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**An Exploration into What Works in Effectively Engaging Young Adult
Offenders in Probation Supervision: Practitioners and Probationers
Perspectives**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of PhD

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Middlesex University**

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Date: 15th April 2020

Abstract

This research explores how probation practitioners might better engage young adult offenders in order to help prevent them from re-offending. While male adults between 18 and 25 comprise around 10% of the population in England and Wales, they account for up to 40% of UK crime (House of Common Justice Committee, 2018). Evidence shows that rehabilitative interventions, rather than punishment, are generally more effective in helping offenders (including young offenders) desist from crime (Chan, 1995; Jones, & Weatherburn, 2011; MacKenzie, 2002; Monarski, 1987; Productivity Commission, 2011; Nagin et al. 2009; Weston, 2016; Nagin, D.S., Piquero, Scott, & Steinberg, 2006). Young offenders who are meaningfully engaged by probation practitioners, and who actively participate in appropriate behaviour-modification interventions, are more likely to achieve long-term positive change (Henry, Henaghan, Sanders, & Munford, 2015; MOJ, 2019b; Prior, & Mason, 2010). As a significant proportion of young adult male offenders are subject to probation supervision, it would help if more positive forms of intervention for probation officers were developed.

This research comprised two qualitative studies involving 15 male offenders and 15 probation officers, focusing on participants' experiences and their perspectives on what constitutes effective engagement between young adult offenders and probation practitioners. Interviews were semi-structured and were carried out both individually and face to face. Data was transcribed verbatim and subjected to thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2013). Main themes included the importance of probation officers having in-depth knowledge about offenders as individuals, being able to communicate with them, being effective motivators, and being trustworthy. Probation officers emphasised the importance of collaboratively engaging with young offenders' families and situations, and both groups highlighted officers' personal characteristics. Trauma was a significant issue for both groups, with officers noting the lack of information and training in this area. Practice implications and proposals are discussed, and recommendations for further research in this area of work are considered.

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To Him through whom I can do all things, for His strength is made perfect in my weakness, thanks. Alicia, Averil and Oliver, thank you. To my Supervisors: Karen, for your fervent belief in excellence – thanks for your forensic abilities, Anthony, for your guidance and words of encouragement, I hear them echoing in my head even now: “soldier on my friend”.

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Glossary

CAS	Case Allocation System
CBT	Cognitive Behavioural Therapy/Training
CJS	Criminal Justice System
CRC	Community Rehabilitation Company
DTO	Drug Treatment Order
E3	Effectiveness Efficiency and Excellence
ETE	Education Training and Employment
GBH	Grievous Bodily Harm
GLM	Good Lives Model
HMPPS	HM Prison & Probation Service
ISP	Initial Sentence Plan
LPT	London Probation Trust
MAPPA	Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
nDelius/Delius	Delivering service to users
Nominal	A person known to be involved in serious group offending
NOMS	National Offender Management Service
NPS	National Probation Service
OASYS	Offender Assessment System
OEP	Offender Engagement Programme
OMIC	Offender Management in Custody
OMs	Offender Managers
OMT	Offender Management Team
OMU	Offender Management Unit
ORA	Offender Rehabilitation Act
POs	Probation Officers
PSOs	Probation Services Officers
RNR	Risk, News and Responsivity
RSR	Risk of Serious Recidivism
Secundee	An officer on a period of secondment to another organisation, for example the YOS.
SEEDS	Skills for Effective Engagement, Development and Supervision
SGO	Serious Group Offending

TR	Transforming Rehabilitation (Programme)
YAO	Young Adult Offender
Y2A	Youth to Adult Transition
YJB	Youth Justice Board
YOI	Young Offender Institution
YOT	Youth Offending Team

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1.1 The Crisis of Young Adult Criminality

“Nostalgia (upon which authoritarianism feeds) is a powerful cultural force...nowhere is it more on display than in the public (adult) condemnation of the behaviour of young people...whether it be the consequences of permissiveness... or the so-called ‘crisis’ of childhood, children and adolescents today, it is claimed, pose more of a threat to the social order than at any time in the past (Hendrick, 11, p.1)”.

Although the criminality of the young has historically been a topic of concern and scrutiny, the ‘crisis’ associated with deviant youths was recently claimed to pose more of a threat to the social order than at any other time in history (Hendrick, 2011). The aggregate of recorded crimes attributed to youths as a collective (children and young people, as well as young adults) has undoubtedly served to drive such perceptions and public debates over time. However, a significant amount of time has passed since Hendrick (2011) made this comment, which was during a period of an unprecedented rise in the number of youths who were getting involved in the Criminal Justice System (CJS). As a matter of fact, within the last decade, figures on youth criminality indicate that there has been a dramatic decrease in the number of recorded crimes being perpetrated by children and young people: those between the ages of 10 and 17 (YJB/MOJ, 2019).

