

The respondents who replied to this question: people I don't know, no one, everyone, most people (n=196) were identified and manually assigned the value 1 within SPSS. The rest of the group was assigned the value 2 within a new SPSS variable: 'trust people'. This new variable had two answers: 'wide radius of trust=2' and 'narrow radius of trust=1'.

If the assumption, that a 'narrow radius of trust' is related to bonding social capital is correct, I would have expected some significant differences between the two groups of young people with either a 'wide', or 'narrow' radius of trust. I would also have expected some significant differences between the standard question about 'radius of trust': "Generally speaking do

you think that most people can be trusted?” and the other social capital variables. However, no significant differences were identified in both cases.

Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) assert that “the reappraisal and re-analysis required can reap long term analytical rewards: alerting the researcher to the possibility that issues are more multifaceted than they may have initially supposed, and offering the opportunity to develop more convincing and robust explanations of the social processes being investigated” (2003: 17). These divergent findings were valuable because they led to a re-examination of the conceptual frameworks and the assumptions underlying each of the two (QUAL and QUAN qual) components of this study and therefore, were not only valuable for further exploration, but also a way to enhance the validity of the data (Denscombe 2007: 133).

Conclusion

This chapter has highlighted how the different phases of the research were interwoven and connected through the data analysis. The integration of data-driven and theory-driven approaches within a framework of ‘adaptive theory’ aided the investigation of social capital, focusing on its contextual complexity as set out in chapter four.

Continuing my research application of the critical realist paradigm and the domain theory, I combined induction and deduction, which aided the exploration of multiple causalities and underlying processes. Thus, it is argued that it is a good strategy to investigate causal mechanisms and conditions under which certain social capital processes and outcomes will or will not be realised. It is in this chapter where the advantages of using a mixed methods design come to shine through the integration of the different data sets.

As a consequence of using purposive sampling techniques (see chapter five), I have highlighted that the goal of this study is not to generalize to a population but – through the exploration of Layder’s four interconnected domains – to obtain insights into the phenomenon of social capital. Using the example of the analysis of trust, I have explored the three stages to the cyclic data analysis. Within this, the use of mixed strategies of data analysis facilitated cross-checking and triangulation. Through the integration of the qualitative data analysis with quantitative data analysis, I explored all of Layder’s four interconnected domains: psychobiography, situated activity, settings and context. In the next two chapters I will present the findings around these four domains.

Chapter 7: Situated Activity and Agency

Introduction to situated activity

Young people tend to socialise with other young people, with their family and other people around them in different ways. Within a social capital perspective, the way in which young people form their networks and how they are being expanded is of special importance. In respect of this, the main focus of interest is not only the enhancement of their networks through family and friends, but also the dynamics of interaction and the access to new people and networks outside their existing, more homogenous environments. Within Layder's framework this refers to the area of **situated activity**, which "...shifts (the) focus away from the individual's response to various kinds of social situations towards a concern with the dynamics of interaction itself" (Layder 1997: 80). The '**situated activity**' was explored through the focus on the environments where young people tended to interact and form their social capital networks. Many of the social capital aspects of the following sections are not new and the reader who is aware of the literature will find that there are overlaps with previous research. However, the systematic presentation of the situated activity, that is, the three network types, is an important aspect within Layder's research framework. The three network types and the exploration of diversity will be used in the further analysis of the findings in chapter eight. I will start this chapter by highlighting the key findings, which hopefully will aid the reader to navigate her or his way through this findings chapter.

Key Findings

| Area Based Networks | Group Based Networks | School/college based networks |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 35% of the total sample • More young men than young women • Tend to spend time with young people from own area or neighbourhood • Meet friends in the street and spend their time hanging around on the street. • More likely to form closely bonded relationships with people with a similar outlook on life and normative frameworks. • Least diverse networks: tend to be more averse to difference | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24% of the total sample • More young men than young women • Tend to socialise with people from the school/college, interest and identity groups • Networks are not locality bound: friends come from different areas and neighbourhoods • Spend lots of time being at friends' houses and in after school activities • Strong sense of belonging to identity or interest groups with normative frameworks • Like and are open to diversity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40% of the total sample • More young women than young men • tend to socialise with people from school/college • Networks are from school/college: friends come from different areas and neighbourhoods • Spend most of their free time at home and less likely to be involved in youth clubs • Strong sense of belonging to the school/college • whilst open to diversity their networks are not varied |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally young people feel they belong to and interact to a restricted array of places • Diversity networks: School/college based networks are not dissimilar to locality based networks • Area based networks do not imply a negative attitude towards diversity. • Most young people mainly tend to trust family and some close friends. | | |

Exploration of Findings

In this study many young people have complex and diverse networks with different groups from different places such as the school, the local area, interest groups, or identity groups. Only 10% of all the young people meet some of their friends through brothers and sisters and about one third of young people have met some of their friends through other friends. Thus, it should be acknowledged that young people enhance their social capital, not only through family networks or existing friendship networks, but also through interactions with other groups, through the school or through encounters in the local area.

Whilst the array of social interactions and networks do not fall into fixed patterns, different factor analyses and cluster analyses came up with different groups of young people based on certain types of networks. These networks were characterised by their location, access to new people and friends and diversity. As a constant, there were two groups which emerged in all the different cluster analyses: young people who mainly socialise with people from their locality and young people who mainly socialise with other young people from the school or college²⁶. However, there was also another group that emerged and further examination suggested that broadly there are three salient and distinct groups which I have labelled as:

1. Group based networks
2. School/College based networks
3. Area based networks

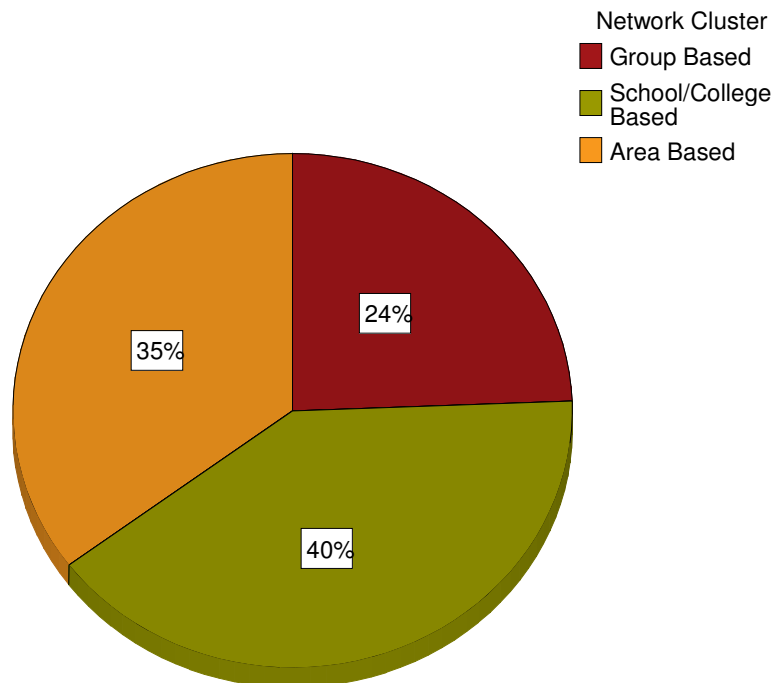
When looking at these clusters, one has to take into account that belonging to these groups might be influenced by gender, age and ethnicity. This interconnectedness of 'situated activity' with structural aspects will be

²⁶ for an exploration of the different cluster analyses performed see chapter five 'Analysis'

explored throughout the presentation of findings and I will highlight significant and meaningful differences within these groups.

Overall, the young people who participated in the survey predominantly belonged to either the school/college based (40% of participants) or area based networks (35% of participants). A smaller group of people (24% of participants) belonged to the group based networks. The following chart represents the distribution within these networks:

Graph 2: Network Cluster Distribution



These different groups also emerged in the discussion groups and interviews with the young people. In the following section, I will present the combination of the qualitative and quantitative data. The mixed methods used in the analysis of the qualitative data helps to understand some of the complexity

and underlying dynamics, whilst the quantitative data provides an overview by focusing on patterns and clusters.

Area Based Networks

Young people who made up the area based cluster comprised 35% of the total sample. More young men (61%) belong to this network type than young women (39%). I labelled this cluster 'area based' because they tend to spend time with young people from their own area or neighbourhood. Young people within this group tend to meet their friends on the street and spend their free time hanging around on the street. They are less likely to enjoy being with people from different life styles and are less likely to be involved in after school activities.

As with the salience of this group in the survey analysis, in the discussion groups and interviews, young people who tend to belong to area based networks also referred to friends who tended to be from the same area in which they lived, and thus they interacted with groups and people who are quite similar to them. When asked about 'where they hang around' and 'which are important places' such responses were typical:

...I just go to the top of the road just to hang around talking to people, other than that I stay in.

(Int 4, White, male, offender, aged 14)

...the people I hang around with now I knew them from school anyway, I would see them at school and a few of them I have known most of my life

(Int 9, Mixed Race, male, offender, aged 14)

***If you think about important places in xxx, which would you say were important places for you?**

...important, my family's houses, I think that's about it really.

(Int 16, White, male, offender, aged 17)

Within this group, young people tend to socialise forming closely bonded relationships with other young people with a similar outlook on life and normative frameworks: young people like to 'stick' together and have a good time with each other:

"... we are all alike, because we like to go out and have a good time together... We know the same people, we hang around the same area, we like the same things, we like the same clothes..."

(DG 10, White, female, aged 18)

It is notable that this group tends to be more gender specific, with more young men (61%) belonging to this cluster than young women (39%). It was also predominantly made up of young people above 13 years old.

Group Based Networks

Young people who made up the group based cluster comprised 24% of the total sample. More young men (60.5%) tend to belong to this network type than young women (39.5%). I labelled this cluster 'group based' because they tend to socialise with people from the school/college and in groups with other young people with similar interests, or coming from similar cultures or religious backgrounds. Young people within this group tend to meet their friends through these groups and spend lots of time hanging around friends' houses and in after school activities.

Similarity and sharing commonalities, is also a strong characteristic within this group, with 83% of the young people saying that their friends like to do the same kind of things that they do. Young people with predominantly group based networks referred in the discussion groups and interviews to friends who tend to come from family networks, but also from interest, identity and other groups from other areas or neighbourhoods. These networks tend to be more diverse and not necessarily area based. Meeting friends through other

friends enables young people to diversify their networks and new relationships are quite often key moments within this.

... but then I went out with a boy who lives in this area, I came up to this area and then everyone who comes to this youth club I made friends with because of that boy, he introduced me...

(DG 7, White, female, aged 16)

Young people recognise that it is important to move on in their lives, however the following account also shows that sometimes breaking out from more bonded networks is not always easy.

***So you have different areas, different places where you hang around...**

And that is why I get a bit of slack because I always hang around in different areas, last week everyone was saying what are you doing down here that is because I was with different people and they don't like it, but they are still stuck around here.

***And each group gives you something?**

Because one of the groups made me really settle down, get my head down and start working, but my other group offered me fun.

(DG 7, White, female, aged 16)

Other group based networks are characterised by their sense of belonging to an identity group or interest group, as expressed in an interview where the taste in music was a key element in meeting people and expanding networks.

***So you know people from other places, do you go to visit them also?**

I see them at school or if we go to XXX , if we go to this place in Leicester It's a pub but it's for people who are older, 14 and we meet up there, big groups of people.

***What do you have in common with this circle?**

Music.

***The community of where you live is that important to you?**

Not really, because the place where I live is just full of old people and big Christian families, so it's not really people I have a lot in common with.

***And at school?**

Yeah.

***Is the school community, is that important?**

Yeah, the school is generally split in two, you have got people that are into my kind of music and people who are into pop music, that kind of thing.

(Int 3, White, male, aged 17)

As with the previous example, it is evident that some of these groups have strong identities and sometimes also strong normative frameworks, such as in the following church based group:

You have to be presented in the right way of course, or you know that someone will probably come up to you and say you shouldn't be dressing like that at all or whatever you are doing.

***That is in the church, for you is church important?**

Yes

(DG 5.2, British Caribbean, female, aged 17)

In these groups, young people will also distance themselves from other young people, which becomes evident in the strong views about localised and street networks expressed by the young women from the church based group.

Sometimes it can relate to the kind of people you hang around with, when you are talking about street cred, say for instance you

have some people you hang around with and are influenced easily by them, and they are the kind of people, maybe they are in homes or they are not with their parents no more, and they act a certain way. Like "no one can tell me what to do", you have to act like them to be able to be with that group of people, sometimes that can happen and that person can carry it home and start acting up. A lot of the time it is because of the people they hang around and they lower themselves to be influenced by them.

(DG 5, British Caribbean man, aged 17)

Whilst young people within this network type seem to mix with other, different groups, for young people, a strong bond is important and this bond happens within groups of people where they feel comfortable, even if they tend to mix with other different people, as highlighted in the following account:

Yes, people can mix with different groups but generally people with the same group bond better.

(Int 3, White, male, aged 16)

More young men (60.5%) tend to belong to this cluster than young women (39.5%) and it was predominantly made up of young people between 11-12 and 15-17 years old.

School/college Based Networks

Young people who made up the school/college based cluster comprised 40% of the total sample. I labelled this cluster 'school/college based' because they tend to socialise with people from the school/college and meet their friends there and tend not to live in the same area as them. Young people within this group spend most of their free time at home and are less likely to be involved in youth clubs. In the discussion groups and interviews, a distinctive element of these young people was their positive relationship with the school environment and other young people from the school. Good friendships are made within this environment as exemplified by the following account:

No, it is important to make friends but to make the right friends because if the person just likes you because you show off that aint a friend. A friend is a person who can see you and like you because of your personality not because you do something or make them, that is my view of friends, true friends anyway. Anybody can have friends but true friends are a different thing.

***So if we think about good friends where do you meet your good friends...?**

At school, at college

(DG 5, British Caribbean, female, aged 18)

As with previous accounts about strong identities and a sense of socialising with interest groups and identity groups, school based socialising is characterised by strong school based bonds, which are seen as different to other young people at school who are identified as the ‘trouble makers’:

At school we have a group of people who hang around with each other and you have other people running round the school causing trouble, starting fights, messing around, but we just stay as a group, we all get on alright.

(DG 9, White male, aged 14)

More young women (64%) tend to belong to this cluster than young men (36%) which was predominantly made up of young people between 11-12 and 16-17 years old.

Interpretation of Trust

Trust represents a force that works for and through individuals, but at the same time for and through human associations more generally (Moellering 2001). This section explores some of the emerging ways young people perceive and experience trust. The starting point of the enquiry was “the subjective ‘reality’ (context) as interpreted by the trustor”, within the situated

activity (Moellering 2001:416). Within this, an important aspect of Moellering's theorisation is to understand and explore the interpretation of trust "assuming idiosyncratic praxis and paying attention to the fine details of interpretation" (Moellering 2001: 416 see also Edwards et al. 2006).

Trusting Friends and Peers

Trust plays a crucial role in the relationships between peers and friends. Without any prompts, young people referred to trust when exploring their networks and relationships with other people. A distinction was made over and over again between 'just friends' and 'real friends'. A key element within these conceptualisations was whether they can trust the person or not.

***So what about the others, a true friend**

Yes a true friend, you can talk to them and tell them things like secrets and just friends will just be there. A true friend is someone you can trust and just a friend is someone you can play with.

(DG 5.2, British Caribbean, male, aged 14)

However, this type of trust is complex and the meaning young people attach to it differed from group to group. In some cases, it came out that young people who are involved with crime trust their peers in only a limited way. It seems that they are part of that group because 'this is what you do', but it is not necessarily based on trust. As a young man identified, in his peer group, there is one person he can trust, however it is his mother whom he trusts most:

...and I trust him and I could tell him everything, but the person I most trust is my mother, because I can tell her everything. But these people here I can trust one because I know he is OK and he is good, he doesn't get into trouble, whereas the others get into trouble and I am getting with them into trouble, so I am sticking

to them but I don't trust them.

(Int 4)

This is a quite an important account which shows that networks might not always be based on a mutual understanding of trust. 'Sticking' to other young people might be quite instrumental in this sense, geared towards a certain activity; in this case, getting into trouble. I speculate that this 'instrumentality' might also be linked to a quite protective trust. (I will explore this further in the section 'bonded relationships').

Bonded Trusting Relationships

As I have described in the 'network' section of Chapter three, young people tend to socialise with other young people, with their family and other people around them in different ways. Of considerable importance within this, is how close young people feel to different people and therefore their significance within their lives. Relationships and networks are underpinned by a strong trust related to feelings of safety, belonging and identity. Generally, the most bonded relationships are with family and close friends rather than more extended relationships. Young people made a distinction between trusting parents and friends. Young people speak of different 'types' of trust they have with friends and other people. Often, they refer to an almost unconditional trust in the parents '...because they are your parents...'. This trust can be seen as an unconditional trust: parents are always there for you:

'...they won't let you down, friends can...'

(Int 2, White, male, offender, aged 16)

Within these family dynamics, the mother becomes a salient figure. There is no distinction between male and female respondents in the qualitative part of the research; the mother often is the closest person whom they can most trust. A quite strong account is given by a young offender:

You just can't, you just can't, you can't trust nobody at all, at all except for your mum do you get me, because your mum has carried you for 9 months, your mum has given you life, looked after you when you are small, so obviously your mum must care and love you from tiny. Your mum must love you in some kind of a way but anybody else you don't know man, they can be best friends, hang around with you, sleep at your house everyday buy the same clothes, the same trainers, one incident happens now and in that incident it is gone, that wasn't a friend.

(DG4.1, British Caribbean, male, aged 17)

The recurring reference to trusting the mother is something which was common in the accounts of the young people in this research. Generally with the family, trust was also expressed in terms of 'closeness'. Outside of the family remit, becoming close is seen as a process of getting to know people and interacting with them.

***So when you talk about people being close or not so close why are some closer and others not so close what is...?**

Because they are more important

***Why are they more important?**

Because like your family they look after you... but other people's family they might give you dinner but they are not like your real family ... You trust them

***You say trust?**

Yes you get to know them and you trust them, if you can trust them then they are close

Like people who you don't see everyday are not as close to you, like if you see someone once a week you won't get to know them so much and you won't get to trust them as much, whereas if you see someone everyday you see them 7 times as much, then they will be closer to you...

(DG 1.1, White British, female, aged 15 and 17)

It seems that for some young people trust, safety and reciprocity evolves within a limited inward looking circle and as a result, tightly bonded networks are often small and static in nature. The qualitative findings suggest that outside this circle, their experience of generalised reciprocity is quite limited. The term 'generalised reciprocity' can refer to 'give and take', which is not based on an immediate return of the favour. Often, this is seen within those more tightly bonded groups, as expressed in the following account:

***Tell me, if a neighbour needed help would you help?**

No

***So for example if there was an old woman living next to you and she can't do the shopping, would you do the shopping for her?**

No

***Why not?**

Forget that

***What about if a mate was in trouble would you help with your mate?**

Yes, that's different,

*** So do your mates help out each other, in what kind of things?**

Everything

***What means everything?**

Anything they need help with

***Which is what?**

Anything

***So if you needed advice or help or you don't know how to do something would you ask your mate?**

Yeah, give and take is important

*** Can you give me some examples where it might be important in your life this give and take?**

Everything to do with give and take is with illegal substances, that's it, or lending a bit of money to my mates and getting it back and that's it. Helping them out with the shopping (laughter), buying them some decent stuff

(Int 1, White, male, offender, aged 16)

Within these groups, there was a prevalence of a strong group based trust which was about looking out for each other, protecting each other, or gaining protection from the outsider. In the discussion groups and interviews with young offenders, this more inward looking trust was apparent. They may be closely bonded and tied together through the 'need' to protect each other, and reciprocity is characterised by an immediate or even no sense of return. This is reflected in the following account which took place in a discussion group conducted at a Youth Offending Team:

We stay together

***What do you mean?**

A lot of us got arrested for criminal damage, 4 or 5 of us we all go down the police station and we would all just blame it on each other cos then they can't arrest none of us, so that is the best way we can get out of trouble. I would just blame M, M would blame my cousin, my cousin would blame M's brother and M's brother would blame one of our other friends.

***You would have to trust each other**

Yes, we have all done it before; even the police officer said to me that every single one of us said it was each other.

***So is that part of the trust you have?**

Yes

***Because no-one would ..**

No one would grass anybody up

(DG 4, group of White young men, aged 15 and 17)

During the first phase of the research, young people referred to different types of trust in relation to different people, such as parents, 'just friends' and good mates'. Although there quite often is an almost 'taken for granted' trust in the parents '...because they are your parents...', many young people would use trust in the context of socialising with other young people and feeling comfortable with them. However, some young people would refer to trust as 'parents or friends who wouldn't stab you in the back'.

There were different ways young people referred to trust within their situated activity. Broadly speaking, these were about feeling comfortable with each other when socialising, being able to open up to friends or sticking up for each other. These interpretations were:

- People do not tell others what I have told them
- People do not stab me in the back
- Sticking up for each other
- Being able to tell somebody what really bothers me
- Feeling comfortable with somebody

The mixed methods approach provided me with a variety of data sources and analyses to understand more fully the multifaceted interpretation, negotiation and lived experience of trust.²⁷ The consideration of how young people understand and attach different meanings to trust, the cluster analysis of the survey and the quantification of the open ended approaches to the survey questions, has enabled me to understand and explore the phenomenon in greater depth, by forming complementary parts of a jigsaw puzzle (Erzberger and Prein 1997 in Tashakkori and Teddlie 2003:17). This analysis enabled

²⁷ The complexity of analysis has been explored in full in chapter six: Analysis.

me to look at trust and its relationship with the social settings. This will be explored in the next chapter.

Diversity

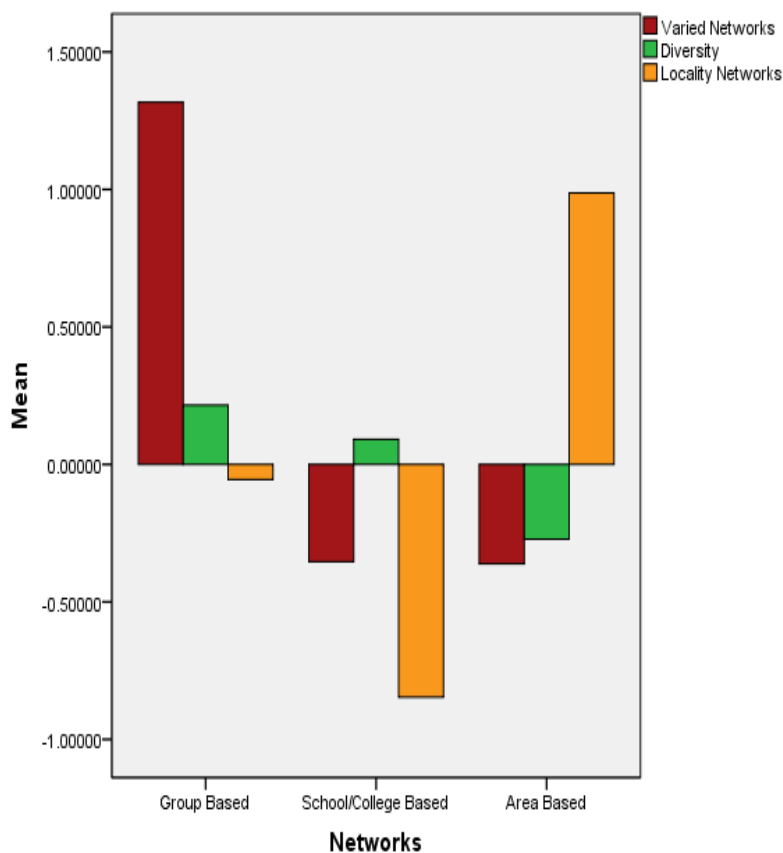
Network diversity, as explored in the literature review, is generally considered to be relevant to young people's lives because it can provide a diversity of resources, experiences, information and exchange of practical support.

Diversity within the situated activity is not only about interacting with people from different areas or groups. In the survey, I examined if young people like to have different types of friends who might not necessarily be of the same gender, age or cultural and ethnic backgrounds. I also examined if they enjoyed being with people of different life styles. In terms of diversity in networks, the analysis suggests that young people within the school/college based networks are not dissimilar to the young people with locality based networks. In terms of diversity regarding the types of friends and enjoying being with people who have different lifestyles, there was only a small difference between the groups, with young people who have locality based networks being the least likely to have friends who are different to them. This has also been explored and reflected in the qualitative accounts of the young people.

The following graph presents these findings. First, it is possible to look at the different clusters: group based, school/college based and locality based networks. Observing the red bars it is noticeable that young people belonging to the group based networks are more likely to have more varied networks. The red 'varied networks factor' means that they draw upon networks based on different groups - such as after school, interest, faith, youth groups. The red bars for the school/college and area based networks are below zero which indicates that young people who belong to these network clusters tend to have less varied networks. The orange bars show that young people who belong to group based networks (which are characterised by socialising in

diverse groups) also draw on locality networks, which are based on socialising on the streets. Young people belonging to the school/college based networks hardly draw at all on locality networks. The green bars look at diversity as expressed in having different types of friends and enjoying being with people of different life styles. Here it can be observed that young people belonging to the area based networks would be slightly less likely to have friends which are different to them. It is also possible to look at the different bars and compare them within each network cluster. Here it is noticeable that having more varied networks (red bars) is not necessarily linked with higher diversity: group based networks are varied (red bar) but people within them are not more likely to have friends who are different to them (green bar) than young people from the school and college based networks who have less varied networks (red bar).

Graph 3: Network Factors and Mean Scores of Network Clusters



In terms of access to relationships, this section has identified that there seems to be certain patterns. Patterns and clusters should be seen as fluid types and boundaries that in real life do overlap. However, especially localised networks and school based networks clearly emerged, not only through the quantitative analysis, but also through the qualitative analysis. The group based networks are more difficult to isolate or define because of their interconnectedness with the school and the locality. Within these considerations, it is important to understand the context in which trust operates and what constitutes for young people the 'knowable' (i.e. suspension). An almost 'unconditional trust' is expressed towards parents in which the mother was a salient figure. However, the feeling of closeness is another aspect of the 'knowable' and becoming close is seen as a process of getting to know people and interacting with them. A strong protective trust emerged also in terms of a more inward looking trust which might hinder the 'leap of trust' (this will be explored further in chapter nine).

Having explored the findings around situated activity and within this the dynamics of trust and diversity, I now will look at young people's subjective perception of agency, which was explained through a focus of the self in Layder's framework.

Young People's Perception of Agency

In this section, I will look at some of the findings touching on young people's subjective perception of their agency. This section is an important analysis, because the self, as defined by Layder, is enacted in social situations and embedded in the situated activity (Layder 1997, 2006). The lived environment becomes the context in which the individuals can explore, negotiate and develop new forms of social capital. Within this, young people's bounded agency (Evans 2002), recognises the restrictive but also enabling powers young people encounter within the domains of situated activity, settings and context.

Key Findings

- Young people have a strong subjective perception of agency feeling that they can influence decisions and that they are able to speak out if they disagree with what adults have agreed on
- Where young people interact and form their networks shapes their subjective perception of agency: young people with area based networks had the strongest sense of agency
- The majority of young people felt that they know to a certain extent what they want to achieve in life. Only 10% don't know what they want to achieve in life.
- Fewer young people contacted through YIP/YOTs and the Grammar School knew what they want to achieve in life. Over half of the young people contacted through YIP/YOT's not having concrete aims for the future, whilst 87% of the young people contacted through the Grammar School see themselves in further education and pursuing a concrete career (compared to 5% of young people from YIP/YOTs).
- More negative outlook on life characterised by:
 - Individualistic explanation of personal failures coupled with a sense of being stuck
 - Lack of exit strategies results in conforming to present situations.
 - Fear of disappointment if aiming for something
 - Related to a certain apathy and sense of boredom
- More positive outlook characterised by:
 - Strong sense of wanting to achieve things in their life
 - Sense of ambition and hope for social mobility
 - Aims are related to personal skills
 - Strong support and encouragement from parents

Exploration of Findings

In my discussion groups and interviews, I met strong and outspoken young people. Some of the young people were both individually and in groups, 'loud' and daring and sometimes it took me a while to create an environment of trust and mutual respect. In some interviews, young people started to open up when I showed interest in their abilities and life styles and the initial defensiveness would wither. For me, these were examples of agency. Young people expressed strong values and views about life, interactions with others and how they perceive themselves and their surrounding world. This section only aims to introduce some of the aspects observed within this study. This

one dimensional exploration will then be followed by a further analysis of how the self is influenced by the situated activity and settings.

Influence and Power

In several accounts young people referred to their individuality, differentiating themselves from other young people. On the one hand they tended to recognise peer influence, but as illustrated in the following account, many young people also like to view themselves as fairly independent and not too prone to that peer pressure.

.... I think that people, the young society, do base their life on street cred or what other people think about them, and they have to act this way to be accepted but that is not me generally. I am an individual I will do what I think is right...

(DG 5.1, British Caribbean, male, aged 17)

Many young people had strong opinions and a strong subjective perception of agency, stressing particularly the choices they make. However, sometimes these choices were meant to break or jeopardise the strong bonded relationships they had with their peers. Some young people, but not all of them, would be prepared to do so regardless of negative consequences such as falling out with their peers.

***So how influential are your friends in your life?**

Not very to me because like some things they do I don't want to do but there are things they do that I do do...

***So you decide?**

Because they skive school but I don't, I have never missed a day of school, if they say skive today and I will say I am not I am not coming with you, I wouldn't go with them, I would go to school... that's the choice I make to do things, whether they fall out with me or not that's something I don't want to do.

(DG 7, White, female, aged 16)

This sense of individuality was explored further in the survey, focusing on young people's own perceptions around how much they feel that they can influence decisions which affect them. It also considered the degree of agency they have when dealing with adults, especially 'how much they think they can speak out' and if they feel that 'adults listen to them'.