Even though this group is still a focus of public anxiety (especially considering recently publicised knife and gang related crimes in London and other counties) current data suggests that the number of children and young people getting involved in the criminal justice system has fallen by about 82% over the last decade, with a 6% fall in 2018 alone (MOJ & YJB, 2019). It appears that young adults (those aged 18 to 24) are the focus of growing concern and now account for an inordinate amount of the criminal justice caseloads. Current statistics suggest that, whilst young adults represent only about 10% of the general population in England and Wales, they account for approximately 30 to 40% of all cases involving the police, probation, and prison services (House of Common Justice Committee, 2018). Young adult men are more likely than adult men to serve sentences for violent and acquisitive crimes and are more prone to be involved in robbery or low-level drug-related offences. Likewise, young adults have the highest reconviction rates of any group: 75% are re-convicted within two years of being released from prison (House of Commons Justice Committee, 2016). Furthermore, those serving community sentences are known to have poorer outcomes and have the highest breach rates of adults serving community sentences. Moreover, studies confirm that the most unfortunate outcomes are typically for care leavers and young Black and Muslim men - each of

whom are over-represented within the CJS (House of Commons Justice Committee, 2016; Livingstone, Amad & Clark, 2015).

While much of the debate on young adults' criminality has focussed on appropriate penal and legal strategies, it has also been paralleled by an expansion in corrective and rehabilitative dialogue. In fact, what works in offender rehabilitation has, for some time, occupied a central place in contemporary criminal justice policy, practice and theorising. The principal intention is, through evidence-based interventions, to reduce the number of new entrants to the CJS, as well as change the behaviour of those already involved. First generation intervention and treatment ideas that focused primarily on cognitive behaviouralism, resulted in a number of empirical studies, leaving little doubt as to what works in rehabilitating offenders (Lösel, 2012; Polaschek, 2011). This body of evidence suggests that, via the design and delivery of cognitive behavioural programmes, corrective intervention can work effectively (Apsche, Bass & Murphy, 2004; Farrington & Loeber, 2001; Lipsey, Chapman, Landenberger & Lipsey 2001; McGuire, 2002; Redondo, Martínez-Catena, & Andrés-Pueyo, 2012).

More recently, however, the offender rehabilitation discourse has progressed beyond just 'what works', with greater emphasis being placed on second generation questions such as 'with whom, when and how' (Lösel, & Schmucker, 2005; Wormith, Althouse, Simpson, Reitzel, Fagan, & Morgan, 2007). Within this new theorising, the 'who' (the role of the worker and with whom he/she is working) and 'how' have been subjects of growing dialogue (Day, 2003; McNeill, Raynor, & Trotter, 2010). Of particular significance are the competencies that practitioners need to possess or nurture in order to effectively engage young people in rehabilitative interventions, and how these competencies are employed within the supervisory process and relationship. Conversely, how to secure young people's engagement in rehabilitative endeavours is hardly studied in intervention-oriented research with young offenders (Prior & Mason, 2010).

In order to explore the topic of effective engagement with young adult male offenders made subject to statutory supervision by the probation service, this thesis draws on a plethora of research literature, effective practice literature, offender management practices and theories of engagement. Primarily, it seeks to capture the perspective of both practitioners and probationers, their experience of what constitutes effective engagement and how it is realised within the daily encounters of their therapeutic relationship. The research is positioned within – and underpinned by – a broader literature that straddles both an acknowledged overrepresentation of young adult male offenders within the Criminal Justice System (England and Wales) and the need to ameliorate this prevalence through evidence-based methods of effective engagement (Lammy, 2016).

Dealing with youths as a collective (children and young people aged 10-17, as well as young adults aged 18-24), this body of research premised that young adult males (predominantly from black and minority ethnic background) are disproportionately over-represented within the Criminal Justice System of England and Wales (Chung, Little, & Steinberg, 2005; Dunkel & Pruin, 2012; Helyar-Cardwell, 2009). Furthermore, this cohort of offenders are perceived as riskier and more likely to recidivate due to a conflation of issues such as developmental deficiencies, poor social capital and multifactorial vulnerabilities. This conundrum is believed to be further exacerbated by an ill-equipped justice system, which does not wholly consider the unique needs of young adult offenders (Altschuler, 2005; House of Commons 2016; Thompson, Molina, Pelham & Gnagy, 2007).

1.2 Why this Research: My Personal Motivation

The idea for this research began shortly after I first qualified as a Probation Officer and is, in the main, inspired by my experience as a probation practitioner for the past 16 years. Working initially as a frontline practitioner, I provided one-to-one case management supervision to a glut of young adult offenders. Later, as a practice manager (Senior Probation Officer), I managed a number of Young Adults Offender Management Teams and specialised in the management and supervision of young adult offenders in custody and in the community. As a Senior Probation Officer, I also worked in close collaboration with practitioners from the Youth Offending Service (YOS) overseeing the transition of young adult offenders from Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) to Probation's Offender Management Units (OMUs). The above roles provided the experience that acted as a catalyst for exploring this research topic empirically.

Despite having limited experience, even as a newly qualified officer, it was discernible that the practitioner-probationer relationship was an integral part of the rehabilitative process. However, capturing the attention and willing participation of young adult offenders in the supervision process appeared, at the time, to be a matter of trial and error. It quickly became apparent that, although not homogenous in character or offending profile, there were observable similarities in how the young adults presented during their supervision sessions. For instance, I started noticing that when a young adult offender reported for supervision, his or her presence alone could not be taken as a reliable indicator of willingness to wholly engage in conversation, to participate in offered interventions, or comply with the requirements of his/her order or licence. Moreover, although I had the authority to issue sanctions for non-compliance, this power to enforce (that in most cases would serve to encourage future compliance / engagement, even on a superficial level) appeared to be less efficacious with this group of offenders. It seemed that having the authority to coercively involve a young adult offender in supervision, did not automatically enable me to secure their engagement and/or

participation. Throughout the first decade of my career, as a frontline practitioner, and later as a manager, my interest in ways of effectively engaging young adults continued to grow. Notwithstanding, the primary inspiration for this research came from a specific encounter I had with a young adult offender. This young adult male had only recently been transferred from the YOS to Probation. On the day in question, I was summoned to intervene and manage 'the unacceptable aggressive behaviour' of a young male towards his probation officer in the reception area. The officer had assessed that this young black male was not only uncooperative, he was also displaying signs of hostility that were potentially too risky for her to resolve safely. The scenario (transcribed below) reflects the young adult's initial appointment at the probation office.

The researcher: Mr X, I would encourage you to consider your behaviour in light of the requirements and expectations of your court order.

Mr X: Or else what?

The researcher: Or else I will call the police, and have you arrested because, whilst your behaviour may have been acceptable at the YOS, this sir, is Probation, and this kind of behaviour is certainly not acceptable here.

Mr X: Well, call the police then; you people are not doing anything to help me anyway.

The above exchange ended with the police eventually being called, a manager's warning issued, breach proceedings initiated, and Mr X taken back to court. I, along with my colleague (Mr X's probation officer) attended court as witnesses. The matter resulted in Mr X's court order being revoked on the grounds of unacceptable behaviour and a new, more onerous order imposed. Nonetheless, an uneasy feeling remained. What if Mr X's offender manager and I were better equipped to engage with this young adult effectively? Is it likely that a less punitive and more positive outcome could have been reached? This experience provided the impetus to move beyond mere personal and professional curiosity, and formally and empirically explore my interest in effective engagement with young adult offenders under statutory supervision.

1.3 Rationale for this Research

“The engagement of young people has been a neglected area in youth justice and drug policy and practice (Duke, Gleeson, Dąbrowska, Herold, & Rolando, 2020, p.1).

Although offending by young people has, over time, attracted significant research interest, these studies have mainly sought to explain phenomena such as the increased levels of offending by youths during a certain developmental period (Moffitt & Harrington, 1996; Wilson & Herrnstein, 1985; Steffensmeier, Allan, Harer, & Streifel, 1989; Steffensmeier & Allan, 2000). Until the late 1960s, most criminologists held that the scientific study of the causes of crime would lay the foundation for interventions that reduce recidivism (Cullen & Gendreau, 2001). However, Cullen and Gendreau (2001) noted that by the mid-1970s, this view had collapsed, replaced by a professional ideology that “nothing works” in corrections, that the causes of criminality are structural, and that crime can only be reduced through social justice (p, 313). This was an era where it was assumed that nothing actually worked to rehabilitate offenders, a belief that, by the 1980s, was well entrenched (Cullen, & Gendreau, 2001). However, between the 1990s and early 2000s, the vitality of rehabilitative oriented research advanced, transcending this period of pessimism made popular by Martinson (1974), disproving Martinson’s assumptions with evidence-based studies and evaluated practices (Burnett, & Roberts, 2013; McGuire, 2001; McNeill, Farrall, Lightowler, & Maruna, 2012; Farrall, 2013; Ferguson, 2002).

The current plethora of rehabilitative studies affirm that offender rehabilitation remains an area of significant research interest, with a range of putative theories regarding what is understood to work in engaging and reorienting offenders away from crime (Ross, Polaschek & Ward 2008). However, offenders are not considered homogeneous and what is known to work effectively in engaging with one group, for example, violent offenders, may not necessarily be efficacious with another group, such as sex offenders (Allam, Middleton & Browne, 1997; Hartwig & Myers, 2003; McGuire, 2003; Ward & Mann, 2004; Ward, Polaschek, & Beech, 2006). Nonetheless, for the purpose of research, grouping offenders according to shared characteristics such as age, gender or ethnicity is believed to hold some ‘predictive and explanatory’ values, and may even serve to inform treatment responsiveness (Gottfredson, 2005, p.46). In this regard, developmental criminology has demonstrated an established history in researching offenders’ taxonomy, leading to correlations between age and crime (Elliott, Huizinga, Menard & Elliott 1989; Farrington, 1986; Gottfredson, & Hirschi, 1990; Hirschi & Gottfredson, 1993; Steffensmeier & Allan, 2000).