Many young people in my study perceive themselves to have a strong agency; with 92% of young people in the survey 'strongly agreeing' or 'agreeing' that they can influence decisions that affect their lives. A very high percentage of young people also see themselves as having strong agency when being with adults, with a surprising 83% of young people 'strongly agreeing' or 'agreeing' that they can speak out if they disagree with what adults have agreed on; 17% 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' with this. An equally high number feel that adults listen to them: 85% of young people 'strongly agree' or 'agree' that generally speaking they feel that adults listen to them when they have something to say.

Through a factor analysis, I was able to arrive at a new variable expressing young people's sense of agency and influence. The combined factor 'agency and influence' is based on the following questions:

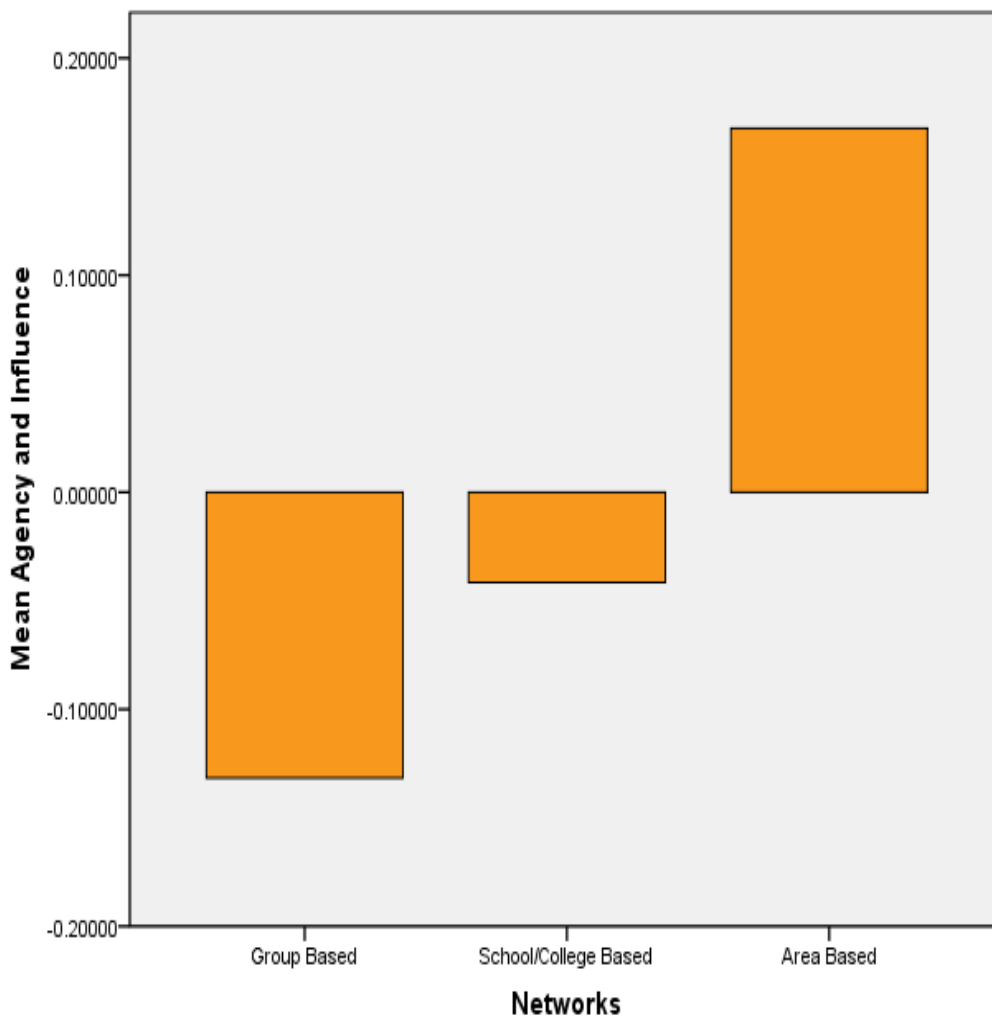
- I can influence decisions that affect my life
- Generally I feel that adults listen to me when I have something to say
- If I disagree with what adults agreed on, I can speak out about it

When exploring if there was a difference in how young people perceived their 'agency and influence' some interesting findings emerged. Whilst there was no significant difference between the respondents from the different organisations, there was a significant difference when comparing the groups of people in terms of the network types.²⁸

²⁸ For ANOVA test see appendix IV, A

The following bar chart represents visually the significant difference found between young people from different network types (situated activity). By looking at the different network clusters (group based, school/college and locality) it is noticeable that the young people who have group based networks tend to have the lowest sense of agency and influence (the orange bar representing the mean value of the factor loading has a negative value) and that young people who have area based networks have the highest sense of agency and influence.

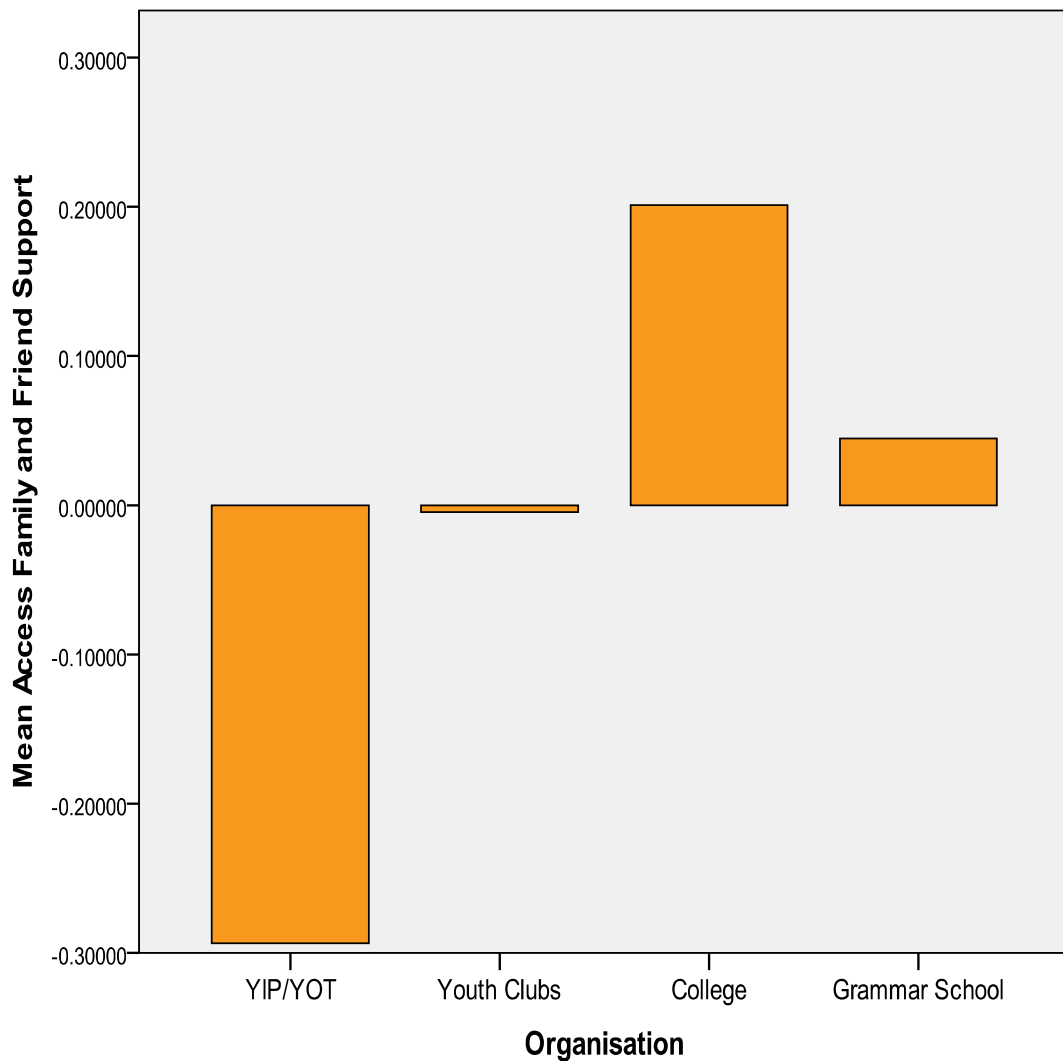
Graph 4: Agency Factor and Mean Scores of Network Clusters



It should be noted that young people with area based networks are the young people who tend to meet their friends in the street and spend their free time hanging around on the street. They are less likely to enjoy being with people of different life styles. More young men (61%) belong to this cluster than young women (39%) and a third (34%) of young people within this cluster were accessed through the YIP/YOTs and 45% are young people accessed through the youth clubs. It is also noticeable that about two thirds (66%) of the young people accessed through YIP/YOTs belong to this cluster which is an important factor to consider. Bearing in mind, that there was no significant difference between the settings, it cannot be concluded that young people accessed through the YIP/YOT's have a higher sense of agency and influence. It is the situated activity, the locality based networks which account for the difference and not the setting. The high sense of agency within this cluster also cannot be attributed to gender, since there was no significant difference between young men and women in their sense of agency and influence. What is noticeable is that young people's sense of agency is not just a personal agentic attribute but it is influenced by their situated activity, put simply: where young people interact and build their networks contributes to shaping their subjective perception of agency.

Young people accessed through the YIP/YOTs are the least likely to access family and friend support and tend to rely mainly on themselves when it comes to the resolution of problems in their life. The young people accessed through the college are the most likely to access this support. The following graph represents visually the significant difference found between young people accessed through the different organisations (settings). By looking at the different organisations (YIP/YOT, youth clubs, College and Grammar School) one can observe, as already mentioned, that the young people accessed through the YIP/YOTs are the least likely to access family and friend support (the orange bar representing the mean value of the factor loading has a negative value) and the young people accessed through the college are the most likely to access this support (orange bar is the highest).

Graph 5: Support Factor and Mean Scores of Organisations



The difference between youth clubs and Grammar School is not significant. I speculated whether the stronger involvement of family and friends by young people from the College could be partly explained through cultural differences (Campbell and McLean 2002) because of the majority of Asian representation (46%) compared with 32% White British. However, when exploring this by comparing 'family and friends support' with 'ethnicity' no significant differences were found.

To conclude this section, this analysis suggests that overall young people have a strong sense of agency. It is also important to note that in terms of social capital as 'situated activity' this strong sense of agency and influence is most prevalent within the area based networks. Considering the literature explored in chapter three around the limiting nature of these localised networks but also their importance for young people's sense of identity, I wonder if young people's perception of their causal powers to enhance social capital and draw on network resources is actually activated or exercised. Whether this happens or not and potentially how this happens might be influenced by different mechanisms (see exploration of causality in chapter six). The following explorations around 'outlook on life' will further shed some light on these mechanisms.

Outlook on Life

In chapter three, I have pointed out that linked to the development of a diverse social capital is the possibility of individuals having aspirations, and developing and engaging in practices which are outside of their safety zone. It also has been highlighted that young people's outlook on life might not be constructed anymore in a linear way (Brannen 2002) and when discussing aspirational uncertainty amongst young people, it is important to consider wider-ranging structural uncertainties (Yates 2008).

The advantage of a mixed methods exploration is that throughout the research I have been able to explore qualitative findings within quantitative findings and vice versa. In this section I will set the scene with the accounts of some young people who have quite positive outlooks on life and seem to fit into Brannen's (2002), model of predictability (see chapter three). The young people's orientations are not dissimilar to that of their parents and they seem to rely on the support and aspirations of their parents. The survey question around outlook in life is then explored and presents us with the finding that, less young people contacted through YIP/YOT's and through the

Grammar School, have a strong sense of outlook on life. In order to disentangle these findings a more in depth analysis is being presented through the quantification of qualitative data. The section finishes with the accounts of some young people from more deprived areas whose accounts seem to reflect the model of deferment in which young people consider adulthood in vaguer, more abstract terms. They tend to live more in the present with not much hope that the future holds much for them.

In the qualitative exploration young people expressed different outlooks regarding their future. Some of them had almost a clear pathway a more positive attitude to their futures than others. This was especially evident in a group of five White young men and one Mixed Race young man, all aged 14 living in a town in Leicestershire. They were all friends and had a strong bond. They saw themselves as 'above average clever' with good relationships to other pupils at school and to the teachers. They held their parents in high esteem for what they had achieved and drew on the experiences within their family especially on the example of their parents. This was formulated in terms of their parents "really doing well":

My dad left school when he was 16, I don't think I could do what he has done because after he left school he has worked damn hard to get to where he wants to be today. He did go back but that was for just one certain thing but he has not got a really full education but he has worked really hard since he left school to get where he is. [...] He has done really well and I know he has worked really hard and he is getting what he put in out of it now.

... my mum is a nurse, I would just like to follow after her because she got a degree, she has been at (name of University) getting a degree, she did really well.

Drawing on the experience of their parents and how much they had worked for their achievements these young men did not have a problem with their parents pushing them to be successful and to achieve.

Yes, if my parents don't keep pushing me I don't think I could be bothered but they keep telling me that is what you need in life so you just go for it, it doesn't matter how long it takes you are going to have it one day.

They also assessed the lack of achievement in relation to this construction

My mum could have gone further but she didn't get help off her parents, she didn't get pressurised to get that far.

However it also has to be said that the relationship with the parents seemed very positive in the sense that they felt respected, supported and given lots of opportunities based on trusting relationships.

Another aspect which emerged strongly throughout the qualitative enquiry was that a sense of having choices were often related to a more positive and focused outlook on life. The following account comes from a young offender, who lives in a relatively deprived council estate. He tends to keep himself to himself and several of his close friends have 'moved on' to college, employment or university. In contrast to the group of young people in the previous accounts, this young man did not have such a strong circle of support, nor strong relationships with his family. However, and probably despite the odds, whilst being aware that some of the options were closed for him, he still feels that there are plenty of other alternative options for him to achieve what he wants to achieve.

'I don't think that I've got to a point where everything is closed off and the end of the line, there are end of line signs written all over the place. I think there are things that are closed now that

weren't before, but it's not terminal, it doesn't stop quite as much, the sidings on some of the lines don't work, whereas they would have done before, now they don't so you've got less options but still a big range, there's still a lot of them. It's not like there's only one option and that's it'.

(Int 6, White, male, offender, aged 17)

Crucial to this outlook on life is the individual's perception of their own future coupled with a sense of having something to aim for. However these perceptions varied quite strongly, from some young people feeling they had achievable ambitions and others feeling that they were stuck and that it was not worth thinking of the future. Those young people with a more positive outlook on life tended to express a strong sense of wanting to achieve things in their life, which sometimes was related to a certain sense of ambition and hope for social mobility.

Yes, my ambition is to become an engineer. I have ambition of places to go and see and I know that in order to do that I have to find the job that will pay to get there. One ambition feeds other ambitions. Your ambitions grow...

(Int 6, White, male, offender, aged 17)

In the survey questionnaire I explored outlook on life further through closed and open ended questions. Replying to the question: "I know what I want to achieve in life", 40% of young people said that they definitely know what they want to achieve in life, 50% said they know more or less and 10% don't know what they want to achieve in life. When analysing the differences between network types (situated activity) and young people's feelings about whether they knew what they wanted to achieve in life, there was no significant differences. These findings suggest that it is not the situated activity (network types) which impacts on the agentic perception of young people's outlook on life. The differences in outlook on life were significant when considering the

organisations through which young people were accessed. More young people contacted through youth clubs and the College felt that they knew what they wanted to achieve in life, than young people contacted through YIP/YOTs and through the Grammar School.

In the table below I have highlighted in green when percentages are higher and in orange when the percentages are lower. As a result, it can be observed that across the four organisations (YIP/YOTs, youth clubs, College and Grammar School) about half of the young people would say that they know more or less what they want to achieve in life. However, more young people from YIP/YOTs (13%) and the Grammar School (14%) compared to young people from youth clubs (7%) and College (7%) do ‘not know at all’ what they want to achieve in life. More young people from youth clubs (48%) and from College (43%) than young people from YIP/YOTs (32%) and Grammar School (31%) definitely know what they want to achieve in life.

Table 5: Outlook on Life, Difference between Organisations

| | | | New organisation | | | | Total |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|------------------|-------------|---------|----------------|-------|
| | | | YIP/YOT | Youth Clubs | College | Grammar School | |
| I know what I want to achieve in my life. | No, not at all | Count | 11 | 12 | 8 | 18 | 49 |
| | | % within new organisation | 12.6% | 6.6% | 8.6% | 13.7% | 9.9% |
| | Yes, more or less | Count | 48 | 82 | 45 | 72 | 247 |
| | | % within new organisation | 55.2% | 45.1% | 48.4% | 55.0% | 50.1% |
| | Yes, definitely | Count | 28 | 88 | 40 | 41 | 197 |
| | | % within new organisation | 32.2% | 48.4% | 43.0% | 31.3% | 40.0% |
| Total | Count | 87 | 182 | 93 | 131 | 493 | |
| | % within new organisation | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | |

| | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|--------------------|-----------|----|-----------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 14.006(a) | 6 | .030 |

a 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8.65.

Neither age, gender nor ethnicity were significant factors explaining different responses to this question. Thus, the finding that young people contacted through YIP/YOTs and the Grammar School have a less clear idea of what they want to achieve in life than the other groups, cannot be explained by the fact that the young people contacted through YIP/YOT were on average older than the young people contacted through the Grammar School. However the quantitative data on its own does not paint the whole picture because it does not explore young people's perceptions of the future and what kind of future they aspire to.

It is here where the mixed methods approach helps to question and further analyse the findings. In the survey I asked young people to complete the following open ended questions:

- I am good at
- I would like to
- My aim is
- Where do you see yourself in a year?
- Where do you see yourself in five years?

What is revealing is that there are accounts where future aspirations are related to present skills and competences, and in other accounts there was a vagueness about future aspirations with no clear sense of what to do or how to achieve this. The following table highlights some of the responses of young people.

Table 6: Qualitative Accounts of 'Outlook on Life'

| # | Good at | Would like to | My aim is | In a year | In 5 years |
|-----------------------|----------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| More unrelated | | | | | |
| 44 | Football | be a footballer | to be a footballer | in a job | Jail |
| 459 | some sports | be rich | to get a good job | flat and job | Don't know |
| 48 | Sports | be a millionaire | be a millionaire | At work. | At home with kids |
| 480 | Sports | mechanic or builder | to earn loads of money | at school | with a job |
| 5 | Football | go on holiday | to get a job | Hopefully working | Still working and have a kid |
| 66 | Sport | be a millionaire | to win the lottery | Working | Working |
| More related | | | | | |
| 125 | Football | work with computers | get a masters degree in IT | Still at school | Getting a masters degree in IT |
| 170 | many things | be a solicitor | to successfully be what I want to be | At DMU studying Commercial law | Finishing or finished Uni (DMU) |
| 184 | Communicating | be a nurse | achieve the best in society | Hopefully at University doing a useful career | Having my course at University completed, being graduated, getting ready to get married |
| 190 | Socialising | be a scientist | to be successful | Still at college | In University |
| 345 | Reading | be a military historian and writer | to be successful | Still at school | At school |
| 409 | being a friend | be a lawyer or a doctor | to get a degree and a PhD | still at school | At school |

In order to explore further the finding that young people contacted through YIP/YOTs and young people contacted through the Grammar School have a less clear idea of what they want to achieve in life, I have concentrated on two questions: 'my aim is...' and 'Where do you see yourself in five years...?'. The qualitative answers of every respondent in the two groups were individually coded and then quantified through a matrix analysis in NVIVO 8.

The aims expressed by young people varied from immediate personal development such as 'to stop smoking', 'to read' and 'to do my best'; wanting to be rich and be wealthy and being happy, to ambitions like 'being

successful’ or ‘break a world record’. What is important to note for my analysis is that about half of the young people from the Grammar School would position their aims as achieving in education and having a concrete profession. About half of the young people from YIP/YOTs however would position their aim as having a job and within this group, half of them have very vague ideas about what kind of job they would like to have.

As can be observed in the table below, the findings highlighted in green suggest that whilst half of young people accessed through the Grammar School have concrete aims, only 39% of young people accessed through YIP/YOTs have concrete aims. The findings highlighted in red suggest that whilst only 3% of young people from the Grammar School have less concrete aims, 20% of the young people accessed through YIP/YOTs have less concrete aims.

Table 7: Difference in Aims between Organisations

| | Grammar School | | YIP/YOT | |
|----------------------|----------------|------------|-------------|-----------|
| | % | count | % | count |
| Ambition | 13% | 18 | 10% | 9 |
| don't know | 4% | 5 | 4% | 4 |
| Happiness | 12% | 16 | 1% | 1 |
| Personal development | 0% | 0 | 12% | 11 |
| Wealth | 12% | 16 | 7% | 6 |
| Various | 6% | 8 | 7% | 6 |
| Education | 27% | 37 | 15% | 13 |
| Profession concrete | 23% | 31 | 24% | 21 |
| Profession vague | 3% | 4 | 20% | 18 |
| TOTAL | 100% | 135 | 100% | 89 |

When asking about their outlook in 5 years time the gap between the groups widens. It is noticeable that 86% of young people accessed through the Grammar School would see themselves in school or university, whilst only

5% of young people accessed through the YIP/YOTs see themselves in further education. 26% of the young people accessed through the YIP/YOTs did not know where they would be in 5 years time and 29% did not have a clear idea about what kind of job they would have. Half of them think that they would have a job. However within this group 66% of young people would not have a clear idea of, or aspiration towards a concrete job. As it can be observed in the table below, the findings highlighted in green suggest that whilst 87% of young people accessed through the Grammar School have concrete aims over the next 5 years, only 20% of young people accessed through YIP/YOTs have concrete aims. The findings highlighted in red suggest that whilst 10% of young people accessed through the Grammar School have less concrete aims, over half (55%) of the young people accessed through YIP/YOTs have less concrete aims, over the next 5 years.

Table 8: Difference in ‘Outlook on Life’ between Organisations

| | Grammar School | | YIP and YOT | |
|---------------------|----------------|------------|-------------|-----------|
| | % | count | % | count |
| fame success | 2% | 3 | 6% | 5 |
| family life | 0 | 0 | 14% | 12 |
| finding job | 0 | 0 | 1% | 1 |
| Fun | 1% | 1 | 1% | 1 |
| Jail | 0 | 0 | 3% | 3 |
| college/ university | 86% | 116 | 5% | 5 |
| job concrete | 1% | 1 | 15% | 13 |
| job vague | 5% | 7 | 29% | 26 |
| don't know | 5% | 7 | 26% | 23 |
| TOTAL | 100% | 135 | 100% | 89 |

These, more in depth findings than the simple question “I know what I want to achieve in life” reveal that there are quite strong differences in ‘outlook on life’ between young people accessed through the Grammar School and young

people accessed through the YIP/YOTs, of which only 20% had a relatively clear idea about their future aims.

Whilst within this analysis I am not making any assessments about the types of jobs or education these young people refer to, the differences between these two groups further highlight the less privileged positions of young people accessed through YIP/YOT's and the more privileged of those young people accessed through the Grammar School. The findings from the open ended questions of the survey are even more vividly described in the discussion groups and interviews with the young people accessed through the YIP's and YOT's. Together with the above findings these accounts seem to resemble Brannen's (2002) model of deferment in which young people consider adulthood in vaguer, more abstract terms. They tend to live more in the present with not much hope that the future holds much for them. During my interviews I encountered some cases where young people seemed to be stuck in their life without much of a sense of them knowing what their future held. Sometimes this seemed to be related to a certain apathy and sense of boredom. The following account is representative of several conversations I had with young people:

***What do you think you'll be doing in a year's time?**

Fuck knows.

***Next week?**

Dunno. Slopping out ...

***What do you think you'll be doing tomorrow?**

Nothing, dunno.

***So is your life's like that, that you don't know what the next thing will be?**

Yeah, 'cos you don't plan the next day, do you?

(Int 11, White , male, aged 15)

One has to be careful not to pathologise young people by interpreting these accounts through an 'attitudinal lens', where young people are being 'blamed for their attitudes' within an individualistic perspective (Hine 2009). Young people also mentioned how hard it was to achieve things, or even to aim for things, which is not necessarily about the available opportunities (or the lack of them). These were often quite strong accounts with young people expressing not only frustration but also a sense of anger. For some young people their lives were lived almost exclusively in the present:

'I think it is better to just take each day as it is and see what happens'.

'It is hard to aim here, I am not thinking about it anymore because when I get back to reality it really pees me off'.

(DG 11, White, female, both aged 16)

Young people often blamed the missed opportunities or missed chances on personal failures which intensified the sense of being stuck. In some cases this resulted in them conforming to present situations, which were experienced as negative but without any exit strategy to draw upon, as strongly expressed in the following account:

Because work is shit... You face the real world now don't you?

***Would you now, if you had the chance again to go back would you say OK I would be more ...**

Yeah, I would actually, if I had the chance, but I am not going to have the chance

***In this sense, if you look back at what has happened and now you are in the situation do you think that now you have something where you say OK I want to aim for something?**

I don't know yet, probably I will get fed up with this job and go to college or training.

***Do you have something where you say I would like to be this...?**

No

(Int 1, White, male, offender, aged 16)

Some young people would talk about their dreams and what they would like to be. In a discussion group with some young women from a deprived neighbourhood, what was sometimes said in a quite jovial way, had some harsh realities beneath it, particularly bearing in mind that the oldest participant of the group was just 19 years old. Personal negative experiences contributed to the feeling that aiming for something would come with a lot of disappointment. Again in this account, as in other accounts, it is noticeable how young people feel that it is up to them to 'try hard' and achieve:

***So what is your aim, do you think about something the future?**

I don't want to dream

I don't have dreams because if you don't get it you will be disappointed.

If you want it you can get it but if you don't try hard enough you won't get it.

I just want a nice house, a nice family and live happily ever after.

I just want a healthy life.

I just wish my boyfriend would stop cheating on me and be a man.

There is no point dreaming because when you wake up in the morning it is just a disappointment.

***Do you want to achieve something in your life?**

Yes

***What do you want to achieve?**

To live a better life.

Don't have to struggle, to worry about what you have to spend your money on.

***What about the others?**

I think it is better to just take each day as it is and see what happens.

Yes live for today not for tomorrow.

Because if you are relying on one thing then you are going to get stressed out and you will have a shit life anyway.

(DG 11, White, female, aged 16-19)

The findings highlight that crucial to outlook on life is the individual's perception of their own future, coupled to a sense of having something to aim for. Bearing in mind that young people accessed through YIP/YOTs came from very deprived areas and what could be called the 'privileged position' of young people accessed through the Grammar School, it is revealing that whilst the latter group might not have such a strong sense of personal agency, nevertheless they do have a more positive and focused outlook in life. The fact that there were no differences within this analysis between the different network types, but a stark difference between young people accessed through different organisations points towards the influence of the settings rather than situated activity. This has been also referred to in the qualitative accounts where young people referred to the lack of having access to opportunities.

Conclusion

Groups in themselves are complex because they might be of identity, interest or location and some might be more open and fluid, and others might be more closed and bonded. The findings also suggest that drawing on varied networks or belonging to different groups (such as interest or identity), is not necessarily related to having different types of friends and enjoying being with people from different lifestyles. As such these types of networks do not point to a clear explanation of more bridging or bonding social capital. They point towards the way in which young people interact, where they interact and with whom they interact. A strong sense of bonding through being with people who share commonalities is important for young people across the sample, as has been highlighted in the discussion groups.

The findings also suggest that it is not necessarily their places of socialising which influence the agentic perception of their outlook on life. The settings and contexts within which the young people socialise start to emerge as influencing how young people see their future and the opportunities they have. Thus, following the critical realist analysis we are starting to get a sense of the way in which structures cause things to happen – by motivating or discouraging, constraining and enabling certain sorts of human action.

In the context of the exploration of social capital and young people, this chapter has only considered Layder's (1997, 2006) framework through a focus on 'situated activity' and 'self', already has pointed towards the interconnectedness of the different research elements (self, situated activity, settings and context). In the next chapter I will explore this interconnectedness further and it is within this exploration that the framework starts to acquire a more holistic explanatory value as a model.

Chapter 8: Social Settings and Context

Introduction to Social Settings

Social settings, according to Layder (2006), are formalised organisational environments. In the lives of young people, these are considered as places such as the school and college, and less formal environments such as youth groups and the neighbourhood. In this section, I will explore the sense of belonging by looking at how young people refer to their neighbourhood and the school. The sense of belonging seems to be influenced by the different experiences and attitudes they have toward the different localities and places and a sense of safety emerges as one of the key elements. Apart, but also linked to the sense of safety is young people's school experiences. This section finishes with a consideration of trust and trusting relationships within the social settings. It is within this analysis where both, settings and situated activity become significant markers and where the contextual experiences seem to influence young people's situated activities and vice versa.

Key Findings

- Many young people have a quite restricted array of places where they feel they belong, referring mainly to their home, the neighbourhood and the school.
- Whilst for some young people the neighbourhood is a place to socialise, paradoxically quite often they don't feel that they belong to the neighbourhood.
- Sense of safety tends to be related to a sense of belonging. Almost half of the young people feel unsafe in the city/ town centre and over a third feel unsafe in the local park.
- Young people's network types reflect their positive or negative experiences within Social Settings
- Social Settings have a strong impact on young peoples' feelings of trust and reciprocity
- Young people with area based networking tend to have a more protective trust

Exploration of Findings

Sense of Belonging

In chapter three I have argued that a sense of belonging often refers to a rootedness and young people feeling that they are part of a collective community. Two important aspects were pointed out: a sense of feeling part of a group or environment and influence in the sense that the individual matters to the group. When young people have a sense of belonging and attachment to a school or a neighbourhood, they will be more likely to make friends and interact with peers within these environments (Schaefer-McDaniel 2004: 163). However, it is also argued that strong bonding social capital whilst providing young people with a strong sense of belonging, security and safety, can also present them with fewer opportunities for interactions with significant others.