A few noteworthy extrapolations can be drawn from this body of available research in developmental criminology: firstly, that the period known as young adulthood remains a crucial crossroad in an offender’s criminal trajectory, and secondly, that, with the right intervention, this group is believed to be the one most

likely to desist from offending (Farrington, 1986; Elliott, Huizinga & Menard, 1989; Hirschi & Gottfredson, 1993; Moffitt & Harrington, 1996). A reasonable conjecture that can be made is that if young adults are most likely to grow out of crime, then a better understanding of how to effectively engage with members of this group may help to augment their rehabilitation, reduce their rate of recidivism and, in the long-term, lessen their involvement with the CJS.

However, whilst there exists a number of established approaches for engaging with offenders generally, which can, arguably, also be applied when working with young adult offenders, it appears that little is known about the specific competencies required to effectively engage with and supervise the latter. Moreover, having explored related literature, there appears to be a paucity of rehabilitative oriented research that specifically focus on how to effectively engage with this cohort. An offender engagement model, Skills for Effective Engagement and Development Supervision (SEEDS), was developed, piloted and operationalised in 2010 by the then National Probation Service. However, SEEDS is indiscriminate in its design and is used to engage with a broad range of offenders, regardless of age. Moreover, standardised engagement methodologies such as SEEDS and other conventional techniques of offender engagement, such as Risk Needs and Responsivity (RNR), are seen as more comprehensive case management approaches, that say little about how to engage effectively with this group. In England and Wales, there seems to be no known established offender engagement model meeting a systematic review criterion that takes 'engagement' as its principal topic and that is designed to work specifically with young adult offenders.

Unquestionably, there are, of course, some available strategies in place that are intended to work exclusively with young adult offenders. However, these approaches focus primarily on transition processes and protocols, particularly in relation to the transfer of young adults between the YOS and the probation services (Shepherd, 2013). Through a recent search of relevant literature, a brief guide was found offering probation practitioners some basic guidelines on approaches that can be employed when working with young adults. The setback is that this guide does not bear the rigours of a systematic review. A comprehensive literature search revealed that little is known about how to effectively secure the interest, motivation and willing participation of young adult male offenders in order to secure their full participation in rehabilitative interventions. Exploring how to effectively engage young adult male offenders in probation supervision and intervention could make a useful contribution to improving practice and policies.

1.4 Research Aims

This research aims to explore ‘what works’ in enabling criminal justice practitioners (primarily Probation Officers, Probation Service Officers, Seconded Probation Officers and YOS Workers) to engage effectively with young adult male offenders subject to statutory supervision. The longer-term aim of this research is to add to the current body of knowledge on offender engagement and inform future practice and policy about what may improve engagement with young adult male offenders. It is envisaged that the findings from this study may support evidence for the development of an engagement model appropriate to young adult offenders.

1.5 Research Context: The only constant is change

Even though the probation service has experienced many changes since its inauguration, this research is being undertaken during a period that some believe is its most radical - at least in the last 100 years- due in part to a performance culture and a wider culture of managerialism (Burke & Collett, 2016; Tidmarsh, 2020; Deering & Feilzer, 2015; McNeill, 2013). The rise in the culture of managerialism within public sector organisations, which later extended to the criminal justice system more generally, and probation in particular, has been extensively discussed and re-discussed (e.g. Beaumont, 1995; McLaughlin et al., 2001; Raine & Wilson, 1997; Whitehead & Statham, 2006). A number of commentators locate the emergence of performance culture within probation to the wider shift towards greater managerialism across public sector organisations, including health, social work, and education (Dorey, 2005; McLaughlin et al, 2001; Carter et al, 1992). Ashworth (2009), for example, traced some of the indicators of change back to the election of the Conservative government under the leadership of Margaret Thatcher in 1979, consequent to a radical shift in the ethos of public sector provision. But, as Burke and Collett (2010) observe, any hope that the election of a Labour government in 1997 would lead to a change in direction was short lived and the march towards greater managerialism continued throughout the period of Labour’s administration.

Phillips (2011) suggests that managerialism arrived at probation’s door in the late 1970s and early 1980s in response to a variety of perceived problems in the penal sphere. During that time, there was increasing scepticism about the effectiveness of probation and its use of casework, especially in the advent of Martinson’s negative analysis of the efficacy of offender modification work (Martinson, 1974). McLaughlin, Muncie and Hughes (2001) noted that, consequently, probation became more and more micro-managed to the extent that by 2001, managerialism, in the form of modernisation, had been ‘institutionalised and normalised’. Ledger (2010) deduces that the shift in government was first signalled when the Prisons and

Probation Minister, Paul Boateng, announced in the late 1990s, that probation should describe itself as a law enforcement agency. Subsequent legislation reinforced this notion and the commitment to advise, assist and befriend (enshrined in the 1907 Act) was removed in favour of a punishment model characterized by closer monitoring and enforcement. Although probation was one of the last agencies to come under reform, the requirement to address fundamental issues of accountability, effectiveness and cost would lead to some of the most radical changes to its function in over a century.

1.5.1 Change is coming: what future for probation?

It was challenging to attribute the approaching changes to a single cause in the presence of competing rationales. Phillips (2011), for example, proffered that derivatives of managerialism such as the introduction of technological solutions to risk assessment, the pervasive use of targets to manage workload and the extensive use of rules to standardise practice were having a negative impact on the service's occupational culture. Burke and Collett (2010) located their reasons in an unreceptive Labour administration who adopted a micro-management culture and a strong belief that prison works, which threatened the existence of the service. Explanation included the need to save the public purse in conjunction with some less than favourable performance reviews which required the service to address central issues of accountability, effectiveness and cost (Ashworth, 2019); concerns around the public 'perception of softness' of the probation service (The Times, 2014); a desire to reduce an expensive and growing prison population (Garland, 2001); a need for greater professionalisation (Goodman, 2008) and an increase in measurement by performance indicators (Davies & Kirkpatrick, 1995). These forces helped to drive a modernisation and managerialist agenda that was about to send shockwaves across the service (Robinson, 2011; Beaumont, 1995; McLaughlin et al., 2001; Raine & Wilson, 1997; Whitehead & Statham, 2006).

Despite pockets of scepticism, this new era of managerialism was viewed by many as positive. The principles of managerialism had the potential to curb professional autonomy, reduce professional discretion and allow both professionals and organisations to become more competitive (Flynn, 1997). A managerialist culture could also be seen as driving up performance and enabling organisations to transform themselves to produce modern notions of public purpose (Loveday, 1999; Newman, 2000). It was believed that the principles of managerialism could be enacted by government to try to increase accountability and efficiency in public sector organisation (Hood, 1991, 1995). Such acts could potentially transform an organisation from being a problem-solving organisation to a performance organisation (Sparrow et al., 2002; Palermo, Cohen, Loan-Clarke, & Mellahi, 2010).

Faulkner (2008, p. 72) believed the changes were necessary 'to correct the inconsistency and shortcomings in standards of public service and the sense of elitism from which many public services, including probation, were suffering. Faulkner was optimistic that the changes would offer new opportunities for developments in probation and in community justice. Consequently, the changes represented an ideal opportunity to re-shape existing assumptions and inefficiencies through the introduction of a new rationale and principled methods. In this way, it was believed that probation would no longer be hampered by a sense of perpetual turmoil and crisis, instead it would become more accountable, demonstrating professional values and leadership. Also, plagued by obscurity, the service could improve its image, secure public confidence and better tackle the issues associated with crime and criminality.

Moreover, according to Fox, Albertson and Warburton (2011) there was an urgent need for justice re-investment in light of high and increasing levels of public spending on criminal justice with relatively little effect. The concept of justice reinvestment was used in the USA with promising results and given that the UK was spending some 2.5% of its GDP to manage public order, this would represent good investment.

Vanstone (2004) suggests that the primary driver of changes experienced by the service transcended beyond contemporary political expediency and fiscal constraints. Vanstone offered an alternative view suggesting that despite the organisation's philanthropic tradition, its response to perceived threat to the social order by the elite class has always been a part of its evolution.

Chui and Nellis (2003) identified five broad phases of change that the service experienced since inception up until 2000: a missionary phase, a welfare phase, a decline of treatment/diversion from custody phase, a punishment in the community phase and a public protection phase. McWilliams (1987, p.97) traced the history of the service's ideologies from the beginnings of the late nineteenth century, noting two main periods: the phase of special pleading, dominant from the mid-1870s to the 1930s, and the phase of diagnosis which held sway from the 1930s to the early 1970s. Whitehead (2010) also tracked many of the service's initiatives between 1997 and 2009, documenting numerous cultural and political influences, whilst Goodman (2012) tracked how the service's work with offenders evolved, recounting its early missionary endeavours, its social work ethos and the introduction of national standards. Robinson (2011) discussed offender management work within the context of ongoing modernisation and changing structures, the offender management framework and the values underpinning the promised rehabilitation revolution that led to Transforming Rehabilitation (TR).

1.5.2 Change arrived

In June 2014, following the introduction of the TR initiative, there were several changes implemented by the Justice Minister, Chris Grayling. The Probation Service underwent, probably, the most substantial structural and operational change to the way offenders were being managed, and how probation operated in England and Wales. Accordingly, the probation service was divided into two separate entities. The National Probation Service was launched along with the creation of 21 new community rehabilitation companies split amongst eight providers (Strickland, 2016).