Throughout the discussion groups and interviews young people talked about where they 'hang out' and about having a certain sense of belonging to places. Mainly they referred to places like the neighbourhood where they live, the street, the local park, their home and the school, and sometimes to their place of worship, the youth club or other places where they would meet with friends. Some young people have a quite restricted array of places where they feel they belong: it is here where the social capital is more static and young people tend to interact with other, similar young people. Networks are based upon their immediate locale of the street, local park and home and characterised by a strong sense of belonging.

The Neighbourhood and the School

As described in the previous chapter, about a third of the young people within the research have strong area based networks. Young people within this group tend to meet their friends in the street and spend their free time hanging around on the street. Whilst for these young people the

neighbourhood is a place to socialise, paradoxically young people in the discussion groups mentioned that quite often they did not feel that they belong to the neighbourhood. The same young women from a deprived council estate who felt that 'there was not much to aim for' (in the above section: outlook on life) referred to 'hanging around on the street', but at the same time they felt that there was 'not much to do' or 'places to go' and thus they do feel quite detached from the neighbourhood as such:

***So you said that you hang a lot around on the street?**

Yes because there aren't many places to go...just hang around the streets with my friends.

***If you think about important places in xxx, which would you say were important places for you?**

Important, my family's houses, I think that's about it really.

(DG 10, White, female, aged 18)

A different picture is painted by the group of young men from a town in Leicestershire who have access to facilities such as a sports centre with tennis courts, squash courts, a gym and a swimming pool, the youth club and parks in which to play. Overall this leads to a more positive feeling about the area:

We like it here because there is quite a bit to do around here.

(DG 9, Mixed Race, male, aged 14)

The survey findings suggest that whilst the area is important for many young people, it is less so than the school, with 67% of young people feeling that the area is either very important (25%) or important (42%), and 81% of young people saying that they feel that school/college is either very important (38%) or important (43%). The picture which emerges therefore is that the importance of the school and the area are quite often related to young people's patterns of socialising: confirming the findings of the survey which

suggests that 65% of young people spend time mainly with other young people from their school and college. It should be noted that the question was constructed in such a way that it allowed for young people to tick several options, and it is the case that 52% also said that they mainly spend time with other young people from their area, highlighting a certain fluidity within the patterns of socialising.

This fluidity, preference and choice to socialise however seems to be influenced by the different experiences and attitudes they have towards the different localities and places. Young people's views on the importance of school to them, varied significantly according to their network clusters and their organisation of origin. In the table that follows I have firstly merged the answers 'very important' with 'important' and 'not very important' with "not important at all'. I have 'highlighted in green when percentages are the highest and in orange when the percentages are the lowest, compared to the total average percentage, which is highlighted in blue, (for this purpose the chart should be read within the column i.e. vertically). It can be observed that compared to the total average, the school is/was important for more young people accessed through the Grammar School and College (approx 95% of young people), than for young people accessed through youth clubs and YIP/YOTs (55%). It is noticeable that for almost half of the young people accessed through the YIP/YOTs the school is not important at all.

Table 9: Difference in School Importance between Organisations

| | | | School importance | | Total |
|--------------|----------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|---------------|
| | | | not important | important | |
| Organisation | YIP/YOT | Count | 40 | 49 | 89 |
| | | % within new organisation | 44.9% | 55.1% | 100.0% |
| | Youth Clubs | Count | 42 | 141 | 183 |
| | | % within new organisation | 23.0% | 77.0% | 100.0% |
| | College | Count | 4 | 89 | 93 |
| | | % within new organisation | 4.3% | 95.7% | 100.0% |
| | Grammar School | Count | 9 | 124 | 133 |
| | | % within new organisation | 6.8% | 93.2% | 100.0% |
| Total | | Count | 95 | 403 | 498 |
| | | % within new organisation | 19.1% | 80.9% | 100.0% |

Kruskal Wallis Test; with Assym. sig = 0.000

When looking at the network clusters it can be observed that against the total average, the school is/was important for more young people who have group based and 'school and college' based networks, than for young people who have area based networks. (This table should be read as the previous table).

Table 10: Difference in School Importance between Network Clusters

| | | | School importance | | Total |
|------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|---------------|
| | | | not important | important | |
| Network Clusters | Group Based | Count | 19 | 99 | 118 |
| | | % within Network Clusters | 16.1% | 83.9% | 100.0% |
| | School/College Based | Count | 14 | 182 | 196 |
| | | % within Network Clusters | 7.1% | 92.9% | 100.0% |
| | Area Based | Count | 60 | 112 | 172 |
| | | % within Network Clusters | 34.9% | 65.1% | 100.0% |
| Total | | Count | 93 | 393 | 486 |
| | | % within Network Clusters | 19.1% | 80.9% | 100.0% |

Kruskal Wallis Test; with Assym. sig = 0.000

So far, the findings suggest that young people with area based networks do not tend to find school important and whilst having a strong attachment to their local area, this might not always be a positive experience. This was especially the case for young people contacted through YIP/YOT's. Young people from school/college based networks tend to feel that the school is or was important, which is especially the case for young people contacted through the College and the Grammar School. Coupled to this comes also the stark differences between how young people feel that other people perceive their area, which was explored at the beginning of this chapter. Whilst a majority of young people contacted through the YIP/YOT's felt that other people viewed their area as bad, the majority of young people contacted through the Grammar School felt that outsiders viewed their area as good. This stark difference is further observable between area based and school/college based networks. Half of the young people belonging to the school/college based networks feel that other people think that the area where they live is good and over a third of young people belonging to area based networks feel that other people think that the area where they live is bad. The following chart shows these findings.

Table 11: Difference in Outsider's Opinion of Area Network Clusters

| | | Network Clusters | | | Total | |
|---|------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|------------|--------|--------|
| | | Group Based | School/College Based | Area Based | | |
| What do other people think of where you live? | It's a good area | Count | 41 | 91 | 32 | 164 |
| | | % within Network Clusters | 41.0% | 54.8% | 21.5% | 39.5% |
| | It's alright | Count | 32 | 38 | 60 | 130 |
| | | % within Network Clusters | 32.0% | 22.9% | 40.3% | 31.3% |
| | It's a bad area | Count | 27 | 37 | 57 | 121 |
| | | % within Network Clusters | 27.0% | 22.3% | 38.3% | 29.2% |
| Total | | Count | 100 | 166 | 149 | 415 |
| | | % within Network Clusters | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

| Chi-Square Tests | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|--------------------|-----------|----|-----------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 19.123(a) | 5 | .002 |

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 15.77.

When exploring young people's experience of the school I observed how young people view education and their future success in finding a job through a lens of individualisation and personal responsibility, similar to that recorded in their accounts of agency. What follows are the views of the group of young men, who already have come across as fairly confident, with a positive outlook on life within a fairly supportive family environment:

...I am not one of the top pupils though but my aim is to do the best I can at school and try hard. As soon as school is finished it is up to you what you do, but if you want to do a job where it doesn't include A levels if you get them, A levels, it is always handy if you change your mind.

***So education is important for you.... How come education is important for you?**

Because if you know you want to succeed you need qualifications

We see how people live and we see what is on TV and what people have in life and the situations they are in and I feel if you get the right education, get the right job and you have enough money to live a decent life, to have what you want in life without being greedy but you have got what you want and need.

If you don't have education where are you going to be?

(DG 9, group of White and Mixed Race young men, aged 14)

In order to explore further young people's personal experience at school I asked young people in the pilot of the survey to come up with an array of words to describe their school experiences which were then inserted into the survey. The list was as follows:

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exciting • Boring • Just a laugh • Hard work • Confusing • Supportive | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenging • A waste of time • Worthwhile • Fun • Disappointing • Cool | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interesting • Enjoyable • Easy • Frustrating • Difficult |
|--|--|--|

Data reduction through a factor analysis identified the following combinations:

- School is/was challenging and positive
- School is/was fun and enjoyable
- School is/was confusing and difficult
- School is/was disappointing and a waste of time

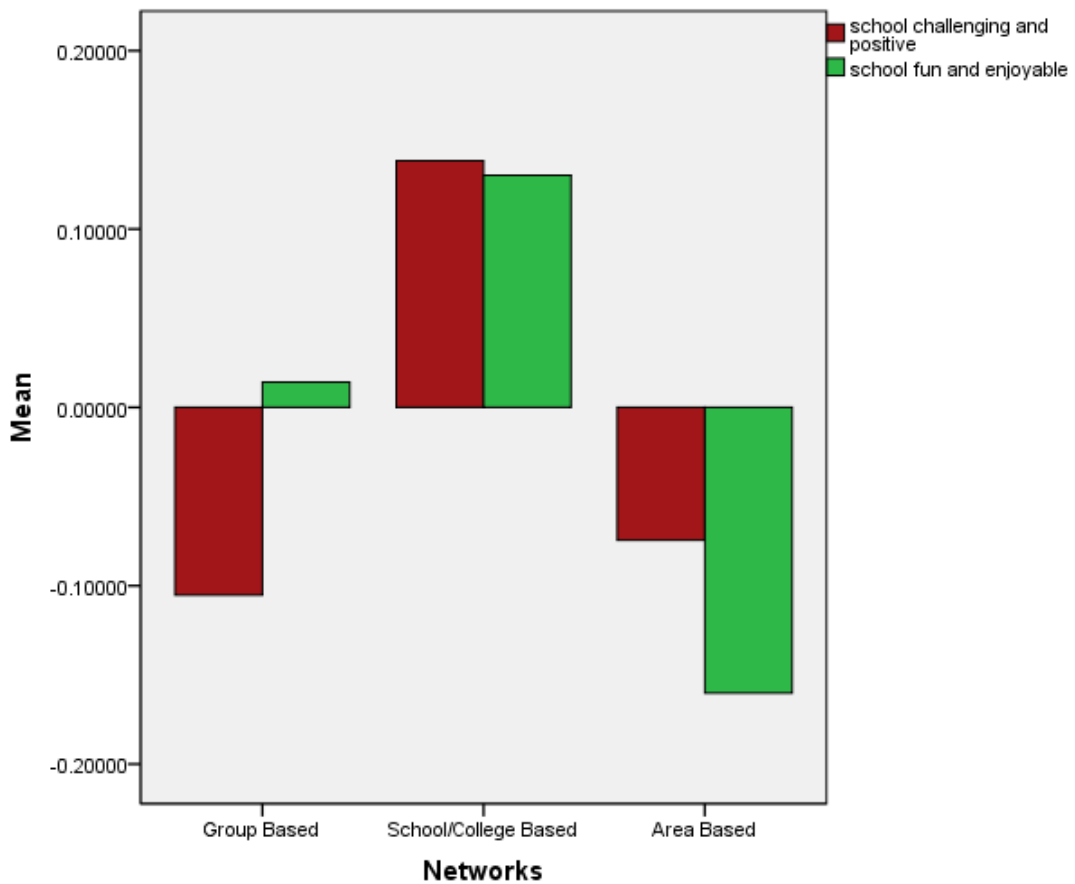
The analysis suggests that there are significant differences in school experiences between young people from the different network clusters and between the organisations where young people have been accessed. The significant²⁹ factors were:

- School is/was challenging and positive
- School is/was fun and enjoyable
- School is/was confusing and difficult

²⁹ For ANOVA test see appendix IV, B

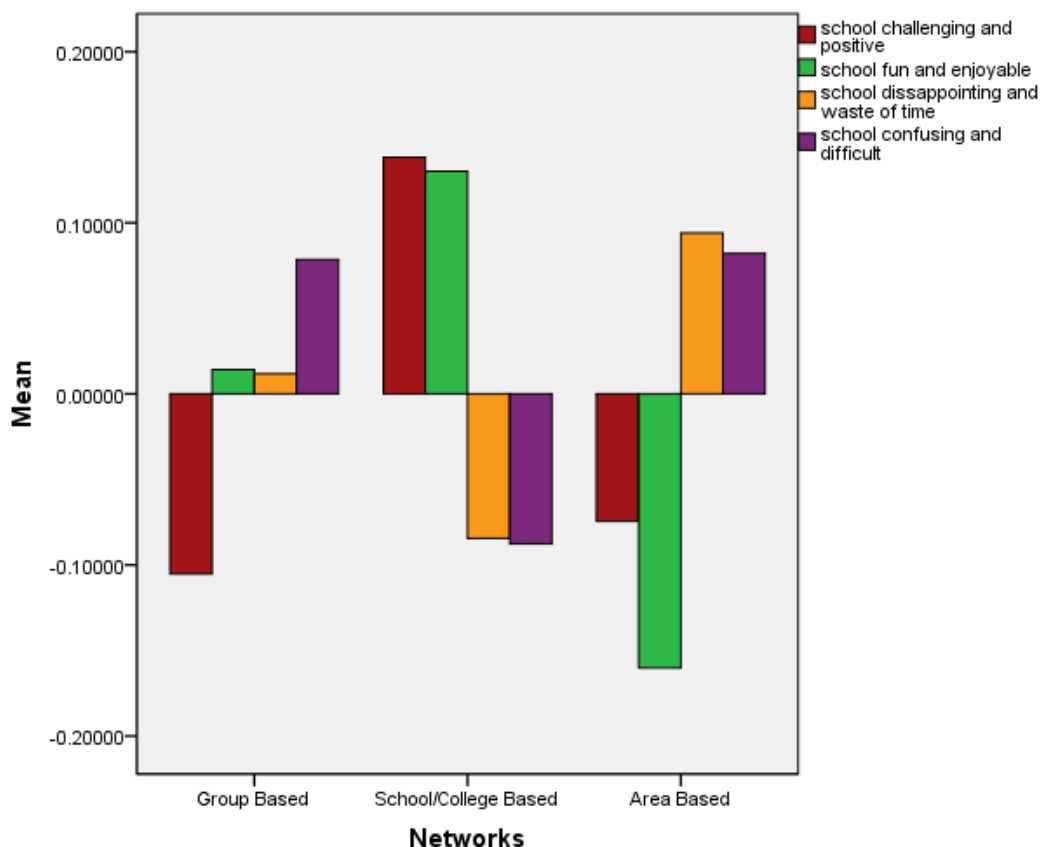
The following bar chart explores the findings. First it is possible to look at the different network types (group based, school/college and area). Young people within school/college based networks are more likely to find school both, challenging and positive (red bar) and fun and enjoyable (green bar). Young people with area based networks are more likely to have the most negative and least enjoyable school experiences (both red and green bars are below zero). Young people with group based networks, whilst not having a positive school experience (red bar is below zero) still find it relatively enjoyable (green bar).

Graph 6: School Factors and Mean Scores of Network Clusters



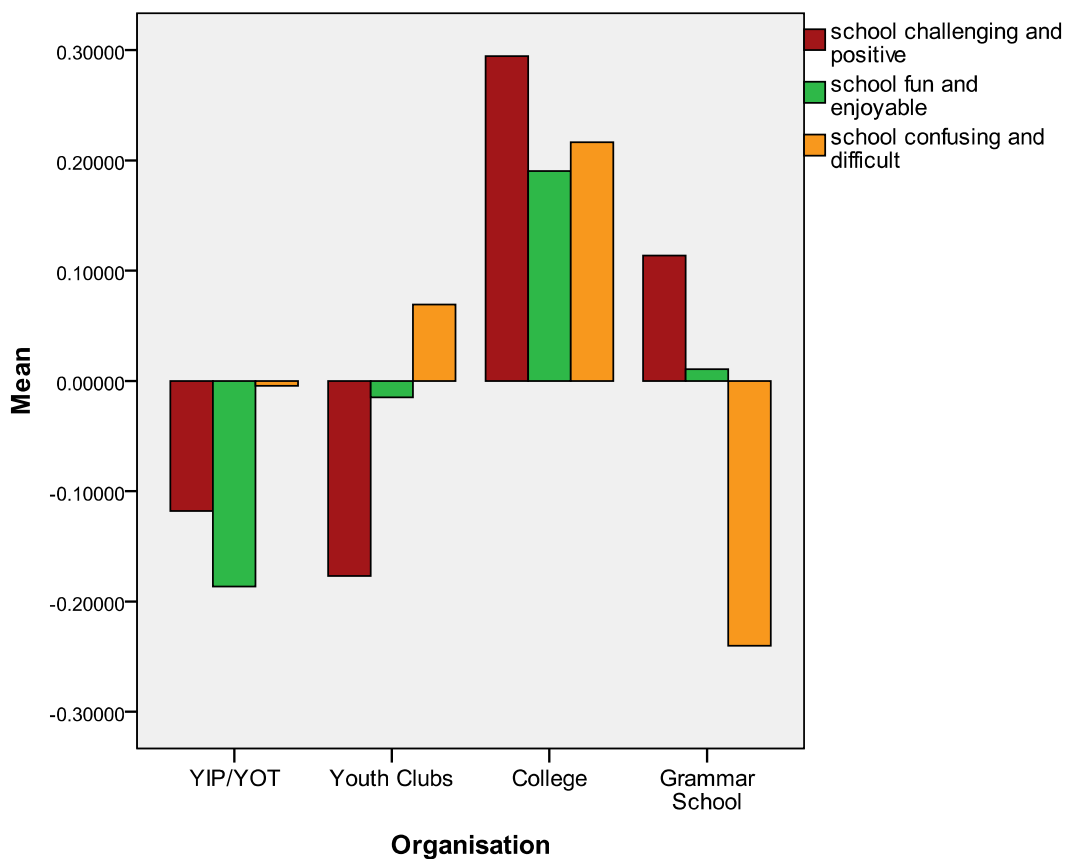
This finding suggests that the situated activity and school experiences become entwined and start to point to the interdependence of the different social domains. In the following bar chart I have replicated the above chart, but have also inserted the two factors which refer to negative school experiences of being ‘disappointing and a waste of time’ and ‘confusing and difficult’. Whilst these two factors are not of statistical significance, they do however signal towards the negative school experiences, especially of young people with area based networks. More young people within this cluster seem to feel that school is a waste of time (orange bar) and as confusing and difficult (purple bar) as young people with group based networks.

Graph 7: All School Factors and Mean Scores of Network Clusters



When looking at the organisations (settings) another very interesting picture emerges. Whilst young people from the Grammar School find the school confusing and difficult (orange bar), they still have a relatively enjoyable and positive school experience (red and green bar). Young people accessed through YIP/YOTs and youth clubs have the least enjoyable and positive school experience (green and red lines). Overall young people at College have had the most positive and challenging but also the most confusing and difficult school experience.

Graph 8: School Factors and Mean Scores of Organisations



Similar to the previous relationship between the school context and situated activity, the above finding suggests that young people accessed through the different organisation (settings) have significantly different school experiences. Young people with area based networks have the most negative and least enjoyable school experiences. This is especially the case for young people contacted through YIP/YOT's. Young people within school/college based networks tend to have a positive school experience. This is specially the case for young people contacted through the College and the Grammar School. Young people with group based networks, whilst not having a positive school experience still find it relatively enjoyable.

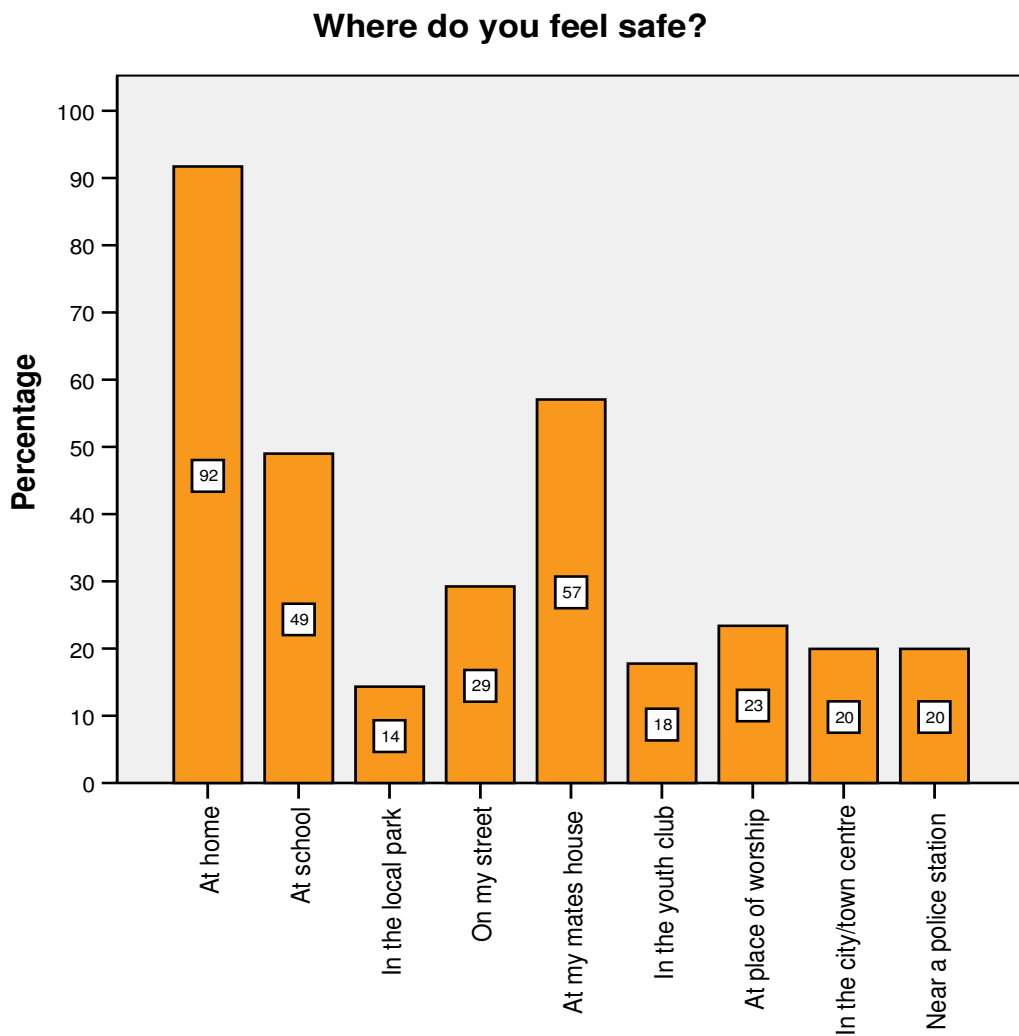
The importance for the exploration of social capital is that the contextual experiences with its positive and negative feelings seem to have an impact on young people's situated activities and thus might influence where and with whom young people form their networks.

Safety

When exploring with young people their sense of belonging to certain places I also asked them why they felt positive or negative about these places. One of the salient aspects was, that 'a sense of safety' and 'knowing other young people who hang around these places' were both important factors for nurturing a positive sense of belonging to these places (see also Morrow 2004; Kintrea et al. 2008).

In the survey young people were given an array of places such as: their house, the school, the local park, their street, friend’s house, youth club, place of worship, city/town centre and police station and they were asked if they felt safe or unsafe in these places. As illustrated in the following chart, most young people feel safe at home (92%) followed by ‘mates’ houses (57%) and school (49%).

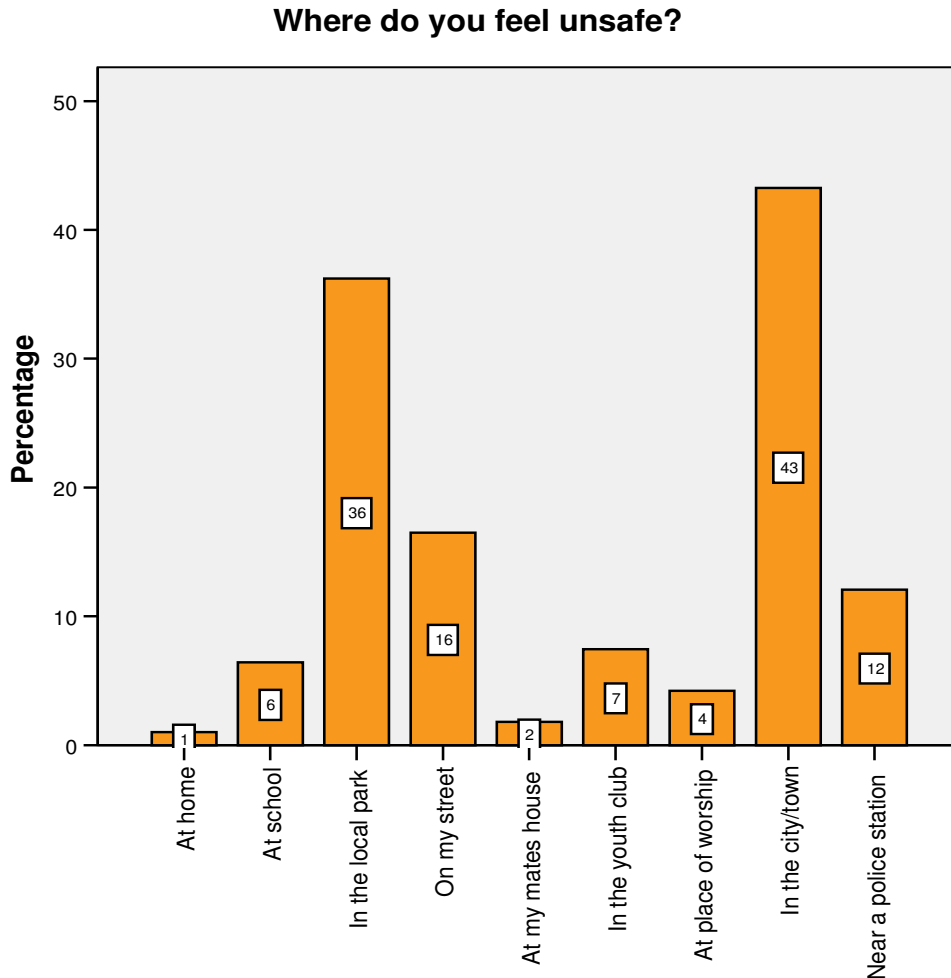
Graph 9: Young People’s perception of Safe Places



However, when asked where they feel unsafe, 43% of young people felt unsafe in the city/ town centre and 36% in the local park. It is nevertheless important to note that if young people did not mark that they felt safe in one

particular place, this did not imply that they felt unsafe (for example 49% of young people feel safe at school and 6% feel unsafe at school).

Graph 10: Young People's perception of Unsafe Places



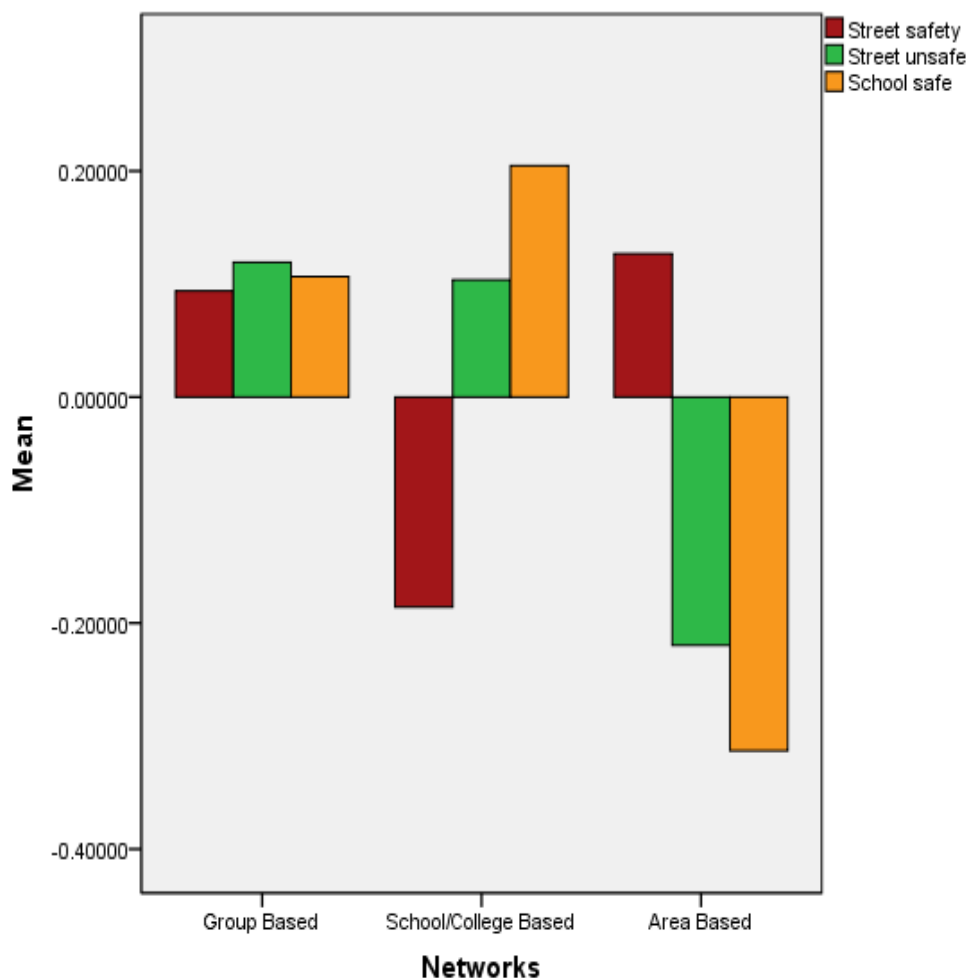
These frequencies on their own do not tell us much about the underlying dynamics of social capital. In terms of exploring how safety has an impact on or is related to the social capital formation, more revealing than the frequencies are the significant differences, which can be seen when considering network types (situated activities) and organisations (settings). The significant differences were derived through conducting an ANOVA test. The main significant differences are observed in street safety and school safety.

The following bar chart explores these findings. First it is possible to look at the different network types (group based, school/college and area).

The green bars show that young people within group based networks and street based networks tend to feel safe on the street, whilst young people within the school/college based networks do not feel safe on the street.