From the government's perspective, TR would mark a revolution in the way offenders were to be managed by transforming how rehabilitation services were being delivered. The rationale was that by paying providers to deliver community orders, licence requirements and the sentences of the court, private providers would be permitted to utilise a greater variety of interventions to augment the recidivism process. The government was optimistic that TR would not only reduce reoffending rates, but it would also be better value for money (Ministry of Justice, 2013). However, as Burke (2012) observed the probation practice should not or cannot be wholly evaluated on economic and cost efficiency grounds, rather there should be a greater focus on the service's ability to help individuals achieve a better life whilst being mindful of their human rights. Ashworth (2009) also observed that the imposition of market driven terms and business models; such as cost-effectiveness, efficiency, measurable outcomes, and performance indicators, weakens probation's purpose and function and distorts its priorities. Moreover, it could be argued, that the value and purpose of the probation service transcends beyond reducing offending to include the effective assessment and management of offenders in the community, forming appropriate supporting relationships with people who often have complex life experiences and dealing with the lapses and relapses inherent within desistance. However, McLaughlin, Muncie and Hughes (2001) noted that despite the stated aims, the primary machinery behind the intent of TR was the outsourcing of services for low and medium risk offenders, for which probation trusts were responsible at the time, to private sector organisation. Perhaps what was overlooked was the actual substance of the services to be provided, with improvement and innovation expected to happen as an automatic consequence of introducing competition.

1.5.3 Transforming rehabilitation: Uncertainties and anxieties

Critics remark that the actual substance of the services to be delivered required further thinking about and, consequently, there was a lack of specificity about what success would look like. It could not have been believed that just introducing greater competition would lead to greater innovation and effectiveness (Frazer, Drinkwater, Mullen, Hayes, O'Donoghue, & Cumbo, 2014). There were also protests from some practitioners

and their unions, who claimed that the proposed changes were likely to result in deskilling practitioners, lower morale amongst staff, and potentially putting the public at risk (Calder & Goodman, 2013; Burke, Mullings & Robinson 2017). Frazer et al., (2014) also noted that the offender management relationship within the new arrangement was articulated in terms of risk and public protection instead of engagement and change. Prior to TR, the SEEDS model of engagement (the established offender engagement methodology used in the probation service) was still going through a period of being embedded and evaluated (Sorsby, Shapland, Farrall, McNeill, Priede, & Robinson, 2013). However, it seems that the focus on offender engagement and the implementation of SEEDS were superseded by the imperatives of TR. Furthermore, inferences were made about engagement in reference to partnering with other agencies to deliver interventions. Yet, it could be argued that whilst many of these agencies were skilled in engaging voluntary clients, there was an assumed lack of expertise among involuntary clients. Conversely, the probation service had an established history of creating and maintaining supportive and enabling relations through years of working with offenders.

1.5.4 The role of probation practitioners: Change agents in a changing agency

For years, the relationship between probation practitioners and the offenders they supervise was the primary channel for the service's intervention and although it seemed to have been undermined by cognitive behavioural programmes, its resurgence and import was once again receiving due attention (Ansbro, 2008; Burnett & McNeil 2005; Shapland, 2014; Shapland et al., 2012; Rex, 1999). This may be because within the last decade, advances in correctional psychology have contributed to a greater understanding of the possibilities inherent within the offender and practitioner supervisory relationship. Even though practice theories and essential skills changed in intricacy and emphasis over time, the probationers' relationship with offenders remained fundamental to the desistance process (Shapland, 2014; Shapland et al., 2012; Rex, 1999). Furthermore, emerging evidence on effectiveness in supporting desistance amongst offenders of all types was pointing towards different modalities and competencies. The catalogue of emerging desistance research, for example, was suggesting that factors such as an understanding of maturation is essential to support offenders' emotional journeys into desistance (Maruna & LeBel, 2010; Transition to Adulthood Alliance, 2013; McNeill et al., 2012; Maruna, 2010; McNeill & Weaver, 2010). Likewise, tailored interventions - delivered with mindful responsiveness - which take account of the offender's individuality and diversity, were more likely to create a conducive atmosphere for changes to occur (Clinks, 2013). Equally, probation practitioners should be skilled at creating and maintaining positive supportive relationships that enable offenders to create non-offending identities (McNeill & Weaver, 2010; Weaver, 2013; Maruna, 2001).

Whilst there may have been pockets of hope for TR's success, there was overwhelming disquiet about the fragmentation of the service, loss of expertise which might result in inconsistent practices, concerns about public safety and possible conflicts of interest (Evans, 2016; Calder & Goodman, 2013; McNeil, 2013; Robinson 2013; Senior, 2013; Annison et al., 2014; Burke, 2013; Hedderman, 2013; Justice Committee, 2014; McNeill, 2013; Newburn, 2013; Public Accounts Committee, 2014; Senior 2013). Evans (2016) argues that despite one potential positive (the IOM), the impact of TR has been overwhelmingly negative. Concerns began to be raised, and whilst a detailed study of the impact of TR is not yet available, there were growing indicators that the vision and purpose of TR were not being realised. An inspection report into the work of probation in the North of London suggests that, whilst the NPS was doing satisfactorily in many areas, performance from the London CRC was not as positive as envisaged (HMIP, 2016a). In 2015, a report from HM Inspectorate of Probation (HMIP) suggested that fewer than half of CRC managed cases that were inspected had their first appointment with an offender manager within the expected five working days, which is key a performance indicator (HMIP, 2015). This was compared to NPS managed cases where almost all of the sampled cases were allocated within one working day and seen by the offender managers within the prescribed time.

In 2017 NPS (London) underwent another quality and impact inspection into the effectiveness of its work. Despite recommendations for improvement in a few areas, overall, the report suggested that the NPS was an efficient service. Although the published results did not specifically address the issue of engagement, evaluations of related areas such as assessment and planning were deemed to be working reasonably well (HMIP, 2018). The report revealed that, whilst the quality of work to reduce re-offending was variable, assessments and planning were generally good. Conversely, the report also highlighted that, 'in too many cases, there were insufficient structured interventions' and service users were not always involved in the planning or reviewing of the work that they were required to do (HMIP, 2018, p26).

It is now clear that the government intends to reunite the services. Wales was returned to a single service in 2018, and there are plans in place to reunify the catalogue of offender management work in England by June 2021. Essentially, the transition model will see offender management once again under the umbrella of the NPS, whilst interventions, such as some offending behaviour programmes will remain under the auspices of the CRC. It could be construed that the reunification is an indicator that the intentions of transforming rehabilitation was unsuccessful.

1.6 Research Focus

This research focuses solely on young adult male offenders. The choice to focus on males rather than females was based on a number of contextual variables. The researcher's professional experience of offender management was predominantly with male offenders, both as a practitioner and practice manager. Moreover, the evidence suggests that London, as a probation division, has a limited number of female offenders (about 4%) on supervision (HMIP, 2019). Besides, there is limited empirical evidence of young females as an offending group (Burman & Batchelor, 2009). Evidence indicates that most traditional sociological/criminological theories of delinquency are based primarily on male offenders (Chesney-Lind, & Pasko, 2013). This may be because young adult females are traditionally overlooked by policymakers. As noted by Burman and Batchelor (2009), policy response to young females who offend traditionally falls into two groups: (a) youth offending, which focuses principally on young men, and as a consequence ignores the issues of gender; and (b) female offenders in general, which then fails to distinguish between older and younger women. According to Burman and Batchelor (2009), these issues serve to relegate young females to a hidden offending minority, whose offending pathways and distinctive needs are largely undocumented and unaddressed. It has been suggested that the criminogenic lens applied to female offending should be gender-responsive if the disadvantages faced by this group are to be effectively addressed (Sheehan, McIvor, & Trotter, 2011). Therefore, young female offenders would require a separate study to adequately explore and address the unique issues of this group.

1.7 Overview of Thesis

This research explores the views and experiences of a group of criminal justice practitioners from Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (London), the London Community Rehabilitation Company and Youth Offending Teams. A group of young adult male offenders subject to statutory supervision was also interviewed about their experiences of engagement during supervision. By capturing, synthesising and analysing the narrative of both practitioners and probationers, the research hopes to better understand what constitutes effective engagement with young adult male offenders and how it is realised within supervision.

Chapter 2 of this thesis sets the theoretical context for discussion by looking at the wider literature on youth offending. It sketches the current state of affairs regarding young adult male offenders within the Criminal Justice System of England and Wales. It also analyses the current parameters of the youth crime debate and explores some of the diverse theoretical perspectives advanced to account for the current disproportionate overrepresentation of this cohort of offenders within the CJS. The chapter scrutinises the

granularities of available offending statistics to unearth an accurate picture of offending by young adults. Additionally, it critically reviews some general characteristics of young adult males within the CJS and explores available literature on offending by marginalised youths.

Chapter 3 is concerned with the methodologies employed in the research. It examines the research question in context with the research paradigm exploring both ontological and epistemological perspectives. Ethical issues related to the research are considered and matters such as consent and confidentiality are discussed alongside issues of diversity and equality. The chapter discusses the researcher's rationale for the chosen methods in tandem with relevant theories and provides a step-by-step outline of how the research data was collected, processed, stored and analysed. The chapter concludes with a reflection on the above.