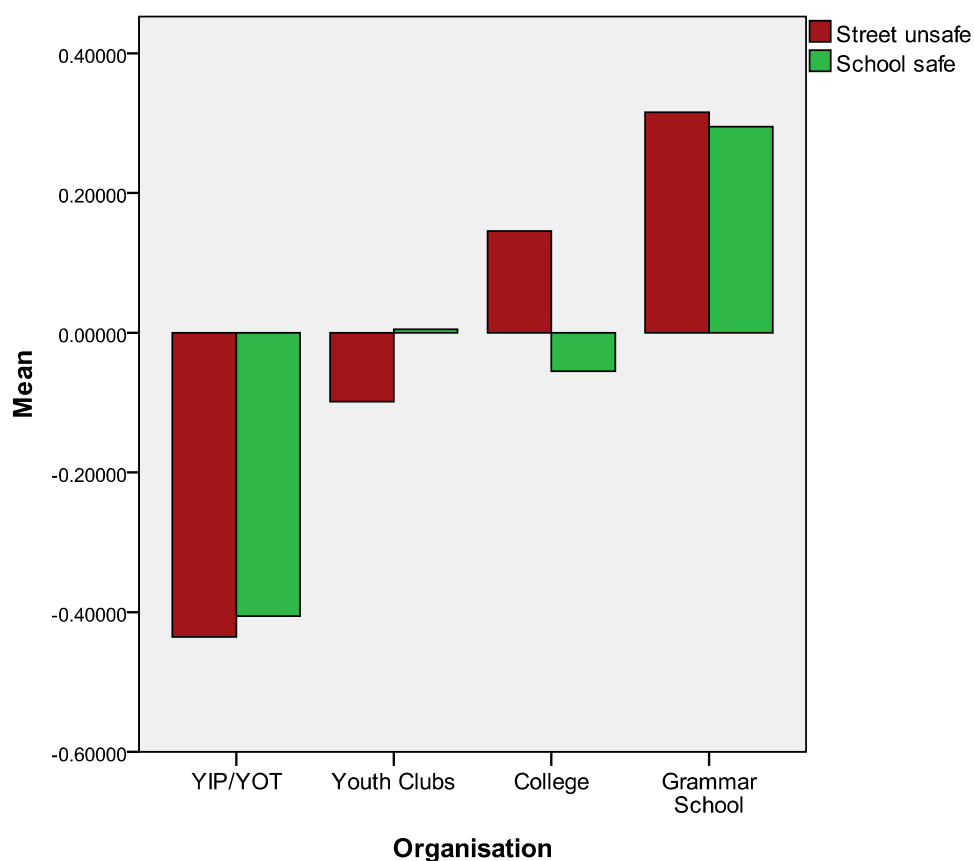
Looking at the orange bars, it is observable that young people within group based networks and school/college based networks are more likely to feel safe at the school and unsafe on the street (green bar), whilst people from the area based networks are less likely to feel safe at the school and less likely to feel unsafe on the street (orange and green bar are below zero).

Graph 11: Safety Factors and Mean Scores of Network Clusters



In terms of organisational differences the following bar chart reveals that young people contacted through YIP/YOTs have the lowest levels of feeling safe at school (green bar) and the lowest levels of feeling unsafe on the street (red bar). Young people contacted through the Grammar School have the highest level of feeling safe at school (green bar) and the highest level of feeling that the street is unsafe (red bar).

Graph 12: Safety Factors and Mean Scores of Organisations



The importance of the above section is that it highlights the connectedness of young people’s feelings of safety with situated activity, especially the strong link between area based networks and ‘not feeling safe at school’ and ‘school/college based networks’ and feeling safe at school and less safe on

the street. In terms of the organisations where young people were accessed, the strongest difference is between the young people accessed through YIP/YOTs and young people accessed through the Grammar School. The first group does socialise on the street but feels unsafe at school, and the latter socialises at the school and feels unsafe on the street. It is also notable that more young men than young women tend to feel safe on the street, the local park and in the city/town centre.

After considering these insights it is useful to look at what it actually means for some people 'being unsafe at school' and why they feel like that. Quite often, young people with more localised networks feel unsafe at school, and that is reflected in the following accounts of a group of friends (White, female and male, aged 13-15) from a deprived outer estate of Leicester with strong localised networks. Their feeling of being unsafe at school was very much because of violence or fear of violence and because they were (or thought they were) picked upon by specific teachers.

***You mentioned school why might one not feel safe at school?**

You get bullied

Knives and stuff... (name) got stabbed

***So it's not only bullies it is also violence?**

Yes

And drugs

Syringes

Teachers

Mr (name) in our school

***So, some teacher might bully you?**

Yes Miss (name) my (subject) teacher she just picks on me and my mate because the other day on detention she puts it minute by minute on the board and by the end of the lesson there was 35 minutes of detention all by me and (name) which I think is a bit funny, a bit weird.

There are people in my class who just mess about all the time
...but you get done for it

***So, what does this have to do with safety?**

I don't know

I don't feel safe in her class, she just picks on me, she just picks on me and my mate (name) everyday

You should tell her

No because then she might get him suspended so you don't feel safe with her...

(DG 1, White male and female, aged 13-15)

Similar experiences were also found with some of the young offenders. Whilst recognising that sometimes they were at 'fault' and provoking troubles they felt that they also were stigmatised and targeted by the teachers. This lack of support and understanding contributed to their lack of feeling safe in the school:

***Why were you kicked out from school?**

For threatening a teacher supposedly. I first got suspended for a week and then I got expelled.

It weren't me though that's what I don't get, because we were in a lesson and I was speaking to two of my friends and all three of us got kicked out and we were all standing outside and the teacher was still inside and my friend said I am going to kill him and then another teacher walked out the staff room, heard that thought it was me, looked at me and then I got suspended.

***Did you enjoy school?**

Sort of and sort of not because really they do more suspending than teaching cos most of the kids have been kicked out even for turning round their head in lesson and that, they get suspended for a day. I have seen my record and I got suspended 33 times in a year and a half and that was just either for speaking or turning round.

(Int 9, Mixed Race, male, offender, aged 14)

When asking him about why he thinks this happens he felt that he got targeted because all his family went to the school and all the family “gave trouble to the school”. I would argue that these are important accounts when considering why some young people have a negative and less enjoyable school experience and why they do not feel safe at school.

In general, this exploration of ‘sense of belonging’ suggests that socialising in an area or place (such as school or neighbourhood), personal experiences attached to the places, having -or not having- access to resources (such as leisure activities), and feeling of safety are important personal and contextual factors. These personal and contextual factors are related to and influence how and where young people enact their social capital. Socialising in an area or neighbourhood is not necessarily matched with young people’s sense of belonging to that neighbourhood. This is especially salient for some young people who have area based networks, but feel that they are detached from the area or neighbourhood, sometimes because of lack of facilities or activities they can pursue there and other times because of being ostracised by other young people or adults.

The importance of the school for young people’s lives is especially relevant when considering their situated activity. From the previous analysis there is an emerging relationship between ‘area based networks’ and three other factors: ‘not having a strong sense of belonging to the school’, having a negative and less enjoyable school experience and not feeling safe at school. School/college networks show a strong relationship with having a strong sense of belonging to the school, having a positive and enjoyable school experience and feeling safe at school, but unsafe on the street. The experience within the school was also defined for some young people by having trusting relationships with adults in that environment. In the next section I will explore some of the accounts of young people and how these refer to the social settings.

Trusting Adults

In one of the discussion groups with young people accessed through the College, the exploration of trust was more complex. This group, apart from referring to the same aspects of trusting friends which I have highlighted in the previous section, also interpreted trust in terms of relating to adults, who were seen as being professional or having an expertise. Some young people mentioned that trust in teachers was about the expectation of receiving a good education. This was not necessarily seen as an interpersonal trust, but more about the fulfilment of the job, or the teacher's role:

It's the trust in the sense that you have to trust them in such a way to get forward in life, if you don't trust them you won't move forward, do you know what I am saying?

I think it is different with your teachers because it is more like, you expect them to give you education and help you because that is what they are there for and it is not really a trusting relationship.

(DG 12, Asian, female and male, aged 18)

Some young people referred to an array of different adults they would trust with different problems outside of the College environment. This was a similar construction of trust which referred to the role or professionalism of adults, and an important element within this trust was to know that the person had some experience and would not judge the young person.

It also depends on what difficulty you are in. If it is something to do with financial help you turn to your parents, if it comes to something like sexual issues I don't think you would turn to your parents specifically. You would turn rather to your friends or a friend that is not of your age but a bit older than you. ... they have gone through the stage that I have but they are my friend so

they are not telling me, they are not judging me, they are there to help you out.

(DG12, White, male, aged 18)

Within the College environment the same young people related more to their personal mentors, with whom they would have a stronger personal bond than with their teachers. Mentors as professionals can provide help and thus are an important resource when help and advice is needed.

In this College we have a team of mentors who if you did need to discuss an issue you go to them rather than to a teacher. I think in this culture if you were to form any kind of a trust, bond with any professional people it wouldn't be a teacher it would probably be a mentor.

Yeah, I think they (the mentors) would be (somebody important) if you needed help. You could go to them and form a trusting relationship with them.

(DG 12, White, male and female, aged 18)

In the same discussion group, these young people also referred to the diversity of their friendship groups such as College friends, friends from work, friends from their old school, anti war groups and Christian human rights organisations. Generally trusting significant adults was referred to in terms of getting help and advice. The importance they attached to these adults having a certain experience or expertise was highlighted:

I would go to someone who had both knowledge and qualifications to tell me, as well as somebody who I could trust and be my friend at the same time. There is always someone in your community ...and he is there and he makes a relationship with you that it is more trusting him and expressing your views with him. In my case I have got someone like that...

(DG 12, Asian, male, aged 18)

In terms of my exploration around interpretation young people from one discussion group made an important distinction, rejecting the notion of degrees of trust and identifying it as more appropriate to refer to 'kinds' or 'types' of trust.

***Are there degrees, certain things with the parents, certain things with brother/sister, certain things with friends, certain things with helpline or a mentor, is that a fair reflection?**

I don't think it is so much degrees of trust, it's different kinds really, it is much more complex than just saying very personal problems it is this person and other things that person....there are all kinds of different help you could want.

(DG 11, White, female, aged 17)

However it was also revealing that two of the young people, one male and one female, who on the whole usually contributed to the discussion, were very quiet at this point, whilst other young people spoke of their strong relationships of trust. They did not want to engage in this and when I asked the group to draw concentric circles of the group of people they would trust, they only had within these circles their family and friends, however they did not want to explain this further. This was also reflected in the open ended survey question where many young people would say that they only trust their family and some friends. This observation was important, not only because it highlights the importance of trust in forging relationships, but also that in order to trust people outside immediate and bonded circles there is a step to be taken: the 'leap of trust'.

Types of Trust

From the exploration of the situated activity and the interpretation of trust (see chapter seven) the distinction between a more protective trust and a trust based on socialising and feeling comfortable with each other emerge when exploring the dynamics between the different environments and social

settings where different pathways are forged, negotiated and navigated. Using the conceptualisations of young people's accounts on trust, I formulated a question in the survey to further explore the types of trust derived from the meaning young people attached to them (see chapter six, section on coding types of trust).

By analysing types of trust and different demographic variables, significant differences are noted within gender, network clusters and organisations. When comparing the organisations it is noticeable that young people accessed through youth groups and the college have similar types of trust, reflecting the total average percentages. More young people accessed through YIP/YOTs and less young people accessed through the Grammar School, refer to a more 'protective trust' relating to 'people not telling others what I have told them' and 'people not stabbing me in the back'. Less young people accessed through YIP/YOTs refer to trust as 'being able to tell somebody what really bothers me' and 'feeling comfortable with each other'. More young people accessed through the Grammar School refer to trust as 'sticking up for each other' and 'feeling comfortable with each other'. I have 'highlighted in green when percentages are the highest and in orange when the percentages are the lowest compared to the total average percentage, which is highlighted in blue (for this purpose the chart should be read within the row i.e. horizontally).

Table 12: Meaning of Trust and Difference between Organisations

| Trust means | | organisation | | | | Total | |
|--|--------------|--------------|-------------|---------|----------------|--------|--------|
| | | YIP/YOT | Youth Clubs | College | Grammar School | | |
| People do not tell others what I have told them | Count | 32 | 61 | 27 | 26 | 146 | |
| | % within Org | 38.1% | 33.7% | 29.3% | 19.4% | 29.7% | |
| People do not stab me in the back | Count | 19 | 25 | 15 | 12 | 71 | |
| | % within Org | 22.6% | 13.8% | 16.3% | 9.0% | 14.5% | |
| Sticking up for each other | Count | 10 | 13 | 7 | 21 | 51 | |
| | % within Org | 11.9% | 7.2% | 7.6% | 15.7% | 10.4% | |
| Being able to tell somebody what really bothers me | Count | 9 | 36 | 17 | 29 | 91 | |
| | % within Org | 10.7% | 19.9% | 18.5% | 21.6% | 18.5% | |
| Feeling comfortable with somebody | Count | 12 | 34 | 20 | 34 | 100 | |
| | % within Org | 14.3% | 18.8% | 21.7% | 25.4% | 20.4% | |
| Other | Count | 2 | 12 | 6 | 12 | 32 | |
| | % within Org | 2.4% | 6.6% | 6.5% | 9.0% | 6.5% | |
| Total | | Count | 84 | 181 | 92 | 134 | 491 |
| | | % within Org | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

| Chi-Square Test | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|--------------------|-----------|----|-----------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 31.516(a) | 15 | .007 |

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.47.

When comparing the network types with each other it is observable that young people with more group based networks and area based networks have similar types of trust. In both clusters more young people refer to ‘people not stabbing each other in the back’, however this might reflect the gender differences (which will be explored in a following section). In both clusters there are less young people who refer to ‘feeling comfortable with somebody’ which is not reflected in gender differences, and in the area based cluster also more young people refer to ‘people not telling others what they have told them’. I have highlighted in green when percentages are the highest and in orange when the percentages are the lowest compared to the total average percentage, which is highlighted in blue (for this purpose the chart should be read within the row i.e. horizontally).

Table 13: Meaning of Trust and Difference between Network Clusters

| Trust means... | | Network Clusters (NC) | | | Total |
|--|-------------|-----------------------|----------------------|------------|--------|
| | | Group Based | School/College Based | Area Based | |
| People do not tell others what I have told them | Count | 32 | 52 | 61 | 145 |
| | % within NC | 27.6% | 26.7% | 36.1% | 30.2% |
| People do not stab me in the back | Count | 20 | 17 | 32 | 69 |
| | % within NC | 17.2% | 8.7% | 18.9% | 14.4% |
| Sticking up for each other | Count | 9 | 26 | 16 | 51 |
| | % within NC | 7.8% | 13.3% | 9.5% | 10.6% |
| Being able to tell somebody what really bothers me | Count | 23 | 37 | 25 | 85 |
| | % within NC | 19.8% | 19.0% | 14.8% | 17.7% |
| Feeling comfortable with somebody | Count | 20 | 52 | 27 | 99 |
| | % within NC | 17.2% | 26.7% | 16.0% | 20.6% |
| other | Count | 12 | 11 | 8 | 31 |
| | % within NC | 10.3% | 5.6% | 4.7% | 6.5% |
| Total | Count | 116 | 195 | 169 | 480 |
| | % within NC | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

| Chi-Square Tests | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|--------------------|---------------------|----|-----------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 31.516 ^a | 15 | .007 |

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.47.

These findings suggest that when considering situated activity and settings, more young people with area based networks and more young people accessed through YIP/YOTs have protective types of trust. Less young people with school and College based networks and less young people accessed through the Grammar School, refer to a protective trust and more to feeling comfortable with somebody.

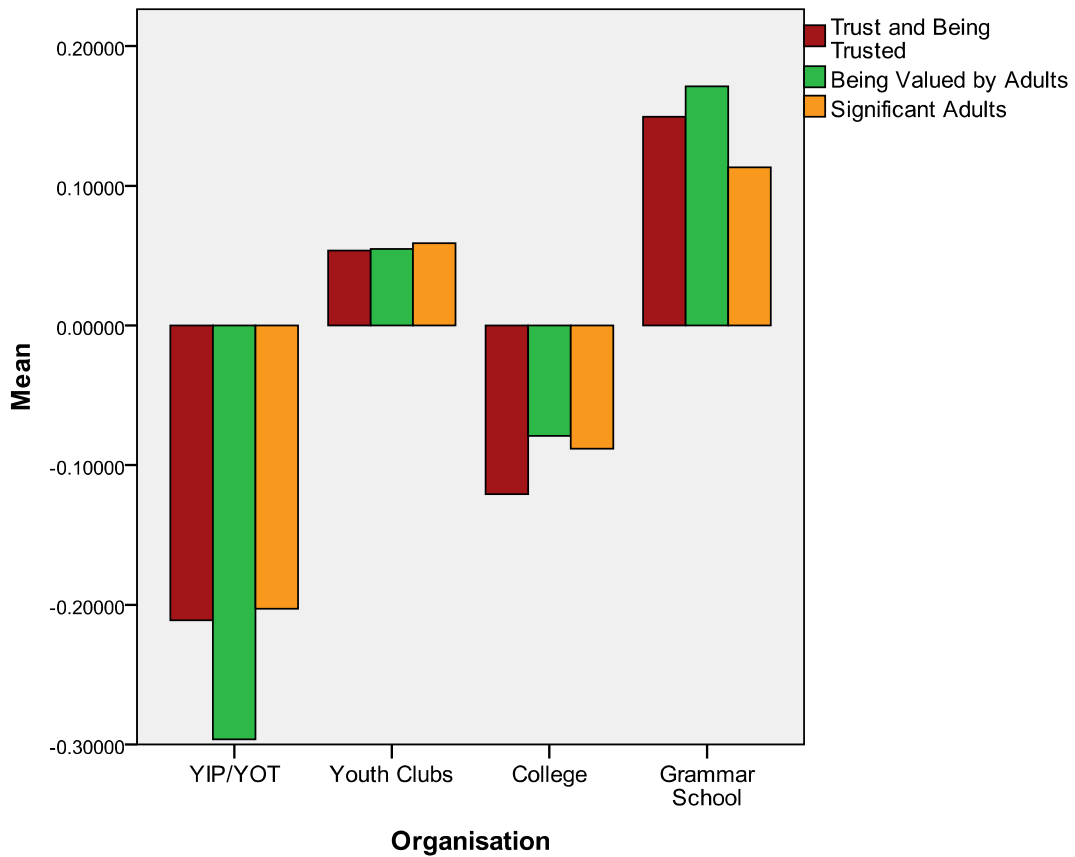
I analysed the data looking at significant differences between the network clusters, focusing on trust, being trusted, having a significant adult in life³⁰ and being valued by adults. Different patterns were explored but no

³⁰ qual to QUAN: this was done by quantifying the qualitative data of the survey.

significant differences were discovered between the different network types. This means that one cannot make assumptions about young people and their levels of trust and relationship with adults based solely on the situated activity or the places in which they tend to socialise.

Contextual factors expressed through the different organisations are stronger markers for significant differences: reflecting the previous discussions around trust; 'trust, being trusted and a sense of reciprocity' (red bar) are highest in the cohort contacted through the Grammar School and lowest in the cohort contacted through YIP/YOTs and the college. Young people accessed through youth groups are close to the total average percentages in levels of trust. The characteristics 'being valued by adults' (green bar) and 'having significant adults' (orange bar) are lowest in the young people contacted through YIP/YOTs and not significantly different within the other groups (Whilst the bars are different in the graph, this difference is not statistically significant). It is interesting to see within the graph how the three indicators (red, green and orange bars) are strongly related to each other.

Graph 13: Trust and Reciprocity Factors and Mean Scores between Organisations



In the exploration of the types of trust there were strong differences between young people accessed through YIP/YOTs and young people accessed through the Grammar School and young women and young men. It would be easy to stigmatise young ‘offenders’ or young people ‘at risk’ as having a more protective trust because of their attitudes or behaviour. The last graph challenges such an interpretation by highlighting that actually young people accessed through YIP/YOTs are not dissimilar in their feelings of trust, reciprocity and being trusted to young people accessed through the college. Therefore such behavioural explanations need to be discarded and structural or contextual interpretations might be more adequate.

Bridging social capital

As explored in chapters two and three, bridging social capital is about creating links and being able to draw upon a diverse group of people outside of immediate family and friendship circles. It is seen that these networks can be very important for broadening people's opportunities and horizons. However, some authors argue that the distinction between 'bridging' and 'bonding' social capital in young people's lives, is not clear cut, but rather 'fuzzy' (White and Green 2011; Holland et al. 2007). Broader, more generalised trust tends to be closely related to bridging social capital and Putnam (1993) argues that "trust lubricates cooperation" (p.170). In the next section I first will explore my findings around the diversity of young people's networks and trust as expectation.

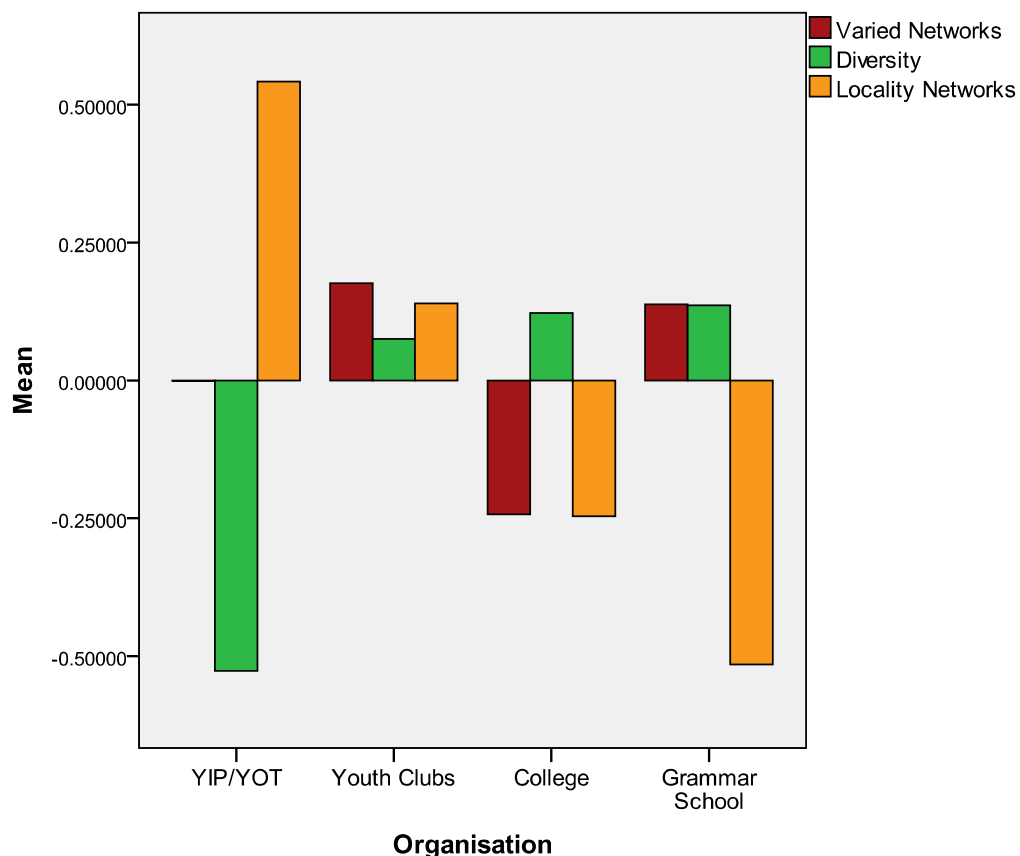
Diversity

When using 'organisations' for looking at patterns of distribution on diversity, my data suggests that there were no significant differences in levels of diversity - in terms of having different types of friends and enjoying being with people of different life styles- between young people accessed through youth groups, the college and the Grammar School. The only group which had significantly lower levels of diversity were the young people accessed through YIPs and YOTs. These findings are especially relevant when considering that many young people contacted through youth groups also draw on area based networks. But they do, like young people from college and the Grammar School have different types of friends and enjoying being with people of different life styles.

The following graph presents these findings. First it is possible to look at the different organisations: YIP/YOT, Youth Clubs, College, Grammar School. Observing the red bars it is noticeable that young people contacted through youth groups and through the Grammar School tend to have the most varied networks. The red 'varied networks factor' means that they draw upon

networks based on different groups - such as after school, interest, faith, youth groups. The red bars for the young people contacted through the College are below zero which indicates that young people who belong to these network clusters tend to have least varied networks. Young people contacted through the College are similar to the young people contacted through the youth groups and the Grammar School However in terms of diversity as expressed in having different types of friends and enjoying being with people of different life styles (green bar). Young people contacted through YIP/YOTs have the lowest levels of diversity and are most likely to have locality based networks.

Graph 14: Network Factors and Mean Scores of Organisations



Overall this suggests that street socialising and area based networks do not necessarily imply a negative attitude towards diversity. Having different types of friends and enjoying being with people from different lifestyles, is not necessarily related to drawing on varied networks or belonging to different groups (such as interest or identity).

Expectation of Trust

Expectation towards other people's actions and intentions is understood as the 'output' of the trust process. It is therefore seen as an "input for actions (risk-taking, co-operating) and associations (relationships, social capital) which in themselves, however, should not be confounded with trust" (Moellering 2001: 415). In the analysis of 'expectation', I start to disentangle "whether a state of expectation towards other people's actions and intentions (the 'end product') is favourable or unfavourable" (Moellering 2001: 415). This leads to a focus on the notions of generalised trust and radius of trust, which were examined in two ways within the survey: one was to ask the standard question about whether young people would say that most people can be trusted and another asking via an open ended question, who are the people young people do 'not trust' and who are the people they do trust?

Generalised Trust

A standard question within social capital analysis is 'would you say that most people can be trusted'? There were no significant (Pearson Chi-Square =0.6) gender differences: 59% of young women and 61% of young men have a more generalised trust and 41% of young women and 49% of young men have less generalised trust. Similar distributions were noted when comparing the networks types and again there were no significant differences (Pearson Chi-Square =0.4).

There are significant differences between the different organisations where young people were accessed. In the following chart I have highlighted in green when percentages are the highest, and in orange when the percentages are the lowest, compared to the total average percentage within organisations, which is highlighted in blue (for this purpose the chart should be read within the column i.e. vertically). It can be observed that compared to the total average, 74% of young people contacted through the Grammar School have high levels of generalised trust (against a total average of 60%). Young people contacted through youth groups reflect the total average percentages and less young people contacted through YIPs, YOTs and the College (about 46% in each category) have a more generalised trust. It is revealing that 14% (against a total of 7%) of young people contacted through the College feel that most people cannot be trusted at all.

Table 14: Generalised Trust and Difference between Organisations

| | | | Would you say that most people can be trusted? | | | | Total |
|--------------|----------------|----------------------------------|--|--------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|
| | | | Not at all | Very few | Quite a few | Yes | |
| organisation | YIP/YOT | Count | 5 | 42 | 38 | 4 | 89 |
| | | % within new organisation | 5.6% | 47.2% | 42.7% | 4.5% | 100.0% |
| | Youth Clubs | Count | 12 | 58 | 92 | 21 | 183 |
| | | % within new organisation | 6.6% | 31.7% | 50.3% | 11.5% | 100.0% |
| | College | Count | 13 | 37 | 38 | 5 | 93 |
| | | % within new organisation | 14.0% | 39.8% | 40.9% | 5.4% | 100.0% |
| | Grammar School | Count | 4 | 30 | 81 | 18 | 133 |
| | | % within new organisation | 3.0% | 22.6% | 60.9% | 13.5% | 100.0% |
| Total | | Count | 34 | 167 | 249 | 48 | 498 |
| | | % within new organisation | 6.8% | 33.5% | 50.0% | 9.6% | 100.0% |

| Chi-Square Tests | Value | Df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|--------------------|---------------------|----|-----------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 31.516 ^a | 15 | .007 |

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.47

Bearing in mind that the question around generalised trust is one of the most commonly used questions in social capital surveys to infer bridging social capital, I would have expected some significant differences between this question and the other social capital variables which have been explored in this Findings chapter. However no significant differences were identified.

Further exploration of 'generalised trust' was conducted by looking at the radius of trust based on the theorisation of trust that 'not trusting people one doesn't know' is a sign of a narrow radius of trust (Uslaner 2002, 2003). By quantifying the open ended survey question "I don't trust (who, which types of people)..." I was able to compare those young people who said that generally they do not trust people they 'don't know,' 'no one', 'everyone' and 'most people', with the rest of the young people who referred in this question to specific groups of people such as drug addicts, murderers, criminals and thieves.

Similar to the first analysis around generalised trust, there were no significant differences between this exploration of trust and the network types (group based, school/college based and area based). There are significant differences between the different organisations where young people were accessed. In the following chart I have highlighted in green when percentages are the highest and in orange when the percentages are the lowest, compared to the total average percentage within organisations, which is highlighted in blue (for this purpose the chart should be read within the column i.e. vertically). It can be observed that compared to the total average more young people accessed through YIP/YOTs (74% against a total average of 61%) refer to specific groups and more young people accessed through the school and college, refer to people they do not know (44% against a total average of 39%); young people accessed through youth groups reflect the average percentages.

Table 15: Radius of Trust and Difference between Organisations

| | | | radius of trust | | Total |
|--------------|----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| | | | Unknown | specific groups | |
| organisation | YIP/YOT | Count | 23 | 66 | 89 |
| | | % within new organisation | 25.8% | 74.2% | 100.0% |
| | Youth Clubs | Count | 72 | 111 | 183 |
| | | % within new organisation | 39.3% | 60.7% | 100.0% |
| | College | Count | 41 | 52 | 93 |
| | | % within new organisation | 44.1% | 55.9% | 100.0% |
| | Grammar School | Count | 60 | 75 | 135 |
| | | % within new organisation | 44.4% | 55.6% | 100.0% |
| Total | | Count | 196 | 304 | 500 |
| | | % within new organisation | 39.2% | 60.8% | 100.0% |

Kruskal Wallis Test; with Assym. sig = 0.001

If the assumption that, a 'narrow radius of trust' is related to bonding social capital, is correct, I would have expected some significant differences between the two groups of young people, with either a 'wide' or 'narrow' radius of trust and other social capital variables. However, as it was the case with the standard question about generalised trust, no significant differences were identified.

When analysing the type of people young people referred to in the question about who they do not trust, an interesting picture emerges. The responses varied with answers such as: drug addicts, murderers, criminals and thieves; young people who are always on the streets and young people who get into trouble; gay people, Somalians, Asians, homeless people and market traders, elderly people; but also referred to certain characteristics like: bullies, 'people that don't respect me', 'people who are not of the same faith', liars, two faced people, people who stab you in the back. I speculate that asking young people about who they do not trust illustrates the groups of people

they do not like, and also those they are wary of, through pre conceived views or ideas about certain type of people. What can be concluded from this section is that questions used in research with adults might be misleading and not reflective of how young people relate to trust and the meaning they attach to it.

Context

In chapter three I have pointed out that young people's ability to access and draw on social capital as a resource is still structured by gender, class, family background, income, ethnicity and locality. Both Putnam and Coleman's discussions of social capital have been described as 'gender blind' (Morrow 1999; Holland et al. 2003; Gidengil and O'Neill 2006). The relationship between social capital and ethnicity is not given particular attention in Coleman, Putnam and Bourdieu's analysis and needs further exploration (Thapar and Sanghera 2010).

Key Findings

- No significant age, gender and ethnicity differences in the exploration of reciprocity, trust, agency, school experience and support received from people
- **Class**
 - **Agency:** More young people from less privileged backgrounds have an individualistic approach to resolving problems
 - **School experiences:** More young people from less privileged backgrounds do not feel safe at school, nor do they have positive school experiences
 - **Trust:** More young people from less privileged backgrounds have lower feelings of 'Trust, being trusted and sense of reciprocity'
 - **Outlook on life:** More young people from less privileged backgrounds have concrete aims for the future and very few tend to see themselves in further education and pursuing a concrete career
- **Gender**
 - **Networks:** More young men tend to have area based and group based networks and more young women tend to have school based networks
 - **Diversity:** More young women within this study tend to have different types of friends and enjoy being with people of different life styles
 - **Safety:** More young men than young women tend to feel safe on the street, the local park and in the city/town centre
 - **Types of trust:** More young men refer to trust in the sense of protecting each other and more young women tend to refer to trust as sharing and feeling comfortable
- **Ethnicity**
 - **Generalised trust:** more White British young people have high levels of generalised trust followed by Asian young people and Mixed Race young people. Far fewer Black young people had high levels of generalised trust

Exploration of Findings

In this section, I will explore some of the contextual aspects such as gender, age, ethnicity and class. Gender and ethnicity were categories - both within the qualitative and quantitative enquiry- where young people could define their identity. All the findings within this chapter were analysed by gender, age and ethnicity and the significant differences will be explored. Because of the sampling strategy, it is important to mention that ethnicity and class proved much more difficult to assess. The sample was not ethnically representative and thus for example, 62.3% of the Asian young people in this study were accessed through the College. Since organisational (YIP/YOT's, Grammar School, College and youth groups) differences were repeatedly significant, I had to be cautious in using ethnicity as a factor in the analysis, without analysing how the different contextual factors are multi layered. I will acknowledge this throughout this chapter.

Class

In terms of exploring class within a critical realist perspective, this study acknowledges young people's own subjective perception of the unequal conditions of class and place but also the objective structural context, which often provides few resources for young people to overcome contingency thus constraining choice (see also MacDonald et al. 2005). As stated in the sampling section of chapter five, young people accessed through YIP/YOTs come from highly deprived areas with multiple levels of deprivation according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation (see chapter five). However the less privileged position of the group of young people accessed through YIP/YOT's, is not only compounded through the socio economic position, but also by other structural processes. Goldson (2010) asserts that:

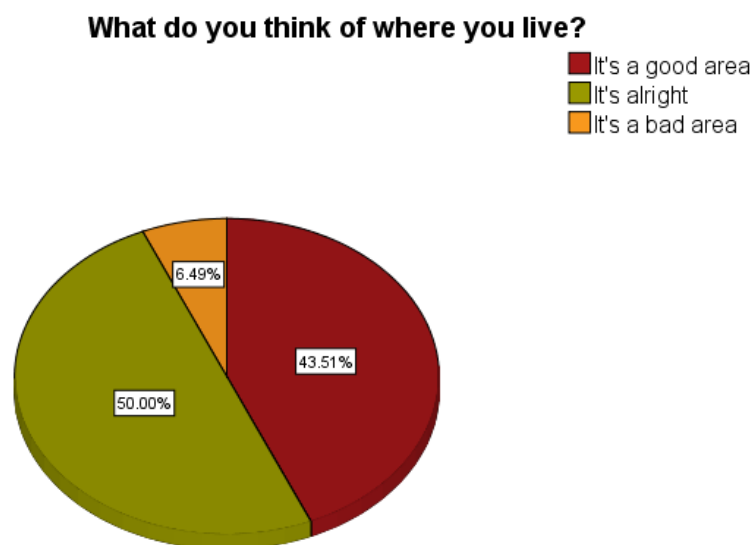
“...the negative consequences of youth crime and youth criminalization—compounded by processes of social, political and economic exclusion and underpinned by the intersecting structural relations of class, ‘race’ and gender—routinely impact

disproportionately on people living in the most impoverished locales” (p.164).

It is also the institutionalisation within the youth justice system which stigmatises these young people and labels them as ‘outsiders’ (Goldson 2007). The physical environment of the locality, its reputation *and* the reputation of being classed as a young person ‘at risk’ might be operating as mutually reinforcing signifiers, a process which Wacquant (1997) refers to as “territorial stigmatization” where certain places, are “branded” as “blemished” and the people who live in these areas are trapped by this label (in Hollingworth and Archer 2009: 590).

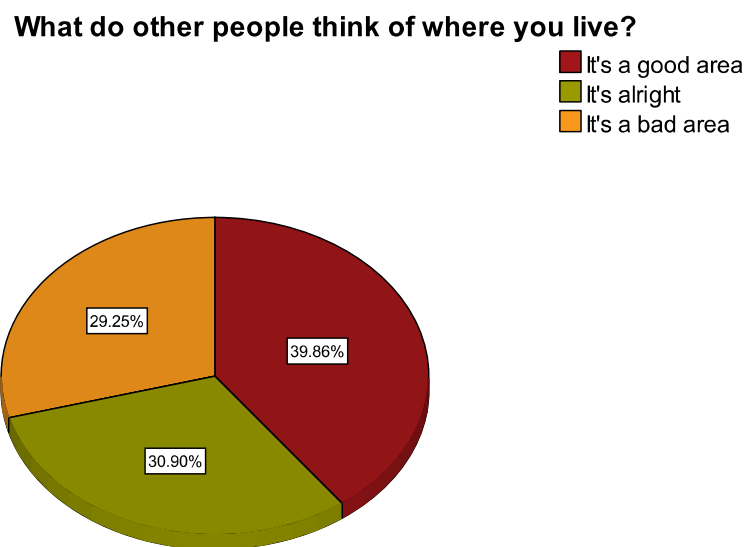
A significant indicator for how young people might see their area and how they might perceive that others stigmatise their area was gained within this study by asking them in the survey how they see their area and how other people see their area. When exploring of how young people perceive their own area, it is to notable that only 6.5% of young people thought their area was a bad area whilst 43.5 and 50% respectively thought it was a good or an ‘alright’ area. The following chart represents this distribution:

Graph 15: Distribution of Personal Perception of Area



However many young people tend to have a different personal perception of their area that what they think other people think of their area: 40 % of young people feel that other people think that their area is a good area, and about 30% a bad and 30% an alright area. The following chart represents this distribution:

Graph 16: Distribution of Outsider's Perception of Area



Exploring this further, it is clear that this perception also differs between the young people from different organisations. In the table below I have highlighted in green when percentages are higher and in orange when the percentages are lower. Two thirds of young people from the Grammar School think that other people perceive the area where they live as a good area and about one third think that their area is perceived as a bad area. Almost half of the young people from the YIP/YOT's think that other people perceive the area where they live as a bad area and only 14.5% of them think that their area is perceived as a good area.

Table 16: Difference in Outsider's Opinion of Area between Organisations

| | | | organisation | | | | Total |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|---------|----------------|-------|
| | | | YIP/YOT | Youth Clubs | College | Grammar School | |
| What do other people think of where you live? | It's a good area | Count | 11 | 49 | 39 | 70 | 169 |
| | | % within organisation | 14.5% | 30.6% | 48.1% | 65.4% | 39.9% |
| | It's alright | Count | 30 | 65 | 30 | 6 | 131 |
| | | % within organisation | 39.5% | 40.6% | 37.0% | 5.6% | 30.9% |
| | It's a bad area | Count | 35 | 46 | 12 | 31 | 124 |
| | | % within organisation | 46.1% | 28.8% | 14.8% | 29.0% | 29.2% |
| Total | Count | 76 | 160 | 81 | 107 | 424 | |
| | % within organisation | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | |

| Chi-Square Tests | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|--------------------|---------------------|----|-----------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 42.662 ^a | 15 | .000 |

a. 12 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .60.

By no means could it be argued that the above insights can be treated as definite indicators of class. However I would argue that they contribute to the understanding of how young people subjectively perceive the unequal conditions of class and place. If young people are content with the area in which they live, but know that others see it as a bad area, they will be conscious of stigmatisation and the potentially negative impact this will have on the area. Forrest and Kearns (2001) assert that:

“...the neighbourhood in which we live can play an important part in socialisation (into the wider society) not only through its internal

composition and dynamics but also according to how it is seen by residents in other neighbourhoods and by the institutions and agencies which play a key role in opportunity structures. Thus the identity and contextual roles of the neighbourhood are closely linked to one another. [...] the external perceptions of areas impact on the behaviour and attitudes of residents in ways which may reinforce cohesive groupings and further consolidate reputations” (p.2134).

The stark difference between young people accessed through the YIP/YOT and the young people accessed through the Grammar School is emerging strongly through these insights. I have also pointed out that whilst not being able to clearly establish the class of the pupils attending the Grammar School, it can be said that in the Grammar School many young people will come from more socio-economically privileged backgrounds. Hollingworth and Archer (2009) assert that it is the norm for “urban middle- and upper class parents” to seek out schools which are deemed as ‘the best’ by choosing “fee-paying schools, high-status selective schools or high-achieving comprehensive schools where there is a critical mass of children like their own” (p.586). Young people accessed through youth groups and young people from the College are more difficult to put into any social categories because of not always knowing their background.

Whilst recognising the role of social and economic structures and institutional contexts, within which the formation of social capital is embodied and enacted (Hollingworth and Archer 2009) I will be cautious in using the above considerations as definite class indicators within my statistical analysis (Sayer 2003). However, embedded within the multi level, mixed methods analysis this provides important insights for the discussion of contextual factors within the exploration of social capital. As such, throughout this exploration I have opted for referring to “more or less privileged positions” of young people, especially those accessed through the YIP/YOT’s and those accessed through the Grammar School.

The next table summarises the stark differences between young people accessed through the YIP/YOT's and Grammar School which have been emerging within this findings chapter so far.

Table 17: Differences Between Young People accessed through the YIP/YOT's and Grammar School

| | Less privileged YIP/YOTs | More privileged Grammar School |
|-------------------|---|---|
| Agency | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> tend to have a more individualistic approach to resolving problems - relying on themselves | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> tend to involve family or friends in resolving problems |
| Outlook on Life | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> over half of the young people do not have concrete aims for the future and only 5% of the young people see themselves in further education and pursuing a concrete career | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 87% of the young people see themselves in further education and pursuing a concrete career |
| School experience | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> tend to feel safe on the street and less safe in the school. They don't tend to find school important and have the most negative and least enjoyable school experiences. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> tend to feel safe at home and at the school tend to have a positive school experience |
| Trust | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Trust, being trusted and a sense of reciprocity' are low 'Being valued by adults' and 'having significant adults' are lowest more young people have protective types of trust within tightly bonded networks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trust, being trusted and a sense of reciprocity' are high Being valued by adults' and 'having significant adults' are average Tend to have trust around socialising and feeling comfortable within bonded relationships |

These findings highlight that agency, outlook on life, school experience and trust are differently experienced and framed by young people from different socio-economic positions. Rooted contextual explanations need to be taken into account and these differences should not be seen through an 'attitudinal lens' (Hine 2009).

Gender

My analysis suggests that young women tend to socialise with other young people, with their family and other people around them in different ways than young men. Statistically strong gendered differences were found within the network types: 'Group based', 'School/College based' and 'Area based'.

- **Area based networks:** More young men (61%) belong to this network type than young women (39%)
- **Group based networks:** More young men (60.5%) tend to belong to this network type than young women (39.5%)
- **School based:** More young women (64%) tend to belong to this network type than young men (36%)

A more detailed analysis and conducting ANOVA tests on all the factors, which were established through data reduction, highlights that apart from the strong differences between the network types there are two more areas where there are strong significant differences: feelings of safety and diversity³¹.

More young men than young women tend to feel safe on the street, the local park and in the city/town centre. More young women within this study tend to have different types of friends and enjoy being with people of different life styles. The gendered attitude towards diversity was also referred to in one discussion group by a group of young women:

³¹ For ANOVA test see appendix IV, C

Everyone hangs around in a group of friends but girls tend to have different people. Lads they probably hang around with people they hang around at school with, but girls have school friends and different friends out of school and they might not hang around together.

Yes like different areas

(DG 7, two White young women, aged 16)

The very significant difference to openness to diversity is also shown in the following chart, where 41% of young women definitely enjoy being with people of different life styles against 29% of young men. However this chart also gives a more detailed view in that overall, only a small number of young people would 'not enjoy at all' being with people of different life styles. As such it is important not to stigmatise young men as not having different types of friends and enjoying being with people of different life styles. The following chart shows the differences which can be read looking at the rows, especially focusing on '%within gender'. I have highlighted the relevant differences with green signalling the higher percentage and orange the lower percentage.

Table 18: Diversity and Differences between Gender

| | | | Gender | | Total |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|--------|--------|--------|
| | | | Male | Female | |
| I enjoy being with people of different life styles. | No, not at all | Count | 18 | 4 | 22 |
| | | % within Gender | 7.2% | 1.7% | 4.5% |
| | | % of Total | 3.7% | .8% | 4.5% |
| | Sometimes | Count | 159 | 139 | 298 |
| | | % within Gender | 63.9% | 57.4% | 60.7% |
| | | % of Total | 32.4% | 28.3% | 60.7% |
| | Yes, definitely | Count | 72 | 99 | 171 |
| | | % within Gender | 28.9% | 40.9% | 34.8% |
| | | % of Total | 14.7% | 20.2% | 34.8% |
| Total | | Count | 249 | 242 | 491 |
| | | % within Gender | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| | | % of Total | 50.7% | 49.3% | 100.0% |

Mann-Whitney U; Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) =.001

However while acknowledging the importance of significant differences, findings of no significant differences are also revealing: within this study there were no significant differences in the exploration of reciprocity, trust, agency, school experience and support received from people, explored through the following factors:

Table 19: List of 'No Significant' Factors in Relation to Gender

| RECIPROCITY AND TRUST | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Reciprocity and Trust | Most people can be trusted, they feel trusted, adults listen to them and feel that people are usually ready to help each other |
| Trust/Being Trusted | Generally feel that most people can be trusted and they are being trusted by adults and adults listen to them |
| AGENCY | |
| Agency/ Influence | Can speak out if they disagree with what adults have agreed on and they can influence decisions in their life |
| SCHOOL EXPERIENCE | |
| Challenging/ positive | school challenging and positive |
| Fun/ enjoyable | school fun and enjoyable |
| Confusing/ difficult | school confusing and difficult |
| SUPPORT | |
| Being valued by Adults | Being valued by adults |
| Family and Friend support | Family and Friend support |
| Significant Adults | Feel valued by adults and would involve police or teacher if they get bullied |
| Rely on Family and Friends | Involve family and/or friends when bullied |

Trust

Within the exploration of trust I would like to disentangle the gender differences in more detail. There were no significant (Pearson Chi-Square =0.6) gender differences within the question about generally trusting people: 59% of young women and 61% of young men have a more generalised trust and 41% of young women and 49% of young man have less generalised trust.

Particularly notable is the strong significant difference between male and female respondents in two of the five identified types of trust: ‘people not stabbing me in the back’ and ‘being able to tell somebody what really bothers me’. More young men (19% compared to 10% of young women) refer to people not stabbing each other in the back and sticking up for each other, and more young women (24% compared to 13% of young men) refer to being able to tell people what really bothers them (see highlighted cells).

Table 20: Meaning of Trust and Differences between Gender

| | | Gender | | Total | |
|----------------|--|-----------------|--------|--------|--------|
| | | Male | Female | | |
| Trust means... | People do not tell others what I have told them | Count | 71 | 75 | 146 |
| | | % within Gender | 28.5% | 31.0% | 29.7% |
| | People do not stab me in the back | Count | 48 | 23 | 71 |
| | | % within Gender | 19.3% | 9.5% | 14.5% |
| | Sticking up for each other | Count | 32 | 19 | 51 |
| | | % within Gender | 12.9% | 7.9% | 10.4% |
| | Being able to tell somebody what really bothers me | Count | 33 | 58 | 91 |
| | | % within Gender | 13.3% | 24.0% | 18.5% |
| | Feeling comfortable with somebody | Count | 50 | 50 | 100 |
| | | % within Gender | 20.1% | 20.7% | 20.4% |
| | other | Count | 15 | 17 | 32 |
| | | % within Gender | 6.0% | 7.0% | 6.5% |
| Total | | Count | 249 | 242 | 491 |
| | | % within Gender | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

| Chi-Square Tests | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|--------------------|-----------|----|-----------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 19.123(a) | 5 | .002 |

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 15.77.

Most noteworthy in this section is the gendered nature of the situated activity, with more young men having area based and group based networks and more young women having school based networks. This is not surprising when considering aspects of safety which was also an area where there were strong gender differences, especially with more young men feeling safe around the local area. The gendered attitude towards diversity, with more

young women being open and positive about diversity is of special significance for the social capital debate, as it is the difference in the types of trust (or what could be interpreted as an aspect of ‘suspension’). This will be further developed in the discussion chapter.

Ethnicity

There are significant differences when considering ethnicity and generalised trust. In the following chart I have highlighted in green when percentages are the highest, and in orange when the percentages are the lowest, compared to the total average percentage within ethnicity, which is highlighted in blue (for this purpose the chart should be read within the column i.e. vertically). It can be observed that more White British young people have high levels of generalised trust followed by Asian young people and Mixed Race young people. Much less Black young people had high levels of generalised trust. (The sample of White other and Asian Other was too small to consider it within this comparison)

Table 21: Ethnicity and Trust Crosstabulation

| | | | Would you say that most people can be trusted? | | | | Total |
|-----------|---------------|--------------------|--|----------|-------------|-------|--------|
| | | | Not at all | Very few | Quite a few | Yes | |
| Ethnicity | White British | Count | 16 | 87 | 174 | 36 | 313 |
| | | % within ethnicity | 5.1% | 27.8% | 55.6% | 11.5% | 100.0% |
| | White Other | Count | 0 | 1 | 7 | 1 | 9 |
| | | % within ethnicity | .0% | 11.1% | 77.8% | 11.1% | 100.0% |
| | Black | Count | 7 | 28 | 14 | 4 | 53 |
| | | % within ethnicity | 13.2% | 52.8% | 26.4% | 7.5% | 100.0% |
| | Asian | Count | 8 | 26 | 29 | 5 | 68 |
| | | % within ethnicity | 11.8% | 38.2% | 42.6% | 7.4% | 100.0% |
| | Asian Other | Count | 0 | 1 | 7 | 1 | 9 |
| | | % within ethnicity | .0% | 11.1% | 77.8% | 11.1% | 100.0% |
| | Mixed Race | Count | 2 | 24 | 18 | 1 | 45 |
| | | % within ethnicity | 4.4% | 53.3% | 40.0% | 2.2% | 100.0% |
| | Total | Count | 33 | 167 | 249 | 48 | 497 |
| | | % within ethnicity | 6.6% | 33.6% | 50.1% | 9.7% | 100.0% |

| Chi-Square Tests | Value | df | Asymp. Sig. (2-sided) |
|--------------------|---------------------|----|-----------------------|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 42.662 ^a | 15 | .000 |

a. 12 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .60.

Outlook on Life

Neither age, gender nor ethnicity were significant factors explaining different responses to the question: “I know what I want to achieve in life”.

Conclusion

The findings chapters have shown the interconnectedness of Layder’s four domains. In my study young people perceive themselves to have strong agency, feeling that they can influence decisions that affect their lives. However privileged positions together with opportunities (or lack of them through the constraints imposed by social organisations), define differences in perceptions of aspirations and opportunities. My study suggests that being trusted, a sense of reciprocity, being valued by adults and having significant adults in their lives underpin the conceptualisation of trust as ‘the leap of trust’. This is about the ability to take social risks, important to enhance social capital.

Situated activity refers to the kind of social interactions young people have. The findings from this study suggest that these interactions are complex and fluid. However certain patterns of social interaction emerged. The patterns of social interaction or network types were: area based networks, school/college based networks and locality based networks. Within these network types, ‘diversity’, as defined in bridging social capital (Putnam 2000), was not a salient characteristic of the social interaction of young people. Access to varied networks and openness to diversity is not only prevalent among young people from privileged positions but also among young people from less privileged positions. However overall young people like socialising with other young people, with whom they have strong bonds through shared commonalities and experiences.

Social settings were explored through the places where these social interactions take place. In many cases there was a positive interrelationship

between situated activity and setting. The school and the college emerged as important places where some young people enact their social capital. However it was especially young people contacted through the most deprived areas who had area based networks, and who whilst feeling safe on the street, felt less safe in the school. Contextual factors in shaping young people's social capital emerged throughout the research. Not only socio-economic factors but also gender and ethnicity infer that contextual inequalities have a strong impact on the access to social capital resources.

The next chapter will discuss these findings in the light of the social capital theory and the literature around youth and social capital, explored in chapters two and three. Throughout I will highlight my contribution to the theory and propose new insights for policy and practice development.

Chapter 9: Discussion

The difficulty, in sociology, is to manage to think in a completely astonished and disconcerted way about things you thought you had always understood.

Pierre Bourdieu

I would like to start this discussion with two quotes from young people. They reflect young people's views of navigating life and the importance of social capital as a means of enhancing their capacity to escape the confinement of static social networks:

....you get sick of the same place. If I was to stay round my house, because I've been round mine all my life you just say oh God, I want to get away, I want a change, I want to get away from this, I want to meet new people so you just go away. See new people, meet them, say hello, get their numbers and meet up again sometime.

(Int 17, White, male, aged 17)

You can't spend all your time with your family and you can't spend all your time with friends, it would just be too cramped all the time.

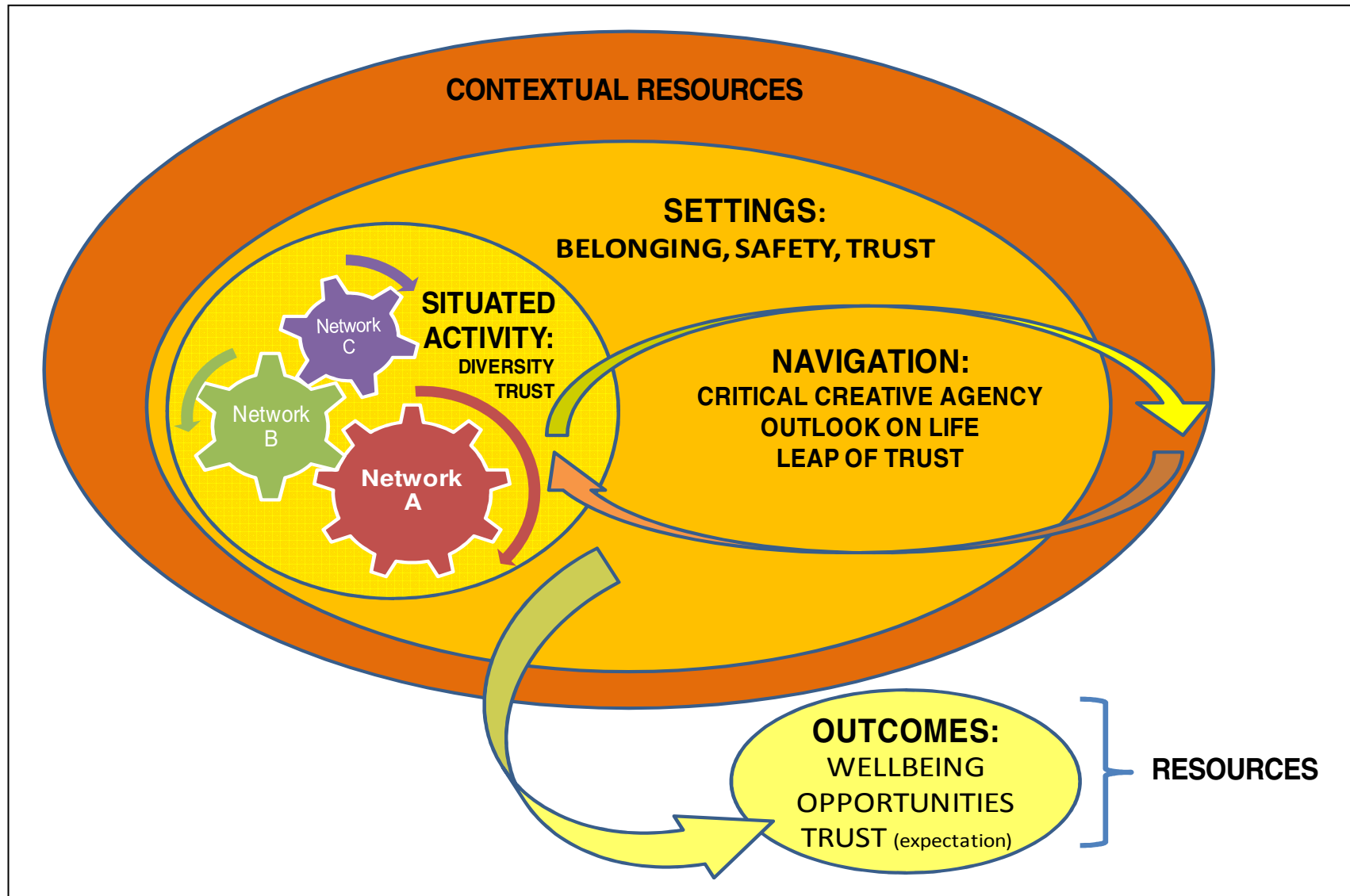
(DG 9, White male, aged 14)

As a means of taking the reader through the discussion, I have organised this chapter with the aid of a graphic representation. In order to discuss the complexity of the findings and layers of analysis, I will present each layer of the graphic and guide the reader through each step, drawing on my empirical evidence and the theoretical explorations.

Using Layder's (2006) research framework, I will start this chapter by discussing the situated activity and disentangling the importance of the network types, diversity and the interpretation of trust. Drawing on my

findings on gender, class and ethnicity I will argue that this discussion cannot be isolated from a contextual perspective. The next section will look at the situated activity and the social settings and explore their impact on the social capital formation. Throughout these first sections I will show the importance of the interaction between situated activity, settings and context. I will then consider young people's agency through a focus on the notion of 'critical' and 'creative' agency'. In the last section I will argue that the notion of bridging and bonding social capital cannot be applied unquestionably to young people's social capital. This discussion will finish with the applications of the discussions to youth policy and practice. The following diagram represents this discussion:

Diagram 9: Integrated Perspective on Social Capital



Young People's Situated Activity

Young people's social interactions are complex and fluid but as shown in my research, certain patterns of social interaction can be observed. The patterns of social interaction or network types which emerged were: area based networks, school/college based networks and locality based networks. On the surface it might seem that these network types mirror the settings in which they are forged and of course, to a certain extent, this is also what my chosen classification suggests. Young people's places in those localities and communities are not necessarily fixed and can be negotiated because of the intimate bond between situated activity and the social settings. However the negotiation or the ability to negotiate, is influenced by and shaped through the relationship young people have to the diverse settings they find themselves in:

“The nature of the reproduced relations, practices and social positions in these different settings vary considerably and have entirely different implications for the people and behaviours they are influenced by and also help to shape” (Layder 1998: 158).

Whilst recognising young people's embeddedness in these settings (Reay and Lucey 2000), this needs to be disentangled through a more layered conceptualisation by drawing on the domains of situated activity and settings (Layder 2006).

Situated activity refers to the kind of social interactions young people have and the settings are the places where these social interactions take place. The influence of social networks, place attachment and associated subjective geographies is recognised by academics (White and Green 2010, 2011; MacDonald and Marsh 2004, MacDonald et al. 2005). Whilst interlinked, both these domains of situated activity and social settings have explanatory power and should not be conflated. As explained in chapter four, conflation occurs when the identities of two or more concepts become confused until there seems to be only a single identity. Within the social capital literature situated

activity and settings tend to be made logically identical (central conflation), whilst within the domain theory it is argued that “social life comprises varying and distinctive characteristics, mutually interdependent and interlocking” Layder (1997: 2).

I theorise area based, group based and school/college based network types as situated activity, the domain where young people form their social capital networks and deal with their broader life situations (Layder 2006). The ‘area based networks’ have been considered in other youth research, especially related to more deprived areas (Raffo and Reeves 2000; MacDonald and Marsh 2001; Walther et al. 2005; Holland et al. 2007; Fram 2004). Alongside these previous studies my research confirms that generally within localised networks, young people tend to interact with other, similar young people and networks are based upon their immediate locale of the street, local park and home. The existence of more ‘group based networks’ as a salient network type is less recognised in the academic literature, but reflects some aspects of the work done by Reynolds (2006) and Holland et al. (2007). Group based networks are formed mainly around identity and interest groups and happen to a lesser extent within localities such as the street or the local park. Similar patterns emerge in the school/college based networks where young people tend to socialise at school, the college, or with their friends in each other’s houses.

It has been argued that the dynamics of meeting new friends through different groups enables young people to diversify their networks and new relationships are quite often key moments within this. Whilst some studies (e.g. Evans 2002; Walther et al. 2005; Holland et al. 2007) suggest that young people from poorer backgrounds are still denied access to different groups through their class position, they do not explore exactly what is meant by these different groups. Within my own research, ‘diversity’, as defined in bridging social capital (Putnam 2000), was not a salient characteristic of the

social interaction of young people. The findings of my research suggest that whilst young people might access a range of different groups and socialise with a diversity of young people, this does not imply that these are bridging networks. Even in these diverse groups, young people like socialising with other young people, with whom they have strong bonds through shared commonalities and experiences.

At this stage of the discussion, having explored the diversity within the situated activity, it is noticeable that the three network types emerge within my research as “objective network(s) of social relationships with those who are most closely implicated in their personal circumstances” (Layder 2006: 280). It is important to remember that whilst social capital is contingent on social networks, networks on their own do not constitute social capital (see chapter two) and social capital should not be treated as equivalent to or interchangeable with social networks (Lin 2008). Much of the literature focuses on young people’s transition to work and diversity is characterised as interacting with people beyond their immediate socio-economic and cultural horizon, who then might help to access diverse job opportunities. Based on the findings of this research I argue that this is not reflected within the situated activity of young people. As such, the concept of diversity in young people’s lives has to be disentangled, which I will do in a later section of this discussion where I explore more closely the notion of bonding and bridging social capital in young people’s lives.

Looking at all the three network types my research suggests that young people’s situated activity is characterised by strong bonds with family and other young people with whom they share similarities or commonalities. This is also akin to what Coleman (1997) would call ‘closure of networks’. Strong bonded networks are essential for young people to develop a sense of identity, trust and wellbeing. I found this especially reflected in the way young people talked about interpersonal trusting relationships.

The extent to which the young people identified themselves as part of certain network types reflected their constructs of trust within their own life experiences. They made clear distinctions between what it meant to trust their parents, their friends and, within this category, some special 'mates' or as it has been put by a young man, the 'true' friend and the 'just' friend.

A true friend is someone you can trust and just a friend is someone you can play with.

(DG 5.2, British Caribbean, male, aged 14)

Young people had greater difficulty in engaging in speculations about a generalised trust referring to the wider society. Overall, their responses drew on fluid understandings of trust but pointed more towards inter personal and situational aspects than social paradigms, i.e. trust as generalised expectation (this aspect of trust as expectation will be explored in the section within this discussion which will look at bridging and bonding social capital).

Following Moellering (2001) I investigated trust as 'interpretation', 'suspension' and 'expectation'. Relevant to the exploration of situated activity is the interpretation of trust. In short, 'interpretation' is how people give meaning to trust within their social interactions and the reasons why they might trust others. The 'interpretation' of trust becomes a distinguishing feature within the consideration of social capital as situated activity. However, networks might not always be based on a mutual understanding of trust.

The different types of trust which emerged were about socialising, being comfortable with each other and trusting that friends would not tell other people information which they regarded as confidential. There was also the element of a more 'protective trust', which was about not betraying trust or being deceitful. These conceptualisations of trust reflect Layder's description of the dynamics within the situated activity, which entails the mutual exchange of emotions and feelings. Young people do not only enter these encounters with "apparent intentions, objectives and purposes, but also with diffuse emotional needs that must, in part, be catered for within the

encounter” (Layder 2006: 279). In consequence, these encounters come with a heavy weight concerning the quality and meaning of relationships with family and friends (Gillies and Lucey 2006)

When focusing on trust, being trusted, having a significant adult in one’s life and being valued by adults, no differences were found between the different network types of young people’s social settings. This means that one cannot make assumptions about young people and their levels of trust and relationships with adults based solely on the situated activity. However, more young people with area based networks have protective types of trust and young people with school/college based networks refer to feeling comfortable with somebody. These differences in the types of trust will be discussed further when considering the social settings in which the situated activity takes place.

Social capital grows when supportive relationships are convertible into beneficial outcomes. The discussion of the situated activity so far especially points towards the ‘use value’ of young people’s social capital (Leonard 2008). Access to emotional satisfaction and trust within bonded social networks becomes a core feature of social capital within the domain of situated activity.

This is of special importance for youth policy and practice. If, as stated in chapter three, government social policy is seen as a mechanism through which opportunities are distributed to citizens (Wood 2009), it needs to build on the situated activity of young people and not erode it. Policy and practice interventions should support rather than punish young people and turn the spotlight away from young people’s networks as problems in themselves. This can be expressed through using Bourdieu’s analogy of the fish in the water (in Forbes and Wainwright 2001: 805). Area based, school based and group based networks are bonded networks which enable young people to be like fish in the water. The social interaction becomes a safe, familiar and

comfortable place³² to be, which gives many young people access to the use value of social capital. This conceptualisation of use value of social capital is encapsulated in the concept of situated activity which becomes an important mean where young people are able to fulfil their desire for “recognition, acceptance, inclusion, approval and other psychosocial reassurances in order that personal identity, security, self esteem and self value are affirmed and reaffirmed” (Layder 2006: 279). However, sometimes this situated activity can exert a strong hold which can also generate an equally strong desire to get out (McGrellis 2004). If we accept that at best this situated activity is not only important in terms of emotional support, but also crucial in giving people more opportunities, choice and power (Woolcock 2001) we have also to accept that at worst the absence of social ties can have a devastating impact, not only on the emotional wellbeing but also on undermining opportunities, choice and power.

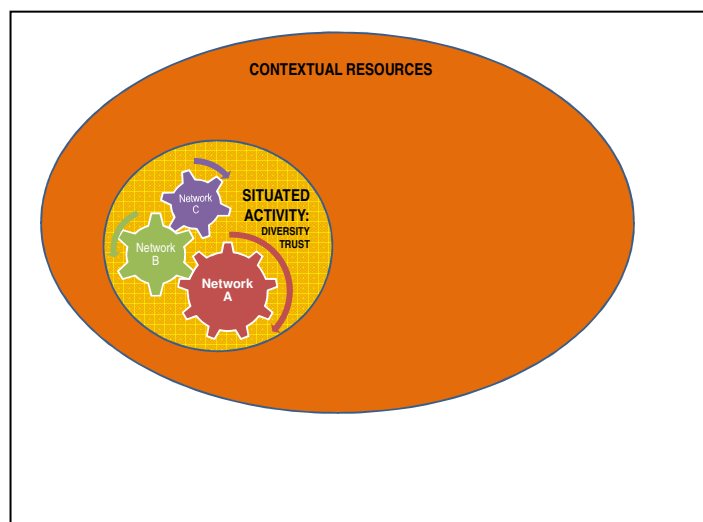
“Our usual response to the link between peer group influences and adolescent risk behavior is to shore up community- and school-based mechanisms of social control [...]. Seldom do we begin with the premise that peer relationships represent a vital segment of an adolescent social support system and that friendships with peers embody the potential to nurture healthy development and academic achievement in ways that adults would find hard to duplicate. Consequently, we rarely respond to adolescent risk behavior by shoring up or strengthening adolescents’ peer support network” (Stanton-Salazar and Spina 2005:380)

Whilst having referred in this section mainly to the “relatively independent influence of situated activity” (Layder 2006: 268) it is important to note that within the domain theory situated activity has a mediating role, which involves mutual reciprocal influences. The situated activity (network types) has distinct analytical power through which I have been able to develop different insights. This has been explored in the findings chapters and I will now proceed to look at the interrelationship between situated activity and social

³² Here I refer to the subjective views of young people. This does not imply that these interactions are always safe and comfortable, because conversely, young people quite often need to have the ability to negotiate tensions and problems.

settings which “are tightly bound together and cannot in any sense be understood as entirely separate from each other” (Layder 1998: 156). I will also discuss how the domain of contextual resources has an impact on these domains.

Throughout this discussion I have explored the first layer of my picture which shows the importance of diversity and trust within this situated activity, but also that this situated activity cannot be seen in isolation and has to be located within a wider contextual perspective.



Social Settings and Context:

Layder 1998 states that “Social settings and context represent the pre-existing circumstances which have developed historically and condition and influence contemporary (ongoing) activities” (p.157). The social domain of contextual resources represents the most encompassing feature of the social environment. One constituent element is a

“distributional aspect in which material resources are unevenly allocated and aligned with groupings such as those based on class, ethnicity, age, gender, status and so on. These furnish the immediate

socio-economic context of particular social settings (educational, occupational, domestic/familial, neighbourhood and so on) and their effects are felt and experienced in social activities and the inner mental lives of individuals” (Layder 2006: 281).

Whilst having discussed the relevance of young people’s relationships oriented toward the exchange of social support (see also Lin 2001; Stanton-Salazar 2001) the domain theory distinguishes this from the participation and social interaction within the social settings, that is, institutional context or grouping such as the school, neighbourhood. Interrelationships between situated activity and social settings are bound by contextual interpretations of trust and sense of belonging. This will be discussed in the next section.

Sense of Belonging, Safety and Trust

Feeling part of a collective community nurtures a sense of belonging and rootedness amongst young people. In chapter three, I have highlighted that it has been argued that the home, neighbourhood and the school are prominent sites for establishing a sense of belonging for children and young people (for example, see Reay and Lucey 2000; Hollingworth and Archer 2009). Within this sense of belonging, two elements were highlighted; one is that a person has a sense of feeling part of a group or environment and the other is that the person feels a sense of having influence and that he or she matters to the group. When people feel this kind of belonging and an attachment to a place they will be more likely to make friends within this environment (Schaefer-McDaniel 2004). As in these above mentioned studies, in my research, many young people described red to a quite restricted array of places which they felt they belonged to, referring mainly to their home, the neighbourhood and the school. Young people tend to draw their friendship circle from within these places of attachment and belonging, and the places in themselves become important spaces for ‘hanging out’ or having opportunities to access leisure activities. Within my research school and the street emerged as especially relevant for this sense of belonging.

As with Coleman (1988) who emphasizes the importance of the school as social structures that facilitate the development of social capital, in my research the school and the college emerged as important places where some young people enact their social capital. There was a positive interrelationship between situated activity and setting: the experiences young people have, especially at school, are strongly related to the type of networks they have. Young people with school/college and group based networks tended to feel that the educational establishment was a place where they felt they belonged to and safe. These young people tended also to have mostly positive school experiences, and even if they experienced difficulties whilst at school this did not hinder them from regarding school as positive overall. Bearing in mind that these young people did not feel safe in the city, town centre or in the local park, educational establishments become a foci for their social interactions. Thus this constructive interplay between the two domains might not only enhance academic performance and motivation, but contribute to the overall emotional well-being and the enhancement of social capital of young people (Osterman 2000; Willms 2003; Morrow 2004)

A lack of such a harmonious interplay is therefore worrying. The PISA³³ study 2000 (Willms 2003) asserts that there is a cohort of young people who have their friends at school, participate in academic and non-academic activities at school, and develop a sense of belonging and identity with schooling outcomes. In addition, there is also another group of young people who are not engaged and do not believe that their school experience has much bearing on their future, and they do not feel accepted by their classmates or teachers. In my study, young people who tend to have the most negative and the least enjoyable school experiences are those who also tend to have area

³³ PISA is an acronym taken from the "Programme for International Student Assessment". Responding to member countries' demands for regular and reliable data on the knowledge and skills of their students and the performance of their education systems, the OECD began work on PISA in the mid-1990s. PISA was officially launched in 1997, with the first survey taking place in 2000. All OECD member countries participated in this survey.

based networks. It was especially young people contacted through the YIP/YOTs who had area based networks, and who whilst feeling safe on the street, felt less safe in the school. Their sense of feeling unsafe was not only related to negative peer relationships but also for some young people negative experiences with their teachers.

Within discourses of blaming young people for their attitudes (Hine 2009), it might be argued that it is young people's disruptive behaviour which engenders hostility and in turn has a negative impact on the school. A discourse and culture of blame presents young people's resistance as the 'fault' of the individual pupil, the family, the community *or* the school which holds 'disruptive children', 'bad parents' or 'bad teachers' responsible. This ideology of individualism turns a blind eye to the structures and discourses that maintain inequalities which limits the possibilities for intervention and social change (Howarth 2004). In contrast to this blaming discourse, my research suggests that many young people who have area based networks might 'react' or 'resist' a school environment in which they are seen as troublemakers and outsiders. In Bourdieu's term, the school does not become their field where they can express and reproduce their dispositions, but the local area.

Perhaps this would be less of a problem if the local area and the neighbourhood became the alternative social setting for these young people. Many young people accessed through the most deprived areas, felt that their neighbourhood was important for them; however, paradoxically whilst socialising on the street and the local park, they not only felt detached from their neighbourhood but also excluded. This might lead to a territorial sense of belonging endorsed and reinforced by their peers, which weakens the belonging and integration into the wider community (Wood 2009). The creation of alternative communities is, in some cases, a reaction to the exclusion they feel in public space and from the wider world (Weller 2006; Morrow 2000; Valentine 2004). As such situated activity is enacted within a

social setting which in itself becomes exclusionary. Bearing in mind that in my research many of these young people also came from some of the most deprived areas and many are seen as being 'at risk', it does not come as a surprise that this group tends to have closed and tight networks.

This closeness is also reflected in the meaning of trust and the interrelationship between situated activity and settings. I have already mentioned that when considering situated activity and settings, more young people with area based networks and more young people accessed through YIP/YOTs have protective types of trust. Fewer young people with school and college based networks and less young people accessed through the Grammar School, refer to a protective trust and more to feeling comfortable with somebody. Through 'closing ranks' (Kintrea et al. 2008) I theorise that young people with a more protective type of trust might develop collaboratively the social and psychological resources to protect themselves against the prejudices of others and the exclusion from accessing formal and informal resources (Howarth 2002; Bottrell 2009; Thapar and Sanghera 2010).

Settings and the dynamics within these settings, become another layer through which the situated activity of young people needs to be considered. In this sense the distinction between situated activity and social settings can provide important insights. A sense of belonging to a certain place might also be a reaction to the alienation felt to another place: "Social settings themselves vary considerably, as do the wider class, gender and racialised contexts of these settings and the material, power and ideological basis of resource allocation which impact upon them" (Layder 1998: 158)

Experiences of schooling shape youth transitions, so therefore young people's accounts of school disaffection are worrying (MacDonald and Marsh 2004). One of the concerns emerging from the above considerations and from my own findings is how schools, as social organisations, address this

need of young people to have a positive sense of belonging to their school environment. My findings question whether schools might adopt organisational practices that “neglect and may actually undermine students' experience of membership in a supportive community” (Osterman 2000: 323). The importance of the school as a community for young people's lives is relevant especially when considering their situated activity. There is an emerging relationship between the situated activity (expressed through the network types), the settings (in the sense of shaping a sense of belonging) and the context. Whilst the school experiences seem to permeate situated activity and are also influenced by settings, it is noticeable that these reciprocal relationships are complex. What has been highlighted so far is that this relationship exists, but this does not mean that there is a linear causal relationship between these. Not all the young people accessed in deprived areas with negative school experiences have a protective type of trust, and some young people from the Grammar School feel alienated and excluded within their setting. This is why it is relevant to look at the subjective experiences of young people in the settings and not give the setting a single objective attribute.

Coleman's and Putnam's views on social capital and its embeddedness within neighbourhoods and schools, portrays not only an optimistic view of those communities, but also ideas which do not take into account the experiences of young people. Coleman and Putnam attribute to these social settings a heavy normative prerequisite which demands from the young people that they adapt and integrate into these settings. Putnam and Coleman mainly stress the benign functions of these settings, without looking at their darker side, or questioning the nature of these settings and how they might fail to create safe and positive spaces for young people to develop social capital. Bourdieu (1977) points to the processes of domination, and the dynamics of an interest-serving political economy with their normative constructions. Normative school and community discourses need to be questioned because they can serve the interests of particular groups with

particular political and ideological agendas, who seek to maintain the status quo through their status, persuasiveness, and control of resources.

In order for young people to integrate into institutionalised and normative frameworks of social settings, young people not only have to negotiate different types and levels of relationships, but also to develop a complex response to authority (Raffo and Reeves 2000). Bourdieu's formulation of social capital accounts for the tensions young people can experience when they encounter adversity within social settings. Whilst resisting power and domination in one field they might express complicity in another field (Moncrieffe 2006). However as a consequence, those young people who fit or integrate into social settings, such as the school or college, will find themselves in privileged positions to accumulate social capital, enhancing their positions and opportunities, over those who do not integrate or those who are excluded.

Developing further the impact of the context, it is clear that gendered differences are also relevant within the consideration of the sense of belonging and feelings of safety. Young women tend to have a strong sense of belonging to the school through their school based networks, with more young men, in contrast, socialising within area based networks. These differences between young women and young men are also reflected in the finding that young women tend to feel safer at school than young men, and young men tended to feel safer in their local areas, on the street and in the parks. Morrow (2006) asserts that this lack of safety leads some young people, especially young women, to experience constraints on how they can develop networks through freely moving around and participating in activities with their friends. I would argue that whilst this might be the case for area based socialising overall, as explored in the previous section, women tend to have more dynamic types of social capital especially within the school environment. Considering that "issues of safety are one of the most difficult hurdles women have to overcome to develop trust of others in society

compared to men” (Morrow 2006:141), women must be resilient and strong to overcome these hurdles. Perhaps this can also be explained by the fact that in terms of social capital, it is not the type and variety of the network which counts but the access to resources that these networks give to young people.

The differences between young women and young men highlighted in the previous section infer that contextual gendered inequalities have a strong impact on the access to resources and need to be acknowledged. Both Putnam and Coleman’s discussions of social capital have been described as ‘gender blind’ and it is on this aspect that Bourdieu’s (1986) work is better in acknowledging the inter-relationship between social capital and wider structural factors in society. These findings would suggest, in line with Holland (2007), that young women and young men might utilise social capital in different ways and thus the resources which are being derived from it might also be of a different type.

I would also like to draw here on Thomson et al.’s (2003) work. They assert that there might be a tension between the conflicting discourses young people receive: on one hand, a discourse concerning social mobility within ‘neo-liberalist’ ideals of individual gain and success (Hughes 2000), and on the other hand, a discourse on cohesion. This discourse is rooted in a quest for social integration through “associative principles of a commitment to the collective good’ (Delanty 2003: 192) within frameworks of loyalty, participation, solidarity and commitment (Selznick 1992). Thomson et al. (2003) argue that the tension between these two discourses is experienced acutely by young women. This might explain in part why the dynamism of young women’s social capital might not give them the same access to resources as young men’s, more static bonded social capital. I finish this section with Gidengil and O’Neill’s (2006) highly appropriate assertion for my discussion:

“Once a gender perspective is applied, it becomes clear that social capital is imbued with gender inequalities and gendered hierarchies. This in turn, raises larger questions about the ways in which social inequalities in general affect both the accumulation and the investment of social capital” (p.5).

Negative experiences within a setting may lead to seeking alternative settings in which to develop situated activity. However sometimes young people might not have the agentic power to develop an exit strategy from a setting and therefore the situated activity within that setting could become insular, inward looking and protective. These interrelationships need to be framed recognising the positive and negative impact the context will have on them. Following a critical realist perspective these reciprocal relationships should not be treated as a relationship between separate events i.e. cause and effect, or as the product of any single cause, but rather of the interaction of multiple causes Byrne (2009).

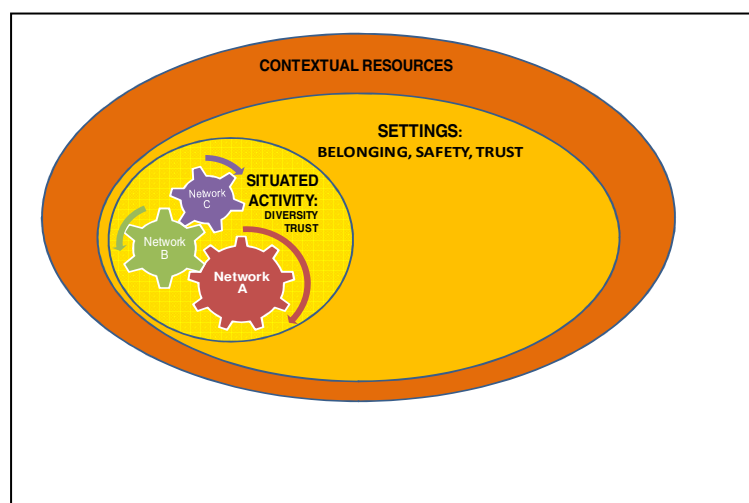
Policy and Practice

The settings emerge as an important layer to be taken into account in policy and practice interventions. It would be very easy to overlook the distinguishing properties of settings and social activities (Layder 1998). This section has discussed how settings shape young people’s social capital. Thus, apart from taking into account young people’s situated activity, practitioners have to reflect whether their organisation becomes a setting which reproduces exclusionary norms and values, which the young people have rejected in the first place. On the other hand they might just replicate those norms and values within which young people already operate and this could hinder them in accessing resources.

A careful balance has to be reached and obviously there is no clear cut solution. Interventions with young people (both seen at risk or posing a risk as explored in the policy section of chapter three) have tended to emphasize human capital (for example skill acquisition, correct thinking). What Ryan

(1976 in Howarth 2004) asserted is still relevant, an “ideology of blaming the victim [...] becomes a primary barrier to effective social change” (p.xv). At its most basic, this can result in skill acquisition for employment, but no access to the networks or opportunities that promote or maintain access to the labour market. By only focusing on the ‘rehabilitation’ and ‘integration’ of the individual, the social problem is left unsolved.

Throughout this discussion I have explored the second layer of my picture which shows the importance of the settings and their impact on the enhancement of social capital. Within this study this was considered through a focus on the sense of belonging, with a consideration of the school experience and safety. I have also shown how contextual factors shape the dynamics of social capital.



Critical Creative Agency

Young people’s bounded agency (Evans 2002) recognises the restrictive but also enabling powers young people encounter within the domains of situated activity, settings and context. I refer to positive and negative boundedness focusing not only on structural constraints, but also on practice settings and contexts of privilege (Bourdieu 1986). Staying stagnated, rebelling against,

integrating or taking advantage of, are all aspects which are part of the processes of negotiation within the different domains. This sees the social actor as a navigator, navigating not only uncertain and unpredictable decisions in an uncertain world (Beck 1992, 2000), but also a world with opportunities in which young people have to use their adaptability and resourcefulness (Bradley and Devadason 2008).

Navigating life transitions is seen (as highlighted in the literature review) as trying to cope, manage and make informed choices in everyday life circumstances. Within this, how young people enhance social capital and access the resources that are so important for them becomes an important question. Embedding this question within a policy and practice perspective I argue that the process of enhancing young people's social capital has to be rooted within an empowering agentic process. Thus empowerment in the form of enhanced social capital requires "the appropriation of power by young people beyond just knowledge of the source of their disempowerment to opportunities to engage in activities to change their situation" (Chawla and Malone 2002:129). There are two elements to this, the creation of knowledge, and change. This recognises young people as active, valid and valued social agents who contribute to the creation of environments where they can enhance and nurture dynamic social capital. Integral to this is the creation of opportunities and the opening up of new spaces, where they can participate in the ongoing policy development and social and physical planning of their neighbourhoods and cities (Chawla and Malone 2002).

The enhancement of dynamic social capital is one of the factors (amongst economic, political, cultural) that will give young people power to support their ability to navigate the challenges of everyday life. This power and empowerment - with its policy and practice implications is discussed within this section through a focus on agency. Two aspects of agency emerged in this study: critical agency and creative agency. Young people's critical creative agency, with a positive outlook on life and being able to make the

leap of trust will be referred to as mediating processes. I will discuss how in my study these three aspects refer to young people's own individual powers to navigate life situations and take the necessary risks to develop dynamic social capital, have aspirations, and engage in practices which are outside of their safety zone.

From 'Subjective Agency' to 'Critical Agency'

I have argued that the consideration of structure and agency is central to this study. Some scholars argue that bounded horizons (Green and Owen 2006; Green and White 2008) and bounded agency (Evans 2002), are seen as appropriate concepts focusing on the interplay between structure and agency. However rather than focusing on a dualistic approach to agency and structure, Layder (1997, 2006) points towards a multi layered approach of more dynamic interrelationship between the self (perception of agency), situated activity, settings and context. This insight is of relevance within this study, especially when considering how young people's subjective agency contributes towards the maintenance, enhancement and mobilisation of social capital. A crucial element in exploring the underlying mechanisms of this is the context within which certain causal mechanisms might or might not operate (Layder 1998; Sayer 2003).

In my study young people perceive themselves to have strong agency, feeling that they can influence decisions that affect their lives. In terms of social capital as 'situated activity', more young people with area based networks consider that they are in charge of their lives and that they can influence decisions that affect their lives. Thus, where young people interact and build their networks will contribute to shaping their subjective perception of agency. Other influencing mechanisms are the socio economic contexts. It is particularly the young people accessed through some of the most deprived neighbourhoods within this study, who tend to have the highest sense of agency and influence.

Nevertheless within the whole sample of this study, young people like to view themselves as fairly independent and not too prone to peer pressure. They also generally felt that they knew what they wanted to achieve in life. These findings can be interpreted as highlighting the potential mismatch between the relatively optimistic views of young people, and the restrictions they actually may face due to their social and economic background (Holland 2007; Furlong and Cartmel 2007). Conversely these findings also indicate that not only structural factors, but also situated activity has a strong impact on the subjective sense of agency. As indicated in the first section of this discussion, policy and practice interventions should build on young people's situated activity and turn the spotlight away from young people's networks as problems in themselves.

Young people's perceived agentic power challenges discourses of young people being perceived as passive consumers of civic life (Ginwright et al. 2005) and powerless. Staples (1990: 30) identifies key themes in empowerment as: 'participation of people in their own empowerment', 'the importance of recognising existing competencies' and 'building on individual and collective strengths'. Empowerment is the process by which power is developed or gained by the powerless themselves. It has been argued that this would mean for young people that they get the opportunity to break "the internal bridles and perceived powerlessness which underpin their sense of self and guide their actions in the world" (Young 1990: 88). However, as already mentioned this is in conflict to how young people see themselves: 'powerlessness' is not, as suggested in this research, the predominant feeling of young people. Adult perceptions of powerlessness should not be transposed to young people's perceptions of their own agency.

Young people's strong sense of individual agency, especially that of young people from more deprived areas should not be treated as a delusion or discarded as something totally subjective and irrelevant. The danger here is

to further emphasise discourses on troubled youth and young people as victims or problems, rather than as competent agents (Checkoway et al. 2003: 298). Whilst on one hand there is a view that young people experience vulnerability (Young 1990) there is also, what some scholars would call “the social construction of vulnerability” (Ford and Smit 2004; Faulkner 2004; Armstrong 2002). By defining young people as vulnerable, adults might be in danger of taking away young people’s agency and in so doing constructing power relations with adults as stronger “protectors” or “trying to represent their voice” (Liamputtong 2007: 27). Adopting a strength perspective³⁴ (Saleebey 1996), static area based social capital, which nurtures a high subjective sense of agency and influence, should be considered as an important agentic coping mechanism. Through developing strong protective networks some young people react and protect themselves against the experiences of exclusion within the school and the neighbourhood.

Discourses of powerlessness and vulnerability can be used to impose top down interventions upon young people seen as powerless and ‘at risk’ (see policy section in chapter three), and therefore in need of adult guidance and protection (Johnny 2006), without the ability to make decisions for themselves. A more empowering approach is needed when considering the policy and practice implications of this research. The ‘non-actualised perceived power’ should be transformed into ‘actualised real power’. Within this the young person’s own perception of agency should not be dismissed and youth empowerment would entail enhancing a critical consciousness towards structural constraints. This should not diminish young people’s belief in their capacity to act and have a voice, but needs to be realistic about potential barriers, as revealed in the differing perceptions of agency between young people from more affluent areas and those from more deprived areas. In the same vein Ginwright and Cammarota (2002) propose a model within the field of youth development work which shifts the attention from individual

³⁴ The strengths perspective emphasizes the individual’s capacities, talents, competencies, possibilities, visions and hopes

and psychological frameworks (see also Lister 2007, 2007b), to a contextual lens which focuses on larger socio-political and economic factors that contribute to everyday youth struggles.

Consciousness raising is seen by critical realism as a key strategy for tackling oppression (Houston 2001). Through this, critical agency (consciousness) and social action (praxis) enable young people to explore the causes of personal, community and social issues and act towards addressing these. This empowerment practice seeks to offer young people the chance to try out and experience new ways of influencing their life chances through transforming power relationships, looking to share power between workers and service users and challenging both to use it non-oppressively (Mullender and Ward 1991). This points towards Lister's (2005) assertion that citizenship agency is not simply about the capacity to act and choose, but it is also about a conscious and critical capacity, which is important to the individual's self-identity. Rather than only stressing 'bounded agency', the exploration around subjective agency calls for the need to nurture 'critical agency'.

Unleashing Young People's 'Creative Self'

Giddens (1986) in his model of structuration views people's life opportunities and life chances as not predefined by the structure, but as reproducing the structure through being part of the socialisation processes. Agency is seen as people having the capacity to change things and to rise above, to challenge and to change the structure which oppresses and disadvantages them. Whereas Giddens speaks of the 'transformative capacity' of human agents, Layder (2006) points out that a generic notion of such transformative agentic capacity fails to acknowledge the "great variations in the strengths of such personal capacities" (p.276). Thus, Heaphy (2009) asserts that Giddens articulates possibilities that are only open to a privileged few.

Exploring the aspirations of the young people accessed through YIPs and YOTs and young people accessed through the Grammar School, privileged positions together with opportunities (or lack of them through the constraints imposed by social organisations), define differences in perceptions of aspirations and opportunities. As a reminder, over half of the young people contacted through YIP/YOT's do not have concrete aims for the future, whilst 87% of the young people contacted through the Grammar School see themselves in further education and pursuing a concrete career - compared to only 5% of young people from YIP/YOTs. This stark difference not only points towards structural constraints, but also to practices of privilege which shape young people's aspirations and outlook on life (Bourdieu 1986).

It has been argued (Aguilera 2002) that a limited outlook on life is compounded by membership of a tight network of similar persons. This might be true, but within my research tight networks are prevalent within privileged and less privileged young people. Context and settings, not the situated activity, have a stronger impact on young people's outlook on life. In consequence, it is those young people who do not have access to social capital resources through their privileged position who will be under more pressure to overcome the constraints experienced through social settings and contexts (Raffo and Reeves 2000; Webster et al. 2004).

Referring to what has been said in chapter one, I would like to reiterate that there is a view that young people do not construct their biography in linear or in clearly defined ways (Threadgold and Nilan 2003). Young people constitute themselves within a fluidity of opportunities and moments of consumption "producing all manner of indeterminate domains and possibilities of identity" (Vaughan 2005: 181). It is undeniable that there are constraints and variations in the strengths of young people's capacities (Layder 2006) and many possibilities that some young people take for granted are only open to a privileged few (Heaphy 2009). I would argue that young people need to be creative and take risks to navigate the complexities

and contradiction between positions, possible identities and identifications, and the access to, and possession and maintenance of, various forms of capital: economic, cultural and social (Walkerdine 2003). Thus, the 'creative agency' encapsulates this creativity and risk taking and focuses on the resiliency developed by young people (Titterton 1992).

It has been argued that an important aspect of the enhancement of a dynamic social capital is for young people to develop and engage in practices which are outside of their safety zone. This is not just about the 'size and density' of the network but also about the resources that the network brings (Halpern 2005). Whilst unequally distributed resources - personal, social and material - partially explain young people's differential ability to navigate life and enhance their social capital, some young people are resilient and draw upon a range of resources to manage their lives. They not only 'absorb the shock' but also 'bounce back' producing relatively good outcomes despite adversity (Boeck and Fleming 2010). Young people enhance resilience through their 'creative agency' enabling them to respond to the challenges they may face. The agency of young people is seen as a predominantly individual, process of social engagement and as a creative and proactive input from young people as individuals to the dynamic processes of transition and change (Furlong and Cartmel 2007).

Two important aspects which support this creative agency emerged in my study: a more positive and focused outlook on life and the leap of trust. The need for diverse and wider ranging networks, a sense of belonging to a wider locale, and a focused and active outlook on life is well recognised and has been explored in the literature review. A 'pessimistic outlook' is related to the lack of trust in others, early in life (Uslaner 2002), and young people who exhibit a pessimistic outlook on life are more prone to experience hopelessness and depression which often leads them to withdraw from social activity (Romer et al. 2009). This is very much reflected in the accounts of the young people in my research, within what Brannen (2002) has referred to as

the model of deferment: young people consider adulthood in vaguer, more abstract terms. This deferment was underpinned by a more negative outlook on life with an individualistic explanation of personal failures coupled with a sense of being stuck. Following Brannen's theorisation I would argue these young people live very much in the present and orientate themselves to their present status as young people because they feel that they do not have clear exit strategies. As a result they tended to conform to their present situation with a diminished hope for change, related to a certain apathy and sense of boredom. They make assumptions about adulthood upon an unquestioning acceptance that it will resemble their parents' lives, with a fear of being disappointed if they were aiming for something they would not be able to achieve it.

Within this research, deferment was very much adopted or lived by those young people who experienced also marginalisation and exclusion. This marginalisation deprives young people of social support systems, implying the need for creative responses to constructing their own identities and support networks (Heaphy 2009). Conforming to present situations, feeling stuck, individual explanations of personal failure will all hamper the creativity needed for young people to navigate the complexities and uncertainties of life. Many of these young people had a high sense of subjective agency and drawing on the notion of 'bounded solidarity', I speculate whether they responded to their experience of marginalisation and exclusion within the school and neighbourhood through the creation of distinctive personal and support relationships. As noted in the literature review, 'bounded solidarity' is a notion which was already developed in the writings of Marx and Engels (1848) and has been used within the social capital literature (Portes 1998). According to Marx 'bounded solidarity' is the emergence of a common consciousness when groups identify with each other and support each others' initiatives. Applied to the understanding of social capital it highlights that within privileged groups, this bounded sociability can be the source for

socioeconomic ascent and development, but amongst less privileged groups it can have exactly the opposite effect (Portes 1998).

Another group of young people echo what Brannen (2002) refers to as the model of predictability, in which young people's orientations are not dissimilar to traditional assumptions about jobs for life. This predictability was underpinned by a more positive outlook on life. Young people had a strong sense of wanting to achieve things in their life which was fuelled by the aspirations and the example of their parents. This very much reflects Brannen's assertion that these young people tend not to construct individualised pathways into adulthood; they rely on the support and encouragement from parents. Their outlooks become somehow an extension of that of their parents and the sense of ambition was underpinned by a hope for social mobility.

This conformist outlook was not only prevalent among young people in more privileged positions but also people from less privileged positions. Thus both groups have similar localised outlooks. A more conformist outlook may mean that many young people do not consider opportunities beyond their immediate experience of their neighbourhood or home town, or opportunities that are different from those conventionally followed by their parents or local people. Within this there is also a strong reliance of family and friends in shaping aspirations and intentions in education, training and the labour market. This is not only the case for young people who live in deprived areas (Green and White 2007, 2008), but also of young people from more privileged backgrounds and reflects my discussion around bridging and bonding social capital.

The drive of young people and their sense of having something to aim for, was often linked to a sense of ambition and hope for betterment embedded within well defined contexts. It has been argued that this is rooted within the young person's practical situated knowledge base and that of their social

networks (Raffo and Reeves 2000). My research suggests that this personal sense of outlook on life is more shaped by the social settings and the context and enacted within young people's situated activity, but not necessarily shaped by their situational activity. At first glance this might contradict the findings of other research which asserts that social networks and place attachment shape aspirations and intentions in education, training and the labour market (Green and White 2007; Green and White 2008)³⁵. It is important to consider wider-ranging structural uncertainties (Yates 2008) which inevitably will shape the context in which young people form and pursue aspirations. Translated into the social capital perspective, this means that the way in which young people form their networks and how they are being expanded do not, per se, have an impact on their personal sense of outlook on life. It is the context and settings which have a stronger impact on it.

As a result, it is those young people who do not have access to social capital resources through their privileged position who will need to develop a creative agency within a model of adaptability. This is about encouraging young people to view the future as a risk to be embraced, calculated and controlled, and perhaps even a positive challenge. Young people should be encouraged to try out what Vaughan (2003, 2005) refers to as 'milling and churning'. The OECD has described this as,

"the process of moving between a diverse set of activities, only one of which is work, before settling into permanent work: unemployment; labour market programmes; out of the labour force; back into education for short spells; part-time jobs; brief full-time jobs" (2000: 76 in Vaughan 2003).

Some young people may quite deliberately try to postpone the development of work identities in favour of other identities. However this requires young people to be able to take risks. Trusting adults emerges as highly relevant in terms of access to support and enabling young people to negotiate difficult

³⁵ This is only so, because the literature does not tend to make a clear distinction between situated activity and settings (as it was also highlighted in the first section of this discussion).

life situations. Trusting adults, expressed as relating to adults who were seen as being professional or having an expertise was highlighted by young people in my study. This is also seen in Walther et al's (2005) and Vaughan's (2005) studies on the navigation of life. Kemshall (2002a) highlights the importance of meaningful interactions especially for young people 'at risk', and her warning that the absence of meaningful relationships is often experienced by 'young people at risk' in their encounters with professional institutions is especially important for policy intervention.

In the discussion of situated activity, I have referred to Fucuyama's (2001) notion of 'in-group solidarity', which "reduces the ability of group members to co-operate with outsiders..." (p.9). In this section, I would like to refer to Coleman's (1988) and Kilpatrick et al's (2003) view on the closure of networks which gives strength to social capital and enables people to move to develop bridging ties that serve mutual action. This seems to be especially relevant for young people: they need a good foundation of bonded relationships with strong trust which allow them to move on and take social risks. What this means and how this happens is better explored through the notion of suspension of trust.

Suspension is the 'leap' of trust and can be described as what happens between interpretation and expectation. "The challenge is to grasp what, from the point of view of the trustor, constitutes ignorance or the 'unknowable'" (Moellering 2001: 416). According to Moellering (2001) this exploration of the 'unknown' is to a certain extent a contradiction in terms; because it looks at what respondents know that they do not know. In this section I depart from Moellering by trying to understand what constitutes the 'knowable' and what is the context in which the known operates. My reasoning for this is as follows: if we understand the context in which trust operates and what constitutes for young people the 'knowable', we will be able to understand what they are looking for or expecting in the 'unknowable'. This was

investigated by drawing on an understanding of how suspension is related to situated activity and settings.

Trust as ‘the leap of trust’ is about taking social risks; people need to feel confident that others will respond as expected and will act in mutually supportive ways, or at least that others do not intend harm (Field 2008). My study suggests that being trusted, a sense of reciprocity, being valued by adults and having significant adults in their lives are strongly related to each other. These findings reflect Uslaner’s (2002) exploration in his book “The Moral Foundations of Trust” in which he seeks to explain why people place their faith in strangers. The question of ‘why’ and ‘how’ are core questions in the exploration of the leap of trust. As in Uslaner who argues that trust does not depend upon personal experience, or on interacting with people in civic groups or informal socializing, in my study there was no relationship between trust as suspension and the network types of young people. Uslaner also places a strong emphasis on learning to trust from parents and that this depends on an optimistic world view. The importance of parents has also been highlighted by the young people in my study and within this the recurring reference to trusting the mother, something which was common in the accounts of the young people from all sectors in this research. This reflects the findings from Morrow (2006) and Park et al. (2004) that parents are important sources of help for young people.

Significant adults who are consistently positive and emotionally supportive (Dallos and Comley-Ross 2005) play an important role for young people to take the leap of trust. One element within the encounters of young people with parents and significant adults, which is overlooked by studies on trust within the social capital debate, is the relevance to young people of ‘being trusted’ by adults. My findings suggest that it is not only the trust which young people have towards significant adults, but also the trust given to young people by adults which is key for enhancing social capital. Being trusted becomes significant in breaking cycles or dispositions of mistrust. “Trusting

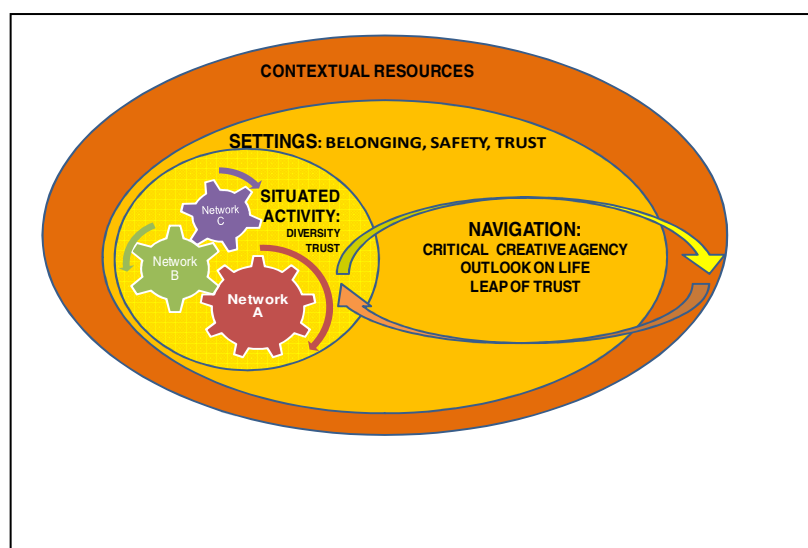
and being trusted create relations, important relations that enhance trustworthiness. Furthermore, when one is trusted, one finds it easier to trust others” (Applebaum 2005: 451). Trust is also about taking social risks, positive reciprocal (trust and being trusted) relationships with adults and other young people will enable young people to take these social risks. This reciprocal nature of the processes of trust might help to address some of the problematic relationships, not only between young people and adults in their neighbourhoods (Morrow 2002a), but also in other social settings.

The findings of this research challenge the individualised notion of young people’s pathways and highlight that there is a mismatch between the relatively optimistic views of young people, and the restrictions they actually may face due to their social and economic background. This has come to light especially when considering young people’s outlook on life and their access to support, which in this research has been considered as support from significant adults and family and friends. Whilst recognising that personal resources (human capital) and social resources (e.g. social capital) are key components to acting and accessing different opportunities, I would argue that the missing link for the enhancement of social capital is trust and ‘being trusted’.

In chapter two I have pointed out that within Bourdieu’s theorisation of habitus, there is no room for non-professional critical and transformative agency (Bohman 2000). This critical assessment is especially pertinent when considering the agency of young people and Bohman (2000) calls for alternative conceptualisations of agency. Throughout this discussion, I have explored how ‘critical creative agency’ within a process of enhancing ‘outlook on life’ and taking the risk to make ‘the leap of trust’ are important mediating processes between the different layers or domains explored in the previous sections. Recognising the interplay between the different domains, the critical and creative young person is aware of contextual constraints but is not left alone to deal with them. Enhancing young people’s existing social capital is

achieved by strengthening their existing support networks, opening up new horizons and creating access to new resources within a strength perspective.

At this point of the discussion I have explored the next layer of my integrated perspective on social capital: navigation. This is shown in the following graph. The next section will consider structural inequalities disentangle some aspects of the 'bridging and bonding' social capital debate.



Bridging and Bonding Social Capital

This section discusses whether the notion of bridging social capital can be applied unquestionably to young people's social capital. It has been argued that the heterogeneity in network relationships are relevant to young people's lives because they provide a diversity of resources, experiences and qualities (Walther et al. 2005), with informal contacts being more effective in the search for jobs than training or education Webster et al. (2004). Weller (2007), Holland et al. (2007) and White and Green (2011) question the usefulness of narrowly using the distinction between bonding and bridging

social capital in young people's lives. The tensions, fluidity and interwoven nature of these different types of social capital can be very complex.

Diversity and Structural Inequalities

Diversity of networks and its benefits is explored within social capital conceptualisations through the consideration of bridging social capital (Putnam 2000; Gittell and Vidal 1998; Schuller et al. 2000; Evans and Syrett 2007). This is seen as 'getting ahead' in life, which is contrasted with 'bonding social capital' which is seen as 'getting by'. Drawing on these concepts, research into youth transitions (Walther et al. 2005) consider bridging social capital as essential because it contains exit options from an individual's social origins. As explored in the literature reviews, tightly bonded localised networks, especially in deprived areas, have limitations because the transitions into the labour market within the reach of these networks are often restricted (Walther et al. 2005: 230; Raffo 2006; Raffo and Reeves 2000; MacDonald 1998).

Something these studies do not explore is whether the networks of young people from more privileged and affluent backgrounds extend beyond the immediate context of their everyday lives. In my research this was examined especially through taking into account the situated activity, setting and context of young people's lives, exploring the difference between having diverse networks and having a positive attitude to diversity. Whilst many young people had a positive attitude toward diversity, they tended to have fairly homogeneous networks (Lin 2001) with similar normative frameworks. There were only minor differences between the settings where young people were accessed (i.e. YIP/YOT, youth groups, College or Grammar School). Young people accessed through youth groups and through the Grammar School had the most varied networks. The research also suggests that area based networks do not imply a negative attitude towards diversity and

belonging to different groups is not necessarily linked to higher attitudinal or actual diversity.

Neither the different network types (situated activity) nor the different organisations (settings) have shown that young people's socio-geographical structure of networks extends beyond the immediate context of everyday life. Bridging or heterogeneity of social networks is not, within my study, the domain of young people from more affluent backgrounds as represented by young people accessed through the Grammar School. Within educational settings individuals interact with a large and diverse set of individuals but these high levels of social interaction may not easily translate into access to resources and into relations of social support (Stanton-Salazar and Urso Spina 2005). Additionally in my study openness to diversity (as an attitude) and being part of a variety of groups of friends does not necessarily mean that young people belong to heterogeneous networks.

Access to varied networks and openness to diversity is not only prevalent among young people from privileged positions but also among young people from less privileged positions and was reflected through the group based networks of young people's situated activity. The analysis of the situated activity (and within this its access to contextual resources) was far from clear cut, especially when considering that the most varied networks were reported by young people contacted through youth groups and through the Grammar School and the least varied networks were those described by young people contacted through the College and YIP/YOTs. These findings question the clear cut division between bridging and bonding social capital in young people's lives. Strong bonding social capital is seen to provide young people with a strong sense of belonging, security and safety (use value), but also with few opportunities for interactions with people who might be able to help them to gain access to material, cultural or social resources (exchange value). This does not explain why young people from privileged backgrounds with strong bonded social capital have more access to resources, which

points towards the relevance of contextual resources rather than the situated activity per se.

The gendered nature of young people's openness to diversity is also noticeable. In the survey young women were more positive towards diversity and more of them tended to interact with a diverse group of friends. Thus it cannot be argued that openness to diversity necessarily leads to more bridging social capital and more access to resources. If this was really the case, young women would have far more access to resources than young men. This challenges the traditional views that posit differences between "homophilous" and "heterophilous" interactions (Lin 2001: 46–54; also termed "bonding" and "bridging" ties by Putnam 2000) as core social capital processes that sustain stratification. What diversity actually means and how it is being used within the social capital discourse needs a more careful consideration. I will do this through a discussion of trust.

Trust tends to be closely related to bonding and bridging social capital. Putnam (1993: 170-171) argues that "trust lubricates cooperation" and that the more we connect with people we will also trust them and vice versa. This was explored in my research through the standard question within the social capital analysis, which is 'would you say that most people can be trusted'? Further exploration of 'generalised trust' was conducted by looking at the radius of trust based on the theorisation of trust that 'not trusting people one doesn't know' is a sign of a narrow radius of trust (Uslaner 2002, 2003).

If generalised trust was an indicator for bridging social capital, young people with high levels of generalised trust would have needed to have significantly different network types to those young people who have lower levels of generalised trust. My research suggests that generalised trust shows no difference within any of the bridging or bonding social capital indicators of the survey questionnaire. In addition to this, considering that the generalised trust of young people who have area based, group based and school/college

based networks is not significantly different to each other, points towards the argument that there is no clear argument for a distinct bridging and bonding theorisation of social capital within young people's situated activity.

Whilst generalised trust is important for the enactment of social capital Moellering (2001) asserts that this expectation of trust is not the same as social capital. I would also like to refer to the 'trust' debate discussed in the literature review. What Fucuyama (2001) refers to as groups with a 'narrow radius of trust', which have a higher 'in-group solidarity' and which "reduces the ability of groups' members to co-operate with outsiders" (p.9), cannot be explored with the traditional question around generalised trust, nor with exploration around 'the unknown' (radius of trust, expectations). More appropriate here is the notion of interpretation of trust and young people's abilities to make the leap of trust, or in other words to take the social risk of trust which is theorised by Moellering (2001) as the 'leap of trust'.

This leads me to conclude that instead of focusing on bridging and bonding social capital in young people's situated activity, I would theorise it as 'static' or 'dynamic' social capital. More static social capital is characterised by a more protective trust and there is less openness to diversity which would explain the 'in-group solidarity' referred to by Fucuyama (2001). More dynamic social capital is characterised by a less inward looking trust and there is more openness to diversity. As such, bonded networks of young people themselves are more complex than previous research has considered. In some instances strong bonding social capital provides the resources to bridge and in others, they might hinder this process (MacDonald et al. 2005). Bonded social capital in itself can be seen as either more dynamic or more static.

The impact networks might have on access to resources, has to be reconsidered through taking into account the context. That young women tend to have more dynamic social capital than young men, puts into question

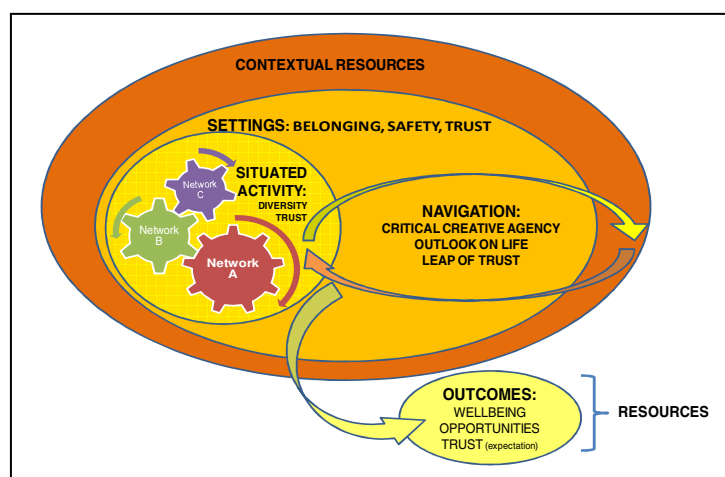
some of the theorisations behind bridging social capital and its assumed access to resources. The impact of young people's privileged positions was reflected by the Grammar School being the setting in which most young people had high levels of generalised trust. It is also notable the impact ethnicity has on the levels of generalised trust: more White British young people have high levels of generalised trust followed by Asian young people and Mixed Race young people. Far fewer Black young people had high levels of generalised trust. All these accounts reflect Uslaner's (2002, 2003) assertion that inequality is generally the strongest determinant of trust, with people of more privileged positions having higher levels of generalised trust.

When considering young people's social capital, a careful distinction needs to be made between: attitudes towards diversity, the diversity of the networks themselves and the access to resources these will give to young people. Homophilous interactions might be less helpful for getting ahead (Fram 2004) for young people in less privileged positions with a more inward looking and a static social capital. However I would argue that young people in privileged positions might have homophilous interactions within bonded social capital, which are helpful in getting ahead because of their privileged access to the exchange value of social capital resources. Similarly positioned others are likely to have spare and diverse resources to offer (use and exchange value) if their privileged positions gives them access to resources.

The focus on the situated activity, settings and contextual resources helps to understand some of the dynamics underlying the social capital formation. I would argue that this refers to the enactment of social relationships within settings and how social capital can be enhanced. Putnam's and Coleman's perspectives reflect discourses of integration (Holland 2007) which seek for young people's situated activity to conform and replicate the norms, values and patterns of behaviour of the institutionalised settings. If these settings are privileged, these young people will be more able to draw upon and benefit from the privileged positions of the people they come in contact with. If they

are less privileged they will draw on the scarce resources available, which might not give them so many opportunities, a perspective accounted for by Bourdieu. In terms of 'diversity' this research challenges some of the underlying discourses around who needs to diversify their networks and why. The danger is that young people who do not interact with people from different backgrounds might be seen as anti-social and closed minded, while attention is deflected away from the disadvantages they face through the dynamics of institutionalised domination and oppression (Young 1990, 2008).

Throughout this discussion, I have explored the last element of my picture which is the access to resources, as depicted below:



Implications for Practice

Progressive youth work is about working with young people in participative ways (Walther et al. 2002), to provide opportunities to widen their horizons of what is possible, to break out of the demoralising and self-perpetuating narrowness of vision, introspection and 'victim blaming', induced through poverty, lack of opportunity and exclusion (Wood and Hine 2009). Therefore I think that it is important to be aware of the structures of society and make them transparent to young people. It turns the spotlight around from people

as a problem in themselves, to the problems they encounter, and enables them to see opportunities to develop a much wider range of options for action and change (Arches and Fleming 2006). The following points discuss ways in which practice initiatives might seek to enhance young people's social capital drawing upon the insights from this research.

- 1) **Diversification of Networks:** Enhance networks of support and interaction. Discuss with young people, who is supporting them? Who is important to them? Explore ways for young people to meet and interact with new people and groups, different from their immediate locale of street, school and family.
- 2) **Enlargement of Trust:** Explore with young people who they trust and the meaning of trust. Work towards establishing strong trusting relationships within safe environments. Do they only trust a small number of people? How will they be able to take the risk to trust new people?
- 3) **Generalisation of Reciprocity:** Do they feel that they give and never get anything back? Do they always expect an immediate return? Do they feel that it is worth contributing to their groups, communities, society? Work with young people in participative ways to engage with others, work towards change in their neighbourhoods, communities or other groups. Encourage them to do things with other people.
- 4) **New, more focused Outlook on Life:** How do they see their future? Do they think they can influence their future? This is about working with them in building their self confidence, relating it to new networks and new trusting relationships. Work with young people to discover their unique skills and thus enhance their aspirations by encouraging them to take the risk of change.
- 5) **Alternative Self and Sense of Belonging:** How do they see themselves? As active or passive? If they feel trapped, work on building up resilience, setting positive goals with a sense of achievement. Can they see themselves differently from how they are now?
- 6) **Community effect:** What are the required community processes to

nurture reciprocity and shared norms and values between young people and their communities? What contribution (benefits) does young people's community involvement make to the community of which they are members? Is this being recognised and valued by the community? To what extent does participation enhance the social capital of young people and the communities of which they are part?

- 7) Young people and organisations:** What are the different relationships which young people form with and within organizations? What is their relationship with adults? Participative ways of working with young people should be nurtured. Power imbalances should be challenged.

Messages for Policy Development

Young people through policy get contradictory messages around bridging and bonding. One should not forget that whilst bridging might be seen as important for social mobility, the downside might be that in order to pursue that path, the young person has to break with important existing bonding support structures, as it has been referred to in this study which is akin to the cohesion agenda.

Transition policy is a representation of particular "interests". There are employment interests, economic interests, social interests, equity interests, and educational interests (Raffe 2003). As a result the policy doesn't necessarily mirror youth; it mirrors a particular representation of youth. However if the policy is based upon interests (such as labour market driven transition policy) and assumptions and does not match the experiences of the young people it will be doomed to fail (Vaughan 2003). A better way forward, taking into account young people's own experiences, is to focus on young people's navigation through life, as presented in this study

One of the emphases within government policy for children and young people is to enhance their social capital to prevent them encountering problems such

as poverty and crime, to improve educational achievement, encourage volunteering and civic participation (ONS 2003). Essentially, the (re)integration of young people into normative social structures has been seen as a question of improving their social networking and life chances – the development of their social capital. However I would argue that this is not the arena where youth policy is best placed. Reflecting on young people’s ‘creative agency’ policies should support rather than punish young people, and turn the spotlight around from young people networks as problems in themselves, to the problems young people encounter, enabling them to see opportunities to develop a much wider range of options for action and change. Rather than trying to ‘engineer’ young people’s situated activity youth policy should draw on it and not demonise young people’s networks.

- The role of social capital in intersecting with and helping to create turning points in the life course of young people should be a key focus within youth policy. It would help to address the context within which youth transitions occur and enhance young people’s ‘creative agency’ through a focus on resiliency
- Policy has to change its focus away from solely individual behaviour change and corrective programmes on thinking patterns. If policy over-emphasises human capital theory or rational decision-making processes, at the expense of social and other forms of capital, the pathways made available to young people will not match the ones that actually get chosen
- From the perspective of localities or social space it seems to be important to enable access to new contacts and relationships, information and options. This does not mean, however, leaving one’s own milieu behind or judging it less valuable than others; but particularly in the context of difficult transitions into the labour market, bridges to other milieus and social spheres are necessary. However this should not be imposed upon young people and the risk of making ‘the leap of trust’ should be recognised
- An understanding of the character of young people’s navigations of

transition and supporting young people beyond the merely informational is needed (Vaughan 2005). Dynamic transitions require dynamic forms of support. Better starting conditions allow for a more relaxed and strategic relationship towards institutional support, while those who already have had negative experiences with institutions need to surmount the highest obstacles. The provision and acquisition of such competencies occurs 'by doing', not through instruction and training, but by informal learning or non-formal education (Walther et al. 2005)

- Transition policy ought to recognise and take into account the different constructions of pathways within the middle classes and working class young people. More understanding is needed in order to disentangle these different paradigms and their implications for social capital and transitions research
- Policy has to be careful not to be 'ethnocentric' or 'gender blind'. It needs to recognise and address that rights and choices are constrained by class gender and ethnicity, as explored in this research

The enhancement of social capital has to distance itself from the 'deficit' and 'blaming the victim' approaches. It has to be based on a commitment to young people having the right to be heard, to define the issues facing them, to set the agenda for action and, importantly, to take action on their own behalf. Empowerment, participation and capacity release are core elements for the enhancement of social capital. Practitioners should recognise that whilst using -and sometimes being part of- the structures set up by the government; one is still able to be critical and able to promote structural, political and cultural change.

Work with young people also needs to enhance resilience by enabling young people to navigate complex and challenging life risks, and to build the skills to cope, manage and make informed choices about risk. Change entails a potential loss of control, and as a consequence seems risky and is

frightening. The key to how this risk is perceived and managed depends on past experiences, perceptions of self-efficacy, and the imagined future possibilities. In consequence, the time of workers (in the guise of 'significant others') may be well spent enhancing dynamic and extended social capital for young people, and in building their self-efficacy. (Kemshall et al. 2006, Boeck et al. 2006b).

It is about working with young people and not for them so they can have more power and opportunities in their lives. Young people need to have the possibility and the freedom to create, change and influence events within their life transitions. This personal and individual engagement is influenced but not determined by existing structures (Evans 2002) and is shaped by the experiences of the past, the chances present in the current moment and the perceptions of possible futures. The dynamic social capital can contribute to creating the social sphere in which 'creative agency' is nurtured and young people can act upon their rights, as creators and critical citizens who have power: being able to have their voices heard, and have a part in decisions that affect them.

Chapter 10: Conclusion

This thesis set out to take on the exploration of social capital in an innovative way through a mixed methods design. Moving beyond single perspectives, this study explored the ‘multi-dimensionality’ of social capital in young people’s lives (Sayer 2003; Layder 1993, 2006; Bhaskar 2008). Through this, the maintenance and enhancement of social capital is seen as a process which has to be negotiated in a continuous interaction between the four domains of self, situated activity, settings and contexts. This interaction and its causal mechanisms depend on the conditions in which the mechanisms work and is not always a linear process (Sayer 2003).

Young People’s Critical Creative Agency

Whilst in both Coleman and Putnam’s accounts, the agency of young people is rather muted (Leonard 2008), this research recognises that young people exhibit agency in the acquisition and development of social capital (Holland 2005). Young people are seen as active agents, who have the power to enhance social capital and draw on its use and exchange value. More so, the study also recognises young people’s sense of ‘subjective agency’. Rather than discarding young people’s strong sense of subjective agency as delusionary, it regards it as a positive risk supporting mechanism, to enhance and diversify social capital. Whilst critical agency is seen as the prevalence of the elite in Bourdieu’s work, I advocate that a critical consciousness about structural constraints should also be fostered when working with young people. This is especially encapsulated within the concept of the critical and creative agent.

Young people who do not have access to social capital resources through their privileged position, will need to enhance their critical creative agency. Within this critical creative agency, a positive outlook on life and being able to

make the leap of trust become agentic mediating factors which help young people to navigate life situations and take the necessary risks to develop a more dynamic social capital. This agentic power is enacted within young people's networks and is shaped by the social settings such as the school and the neighbourhood and the access to contextual resources.

Static and Dynamic Social Capital

This research stresses the importance of young people's network types (situated activity) as the domain where young people form their social capital networks and deal with their broader life situations (Layder 2006). This challenges some common discourses on diversity, especially those referring to bonding and bridging social capital (Putnam 2000). Networks of young people are better assessed as to whether they provide a solid base from which to bridge out to new networks, or whether they are more constraining. Bonded social capital can be either more dynamic or more static. Static social capital is characterised by tight networks with a protective trust and less openness to diversity. Dynamic social capital is characterised by fluid networks, a less inward looking trust and openness to diversity. This is the domain which provides important access to the use value of social capital and therefore needs to be nurtured through youth policy and practice approaches.

The distinction between 'bridging' and 'bonding' social capital is not clear cut (White and Green 2011; Holland et al. 2007). Young people's dynamic bonded relationships with family and friends provided them not only with support but also with more opportunities. It is not the situated activity but the privileged contextual positions which help young people to draw on the exchange value of the dynamic social capital. In young people's lives the access to resources and the number of resources provided by social capital are not only forged within the 'situated activity', but also through their embeddedness within social settings and structural opportunities.

The call for young people from more deprived areas to 'diversify' their networks is a tough call, which means stepping out of their comfort zone of the situated activity and leaving behind important social networks. However, interaction with different people does not necessarily give access to the exchange value of social capital. This research challenges some of the underlying discourses around the need to diversify networks: the need for bridging social capital and the view that 'only' this creates access to resources is being questioned. Bonded dynamic social capital can also create access to resources for young people, especially when these bonded relationships are embedded in social settings and contexts which are privileged and provide access to diverse resources.

Context Matters!

Contexts of privilege but also of gender and ethnicity are important mechanisms that have a strong impact on the access to social capital resources and points towards the resiliency young people are able to build. Whilst both Putnam and Coleman's discussions of social capital have been described as 'gender blind' (Morrow 1999; Holland et al. 2003; Gidengil and O'Neill 2006), gendered differences, manifested in the sense of belonging, feeling of safety, interpretation of trust and attitudes to diversity, infer that contextual gendered inequalities need to be taken into account in young people's mobilisation of social capital. This helps to understand the different types of networks young people form and the unequal distribution and access to resources. .

Putnam's and Coleman's understanding of social capital obscure the issues of unequal distribution of resources and the situational and contextual constraints on the formation of social capital. In terms of policy development this questions approaches to enhancing social capital, especially in deprived areas, with an emphasis on 'community strength and civic participation'.

Building 'social capital' in disadvantaged areas, mainly focusing on the geography of the areas, risks the danger of overlooking the relationships that young people develop and mobilize (Thapar and Sanghera 2010). It also does not take into account, nor questions exclusionary and normative school and community environments. Bourdieu's formulation of social capital accounts more adequately for the tensions by uncovering how these environments may serve the interests of particular groups with particular political and ideological agendas, which seek to maintain the status quo through the status, persuasiveness, and control of resources.

This thesis argues that focusing exclusively on either Bourdieu's, Putnam's or Coleman's formulations of social capital would risk obscuring the complexity of the phenomenon under study. The distinction between situated activity and social settings provides important insights to the social capital formation. A constructive interplay between the two domains of situated activity and social settings enhances dynamic social capital whilst a lack of such a harmonious interplay leads to a static social capital. This static social capital will provide with the social resources to protect against the prejudices of others but also the exclusion from accessing extended formal and informal resources (Howarth 2002; Thapar and Sanghera 2010). Putnam and Coleman mainly stress the benign functions of these settings, without looking at the darker side of it or questioning the nature of these settings and how they might fail to create safe and positive spaces for young people to develop social capital. As such, situated activity is enacted within a social setting which in itself becomes exclusionary. Schools, as social organisations, need to look carefully to how they can address this need of young people to have a positive sense of belonging to their school environment and create safe environments for all of the young people.

Contribution to Policy and Practice

As a contribution to the interrogation of social policy and its implications to practice, this study has attempted to offer some alternative perspectives to those reviewed in the third chapter of this thesis. There is a need to move away from 'blaming cultures' (Ryan 1976), especially those, which buy into the 'problematism' of childhood and the view of young people as either being 'at risk' or 'posing a risk' (Armstrong 2004; Kemshall 2008). Such an ideology of individualism turns a blind eye to the structures and discourses that maintain inequalities which limits the possibilities for intervention and social change (Howarth 2004). Policy and practice interventions should support rather than punish young people and turn the spotlight away from young people's networks as problems in themselves. Youth policy and practice needs to recognise that the spatial and social context in which people are located matters, highlighting that the immediate and structural constraints upon both access to and use of social capital resources is important. There is also a danger that by focusing only on situated activity alone we fall into an approach to social capital, which aims to engineer social interactions. However, the rights and choices of young people are bounded by the settings and access to contextual resources.

Therefore it is important to build on the resourceful ways in which many young people use their social capital to overcome contextual and economic constraints or exert their agency as individuals and within groups (Gillies 2005; Henderson et al. 2007; Cockburn and Cleaver 2009). Young people need to have the resources, possibilities and the freedom to create, change and influence events within their life transitions. The dynamic social capital can contribute to creating the social sphere in which agency is nurtured and young people can act upon their rights as creators and critical citizens, being able to have their voices heard, and have a part in decisions that affect them. However, when young people do not have access to these kinds of resources they need to find ways to mobilise their social capital.

Through empowering youth work policies and practice, the bounded subjective agency of young people needs to be liberated through the critical agency and set into motion by enhancing young people's creative agency. The critical and creative young person is aware of contextual constraints but is not left alone to deal with them. Enhancing young people's existing social capital is achieved by strengthening their existing support networks, opening up new horizons and creating access to new resources within a strength perspective. Institutions need to enhance resiliency and positive risk taking, nurture trusting relationships with significant others (who have a diverse social capital) and enhance young people's outlook on life.

Methodological Advancement

There are a number of challenges in researching the 'textured' or interwoven nature of different levels and dimensions of social reality (Layder 1997, 2006). Through what I have called 'theoretical designing', within an adaptive theory approach, the exact design of each of the phases of my research was controlled by the emerging theory. Therefore the design becomes an ongoing process of induction and deduction rather than a distinct and single phase. Of particular importance within this, was the way qualitative data was quantified and how this was aided by the use of two computer packages of data analysis: SPSS and NVIVO8. This way of combining qualitative and quantitative processes contributes to furthering concrete examples of the integration of different methods, not only in the data collection but also in the analysis of the data. This dynamic process aided clarity in exploring concepts such as trust, reciprocity, sense of belonging and community, and how these can be measured in a meaningful way. (Morrow 2002a).

Limitations and Areas for Further Research

Whilst overall I would argue that the research was thorough and rigorous, I am also aware of some of its limitations, areas for improvement and further investigation. Throughout the study I have been critical and have highlighted limitations during the different phases of the research. One of them is the use of the adaptive theory approach which aims to produce innovative forms of theory and research strategies. Layder, in his work, warns and emphasises that so far these promises have been largely unfulfilled. I am very cautious in laying claim to have achieved this aim, however I have applied systematically Layder's research framework. Trying to move away from frameworks that are heralded as "total perspectives" (Layder 1993: 53, 2006) has been one of the major challenges within this study and would benefit from further discussion.

The use of critical realism and the domain theory has presented me with many new insights, which I would like explore further and apply in future research. The mixed methods design within this approach was very challenging, but I think that it has given much more rigour and depth to this study. By using a mixed methods design with Layder's research framework, one has also to be very careful that this does not tempt one to cover too much, so that what is gained in breadth, one loses in depth.

The statistical analysis, especially the factor analysis in this study has its limitations and further analysis of the survey data would be beneficial. There is also a body of data from this study which could be further analysed; in particular there is extra potential in quantifying qualitative data from the survey questionnaire. In terms of the study of social capital, further insights might be gained by exploring in more detail the self and the context. In the light of this it might be interesting to propose an interdisciplinary project with a social psychologist, which could add further strengths to the analysis focusing on the self, aspirations, sense of belonging and trust. Further

insights need to be gained through looking and addressing ethnicity and class inequalities.

Whilst I enjoy the 'hands on research', the theoretical explorations, especially critical realism, has sparked an interest to revisit my previous research projects and develop my understanding of the agency and structure debate and the exploration of causal mechanisms and powers.

The distinction between the use and exchange value of social capital was interesting in this study but was only dealt with to a limited extent. However, through a Big Lottery funded research project in which I was the principal investigator, I have been able to further investigate the access to resources and also expand on the findings of this thesis around trust and social capital. The project "How does youth participation in volunteering benefit young people and their communities?" investigated youth action volunteering and its impact on social capital and community cohesion.

Using some of the new insights gained through the substantial corrections I am also pleased that I have successfully been awarded a Joseph Rowntree grant to develop a project called "Amplified Resilient Communities", which will connect different communities through online and offline interactions aiming to enhance social capital, knowledge, skills and opportunities.

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Appendices

Appendix I: Information Sheet

We would like to invite you to take part in a research project organised by De Montfort University (Leicester) called:

Young People and Social Capital

a) What is Social Capital?

- ◆ Social capital is about relationships with people and groups in communities.



- ◆ So, what is it made of?
 - ◆ It is made out of trust in others
 - ◆ Feeling safe
 - ◆ Getting something back if you have given something
 - ◆ Having something in common with others
- b) What is the purpose of the research project?
 - ◆ To find out your views about:
 - ◆ Your relationships with other people or groups
 - ◆ Who you can trust
 - ◆ Where you feel safe
 - ◆ What does 'taking risks' mean to you
 - ◆ Why do you or don't you avoid risks

c) What will happen if I take part in the study?

- ◆ You will be asked to sign a consent form, this means that you agree to be part of the study
- ◆ The research will be carried out by either the researcher or a volunteer
- ◆ The researchers will visit you at any of the following places :
 - ◆ your school
 - ◆ your local youth agency
 - ◆ your youth club
 - ◆ your home

d) What will I be asked to do?

- ◆ It is up to you how many times you want to be involved in the research. You can:
 - ◆ take part in an interview which lasts between 60 to 90 min, or,
 - ◆ be in a discussion group between 60 to 90 minutes
 - ◆ take part in a survey.
- ◆ You may be asked to talk to us more than once

e) Will information given in the research be confidential?

- ◆ Yes!
- ◆ We only need your name in case we need to talk to you again
- ◆ All information we get will be held safely
- ◆ The study will comply with the Data Protection Act
- ◆ No one will be able to identify you from the research.
- ◆ We only will disclose information that if kept confidential may result in harm or intent of harm to others

f) Who will be able to look at the information?



- ◆ The researchers and the person who puts your answers into a computer
- ◆ Only the researchers will keep your details after the study on a computer. They are the only people will be able to access them.

g) What happens if I do not want to take part, or want to stop being part, of the research?



- ◆ You do not have to take part and can stop taking part without giving any reasons. Your future involvement in the YOT, youth group , school will not be affected in any way

h) How will the information be used?

- ◆ We will use the information to
 - ◆ Write a report about our research findings
 - ◆ Use your views to influence the work with young people in different organisations
 - ◆ Use it for the purpose of a doctorate study.

i) What do I get out of participating in this research

- ◆ You will have a chance to express your views
- ◆ Your views are important and they can effect how things are done and policy
- ◆ As a 'Thank you' you will receive a gift voucher for each session you attend

j) What if I have more questions or want to make a complaint?

- ◆ Ask the researcher, Thilo Boeck. If this does not help, ask Hazel Kemshall. If neither Thilo nor Hazel can help then an appropriate senior person within the School of Health and Applied Social Sciences of the university will be found.
- ◆ If you want to contact Thilo Boeck, Hazel Kemshall to ask more questions or to make a complaint about the discussion groups, you can do so using the details below

Researchers:

Thilo Boeck

De Montfort University
Department of Health and Community Studies
Scraptoft Campus, Scraptoft, Leicester, LE7 9SU
Tel: 0116 2577879 e-mail: tgboeck@dmu.ac.uk

Hazel Kemshall.

Address: Same as above
Tel: 0116 257 7717 e-mail: kemshall@dmu.ac.uk

Appendix II: Consent Form

**Young People and Social Capital
Consent Form**

**Research Fellow
Director**

Thilo Boeck
Hazel Kemshall

De Montfort University

Before signing this form you should read the attached project information sheet

Please read carefully the points made below and follow the instruction given only if you consent to take part in this project.

- I have had the study explained to me and I understand my involvement in it.
- I have read the project information sheet and have discussed the details with one of the researchers.
- I understand that I can leave the study at any time. This will not affect my involvement with the: YOT, Youth group or school.
- I therefore agree to take part in the above study as described in the Project Information Sheet.

Signature of participant

Date

Please print name

.....

I confirm I have explained the nature of the research project, as detailed in the Project Information Sheet, in appropriate terms.

Signature of researcher

Date

Please print name

.....

Appendix III: Survey Questionnaire

Questionnaire ✓

All the information you will give is strictly confidential

| | |
|----------|--|
| 1 | What is your gender? 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Male 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Female |
| 2 | Are you disabled? 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 3 | <p>What is your ethnic origin? <i>(please tick box that applies to you)</i></p> <p>I am White of</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> UK origin 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Irish origin</p> <p>3 <input type="checkbox"/> Other origin <i>Please state:</i></p> <hr/> <p>I am Black of</p> <p>4 <input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean origin 5 <input type="checkbox"/> African origin</p> <p>6 <input type="checkbox"/> Other origin <i>Please state:</i></p> <hr/> <p>I am Asian of</p> <p>7 <input type="checkbox"/> Indian origin 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani origin 9 <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi origin</p> <p>10 <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese origin 11 <input type="checkbox"/> Other origin <i>Please state:</i></p> <hr/> <p>I am of 'mixed race' dual heritage</p> <p>12 <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Please specify:</i></p> |
| 4 | <p>What is your age?</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> under 10 years 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 10 years 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 11 years</p> <p>4 <input type="checkbox"/> 12 years 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 13 years 6 <input type="checkbox"/> 14 years</p> <p>7 <input type="checkbox"/> 15 years 8 <input type="checkbox"/> 16 years 9 <input type="checkbox"/> 17 years</p> <p>10 <input type="checkbox"/> over 17 years</p> |
| 5 | <p>Who do you live with?</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Family 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Boyfriend/Girlfriend/Partner</p> <p>2 <input type="checkbox"/> Foster family 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>(please specify)</i></p> <p>3 <input type="checkbox"/> Alone</p> <p>4 <input type="checkbox"/> Friends</p> |
| 6 | <p>Where do you live?</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> City 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Town 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Village</p> |
| 7 | <p>I am at</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> School 2 <input type="checkbox"/> College 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Training</p> <p>4 <input type="checkbox"/> Work 5 <input type="checkbox"/> None</p> |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|--|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| 1 | <p>In the last week, most of my free time I spent hanging around... <i>(mark as many as you like)</i></p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 2px;">1 <input type="checkbox"/> on the street</td> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 2px;">5 <input type="checkbox"/> youth group</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">2 <input type="checkbox"/> friend(s) house</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">6 <input type="checkbox"/> other <i>(please tell us where?)</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">3 <input type="checkbox"/> after school activities</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">4 <input type="checkbox"/> at home</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> on the street | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> youth group | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> friend(s) house | 6 <input type="checkbox"/> other <i>(please tell us where?)</i> | 3 <input type="checkbox"/> after school activities | | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> at home | | | |
| 1 <input type="checkbox"/> on the street | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> youth group | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 <input type="checkbox"/> friend(s) house | 6 <input type="checkbox"/> other <i>(please tell us where?)</i> | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 <input type="checkbox"/> after school activities | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 <input type="checkbox"/> at home | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 | <p>The people I spent my free time with are: (e.g., friends, brother/sister, family, alone etc..)</p> | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | <p>I have met most of my friends...</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 2px;">1 <input type="checkbox"/> through school</td> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 2px;">6 <input type="checkbox"/> through an interest group</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">2 <input type="checkbox"/> through youth group</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">7 <input type="checkbox"/> through my extended family</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">3 <input type="checkbox"/> in the street</td> <td style="padding: 2px;">8 <input type="checkbox"/> other <i>(please tell us)</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">4 <input type="checkbox"/> through other friends</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">5 <input type="checkbox"/> through my sister/brother</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> through school | 6 <input type="checkbox"/> through an interest group | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> through youth group | 7 <input type="checkbox"/> through my extended family | 3 <input type="checkbox"/> in the street | 8 <input type="checkbox"/> other <i>(please tell us)</i> | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> through other friends | | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> through my sister/brother | |
| 1 <input type="checkbox"/> through school | 6 <input type="checkbox"/> through an interest group | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 <input type="checkbox"/> through youth group | 7 <input type="checkbox"/> through my extended family | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 <input type="checkbox"/> in the street | 8 <input type="checkbox"/> other <i>(please tell us)</i> | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 <input type="checkbox"/> through other friends | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 <input type="checkbox"/> through my sister/brother | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 | <p>What do you do with your friends/mates in your spare time?</p> | | | | | | | | | | |
| 5 | <p>If you have a problem or you need somebody to help you out with something, is there anyone outside your family that you could count on to help?</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 | <p>Where I live I know...</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; padding: 2px;">1 <input type="checkbox"/> most of the people</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">2 <input type="checkbox"/> many of the people</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">3 <input type="checkbox"/> a few of the people</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 2px;">4 <input type="checkbox"/> none of the people</td> </tr> </table> | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> most of the people | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> many of the people | 3 <input type="checkbox"/> a few of the people | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> none of the people | | | | | | |
| 1 <input type="checkbox"/> most of the people | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 <input type="checkbox"/> many of the people | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 <input type="checkbox"/> a few of the people | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 <input type="checkbox"/> none of the people | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | <p>Who do you ask for help or advice? <i>(e.g., friends, brother/sister, mother, father, foster carer, teacher, etc.)</i></p> | | | | | | | | | | |
| 8 | <p>In the past 6 months did you do any leisure activities with your family?</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No</p> | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9 | <p>If yes, please tell us what did you do</p> | | | | | | | | | | |

10 How important is/was school/ college in your life?

1 very important
 2 important
 3 a little bit important
 4 not important at all

11 How important to you is the area where you live?

1 very important
 2 important
 3 a little bit important
 4 not important at all

12 Would you consider some of your neighbours also as friends?

1 Yes 2 No

13 I think being at school is/was: *(mark as many as you like)*

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Exciting | 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Challenging | 13 <input type="checkbox"/> Interesting |
| 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Boring | 8 <input type="checkbox"/> A waste of time | 14 <input type="checkbox"/> Enjoyable |
| 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Just a laugh | 9 <input type="checkbox"/> Worthwhile | 15 <input type="checkbox"/> Easy |
| 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Hard work | 10 <input type="checkbox"/> Fun | 16 <input type="checkbox"/> Frustrating |
| 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Confusing | 11 <input type="checkbox"/> Disappointing | 17 <input type="checkbox"/> Difficult |
| 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Supportive | 12 <input type="checkbox"/> Cool | |

14 Mainly I spend time with: *(mark as many as you like)*

1 other young people from my area?
 2 other young people from my school/college/work
 3 other young people with similar interests to me (e.g. music, skate boarding etc)
 4 other young people from the same culture or faith as me

15 What do you think of where you live?

1 It's a good area
 2 It's alright
 3 It's a bad area

16 What do other people think of where you live?

1 It's a good area
 3 It's a bad area
 2 It's alright
 4 I don't know

17 Trust means: *(choose one)*

1 People do not tell others what I have told them

2 People do not stab me in the back

3 Sticking up for each other

4 Being able to tell somebody what really bothers me

5 Feeling comfortable with somebody

6 other *(please tell us)*

18 Where do you feel safe? *(as many as you like)*

1 at home

2 at school

3 in the local park

4 on my street

5 at my mates house

6 in the youth club

7 at place of worship

8 in the city/town centre

9 near a police station

10 other *(please tell us)*

19 For you what does feeling safe depend on?

20 Where do you feel unsafe *(as many as you like)*

1 at home

2 at school

3 in the local park

4 on my street

5 at my mates house

6 in the youth club

7 at place of worship

8 in the city/town centre

9 near a police station

10 other

21 For you what does feeling unsafe depend on?

22 Would you say that most people can be trusted ?

1 Not at all 2 Very few 3 Quite a few 4 Yes

23 I trust *(who, which types of people?)*:

24 I don't trust *(who, which types of people?)*:

| | |
|----|---|
| 25 | People who trust me are: |
| 26 | Please choose one sentence: 1 <input type="checkbox"/> I think adults put a lot of trust in me 2 <input type="checkbox"/> I think adults put some trust in me 3 <input type="checkbox"/> I think hardly any adult puts trust in me 4 <input type="checkbox"/> I think no adults trust me |
| 27 | Is there any adult person in your life who you think trusts you? <i>(Please tell us)</i> |
| 28 | Please continue the following sentences 1 <u>I am good at</u> 2 <u>I enjoy</u> 3 <u>I would like to be</u> 4 <u>My aim is</u> |
| 29 | What do you think/feel gives you value in your life? <i>(Choose maximum three)</i> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Money 2 <input type="checkbox"/> School performance/attainment 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Career 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Health 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Relationships 6 <input type="checkbox"/> Involvement in community 7 <input type="checkbox"/> Family 8 <input type="checkbox"/> Helping others 9 <input type="checkbox"/> Other <i>(please tell us)</i> |
| 30 | I feel valued by my 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Friends 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Family 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Carers 4 <input type="checkbox"/> Teachers 5 <input type="checkbox"/> Others <i>(please tell us)</i> |
| 31 | I know what I want to achieve in my life? 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, definitely 2 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, more or less 3 <input type="checkbox"/> No, not at all |
| 32 | Where do you see yourself in a year? |

33 Where do you see yourself in five years?

34 My friends: *(choose as many as you like)*

1 Are mainly the same sex as me

2 Live in the same area as me

3 Belong to the same culture/religion as me

4 Like to do the same kind of things as me

5 I have different friends depending on where I am, what I am doing and the time of day.

35 I enjoy being with people of different life styles.

1 Yes, definitely 2 Sometimes 3 No, not at all

36 If my mates asks me for a favour I would *(eg. lend your mobile phone, bike, fags etc.)*

1 Do it without expecting anything back

2 Do it if they did something for me

3 Do it if they give me something similar in return

4 Do it if they give me money

5 Not do it

6 It depends *(please explain)*

37 If a neighbour gets ill and asks me to go to the corner shop for a pint of milk I would

1 Do it without expecting anything back

2 Do it if they did something for me

3 Do it if they give me something similar in return

4 Do it if they give me money

5 Not do it

6 It depends *(please explain)*

38 At home I help with the washing up/looking after sister/brother/tidying up

1 always 4 only if I want to get a favour back

2 sometimes 5 hardly ever

3 only if asked 6 never

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 47 | <p>What would you do if somebody bullies you?</p> <table> <tr> <td>1 <input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Try to talk to the person</td> <td>4 <input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Beat the person up</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 <input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Ask a mate to help me</td> <td>5 <input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Involve the police/teacher</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3 <input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>Ask a family member to help me</td> <td>6 <input type="checkbox"/></td> <td>There is nothing I can do</td> </tr> </table> | 1 <input type="checkbox"/> | Try to talk to the person | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> | Beat the person up | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> | Ask a mate to help me | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> | Involve the police/teacher | 3 <input type="checkbox"/> | Ask a family member to help me | 6 <input type="checkbox"/> | There is nothing I can do |
| 1 <input type="checkbox"/> | Try to talk to the person | 4 <input type="checkbox"/> | Beat the person up | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2 <input type="checkbox"/> | Ask a mate to help me | 5 <input type="checkbox"/> | Involve the police/teacher | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 <input type="checkbox"/> | Ask a family member to help me | 6 <input type="checkbox"/> | There is nothing I can do | | | | | | | | | | |
| 48 | <p>Generally I feel that adults listen to me when I have something to say.</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> strongly agree 2 <input type="checkbox"/> agree 3 <input type="checkbox"/> disagree 4 <input type="checkbox"/> strongly disagree</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 49 | <p>If I disagree with what adults have agreed on, I can speak out about it.</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> strongly agree 2 <input type="checkbox"/> agree 3 <input type="checkbox"/> disagree 4 <input type="checkbox"/> strongly disagree</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 50 | <p>I can influence decisions that affect my life.</p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> strongly agree 2 <input type="checkbox"/> agree 3 <input type="checkbox"/> disagree 4 <input type="checkbox"/> strongly disagree</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Thank you very much for taking your time and completing this questionnaire.
 All the information you have given is strictly confidential and will be treated as such.

Appendix IV: Statistical Tests

A: ANOVA test: Agency

The following two ANOVA tests show that the sense of agency and influence is not different between the young people when looking at the 'settings' –expressed through the organisations where young people were accessed for this research. The ANOVA test highlights that the significance is of 0.285.

| | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| Between Groups | 3.791 | 3 | 1.264 | 1.266 | .285 |
| Within Groups | 442.209 | 443 | .998 | | |
| Total | 446.000 | 446 | | | |

However the sense of agency is different between the young people when looking at 'situated activity' - expressed through network types - as shown in the following ANOVA test where the significance is of 0.038:

| | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| Between Groups | 6.438 | 2 | 3.219 | 3.297 | .038 |
| Within Groups | 427.664 | 438 | .976 | | |
| Total | 434.101 | 440 | | | |

B: ANOVA test: School Experiences

ANOVA Tests show that there are significant differences in school experiences between young people from the different network clusters (the first chart), and when considering the organisations where young people have been accessed (the second chart). The significant factors are highlighted in orange.

ANOVA: Networks

| | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|--|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| school challenging and positive | Between Groups | 6.026 | 2 | 3.013 | 3.010 | .050 |
| | Within Groups | 484.462 | 484 | 1.001 | | |
| | Total | 490.488 | 486 | | | |
| school confusing and difficult | Between Groups | 3.327 | 2 | 1.663 | 1.642 | .195 |
| | Within Groups | 490.314 | 484 | 1.013 | | |
| | Total | 493.641 | 486 | | | |
| school fun and enjoyable | Between Groups | 7.748 | 2 | 3.874 | 3.912 | .021 |
| | Within Groups | 479.269 | 484 | .990 | | |
| | Total | 487.017 | 486 | | | |
| school disappointing and waste of time | Between Groups | 2.929 | 2 | 1.464 | 1.454 | .235 |
| | Within Groups | 487.367 | 484 | 1.007 | | |
| | Total | 490.295 | 486 | | | |

ANOVA: Organisations

| | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|--|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|-------|------|
| school challenging and positive | Between Groups | 16.764 | 3 | 5.588 | 5.748 | .001 |
| | Within Groups | 481.236 | 495 | .972 | | |
| | Total | 498.000 | 498 | | | |
| school confusing and difficult | Between Groups | 13.025 | 3 | 4.342 | 4.431 | .004 |
| | Within Groups | 484.975 | 495 | .980 | | |
| | Total | 498.000 | 498 | | | |
| school fun and enjoyable | Between Groups | 6.484 | 3 | 2.161 | 2.177 | .090 |
| | Within Groups | 491.516 | 495 | .993 | | |
| | Total | 498.000 | 498 | | | |
| school disappointing and waste of time | Between Groups | 7.264 | 3 | 2.421 | 2.442 | .063 |
| | Within Groups | 490.736 | 495 | .991 | | |
| | Total | 498.000 | 498 | | | |

C: ANOVA test: Safety and Diversity

Conducting ANOVA tests on all the factors, highlights that there are two areas where there are strong significant gender differences: feelings of safety and diversity.

| | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|--------------------|----------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|------|
| Street/Town safety | Between Groups | 19.483 | 1 | 19.483 | 20.240 | .000 |
| | Within Groups | 475.517 | 494 | .963 | | |
| | Total | 495.000 | 495 | | | |
| Diversity | Between Groups | 11.579 | 1 | 11.579 | 11.926 | .001 |
| | Within Groups | 352.421 | 363 | .971 | | |
| | Total | 364.000 | 364 | | | |