Chapter 4 seeks to contextualise the prevalence of offending by young adults by exploring some of the theoretical arguments put forward as a basis for the current influx of young adults within the CJS. It examines the age-crime debate and discusses issues such as the age-crime curve, deficit in maturity and the phenomenon labelled as the maturity gap. The chapter draws on neurobiological evidence to examine and put into perspective thinking and decision-making processes, and how these variables are claimed to impact offending.

Chapter 5 provides an overview of the evolution and trajectory of youth justice within the UK. In particular, it looks at early endeavours to improve the welfare of justice-involved children and youths, including efforts to protect them from danger and exploitation. It pays specific attention to successive legislative reforms, offers contextual and operational insights and understandings into youth to adult transition (Y2A), and discusses current practices concerning the management of young adult offenders. Existing arrangements governing the transition of young adult offenders from the youth justice system into the adult criminal justice system are examined, principally, as they relate to the assessment and allocation of cases between the National Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Companies. Also, the chapter explores the notion that a distinct approach is required when engaging young adult male offenders. It deliberates the proposed explanations underpinning the justification for a separate approach to engaging with this offending group. Theoretically, the chapter critically examines some of the arguments put forward by academics and practitioners, both for and against the above proposal. It sets out to explicate what is meant by the term 'effective engagement' and seeks to clarify why a distinct approach to engaging with young adult offenders is required. The apparent maturity gap faced by youths in western cultures is examined, along with a reported delay pertaining to some young adults and their transition to adulthood. The chapter begins by outlining a working definition of engagement before analysing what effective engagement looks like in practice. It seeks

to understand the components of effective engagement and how it can be achieved. The chapter draws on a plethora of effective practice literature relating to offender rehabilitation and scrutinises the development and propagation of cognitive behavioural programmes. It also explores and describes the role of practitioners, the significance of the therapeutic alliance between practitioner and probationer, and how this may impact the rehabilitative process.

Chapter 6 is the first of two connected findings chapters; it summarises and discusses the findings from the interviews with probation practitioners about their views and experiences of engaging with young adult offenders.

Chapter 7, the second of the interconnected chapters, discusses the experiences and views of engagement from the perspectives of young adult offenders.

Chapter 8 brings together the findings from both groups of participants in a condensed discussion that compares, contrasts and contextualises the findings as a whole. As the concluding chapter, it also looks at practice implications and makes recommendations for future research before a final reflection on the overall study.

This study is concerned with how criminal justice practitioners actively engage young adult offenders in supervision. To set the scene for discourse, the chapter opens with a brief discussion and definition of the two essential concepts at the heart of this research: precisely who are young adult offenders, and what exactly is meant by the term ‘*effective engagement*’? The current state of affairs involving young adult offenders within the Criminal Justice System is later examined, starting with the purported overrepresentation of the cohort. The chapter then explores the characteristics of these justice-involved youths, through a review of current data and pertinent literature on young adult offenders and offending.

2.1 Defining Young Adult Offenders

Although criminal justice agencies are advised to recognise young adults aged 18 to 24 as a distinct group by virtue of the developmental, social, economic, and structural states they have to traverse (Helyar-Cardwel, 2009), there remains a lack of consensus as to precisely which age group within the offending population are classified as young adult offenders (Judd & Lewis, 2015). This lack of official classification is apparent across the agencies within the criminal justice system. The Ministry of Justice, for instance, recognises prisoners aged 21 and over as adults, and young adults as those aged 18 to 20 (MOJ, 2011), whilst the Probation Service categorises young adults as those aged between 18 and 24. HM Inspectorate of Prison, on the other hand, recognises young adults as those ages 21 to 24 (HMIP, 2006). The Crown prosecution Service (CPS) appears to make no distinction between young people, young adults and adult offenders for prosecutorial purposes, although there is an emphasis on maturity (CPS, 2019). Nevertheless, some proponents of this debate have long taken the Probation Service’s classification as the standard and have consistently referred to young adults as those aged 18 to 24 (Barrow Cadbury Trust, 2014). For this research, the term ‘young adult offender’ refers to a young person aged between 18 and 24. They will have been found guilty of, or entered a guilty plea to an offence in court, sentenced, and are now in the process of transition to be managed, or currently being managed within the Adult Criminal Justice System. Throughout this thesis, the term will, at times, be used synonymously with the following: youths, offending youths, justice-involved youths, probationers, young people and YAOs, except where children 10-17 are inferred or expressed.

2.2 Effective Engagement

Precisely what is understood within offender management as effective engagement will be explained in more detail in chapter four. In sum, effective offender engagement is conceptualised as employing the necessary knowledge and skills to attract and occupy the interest of offenders, motivating them to willingly become involved in dialogues, processes, and rehabilitative activities that are linked to their sentence plan objectives. Engagement, according to Mason and Prior (2008, p.212) connotes being concerned with a set of objectives focussed on developing a young person's motivation and commitment to become willingly involved in selected activities: it infers an active, not passive involvement.

2.3 Perceptions of Youth Crime: Youths in Crisis or Moral Panic?

From Cohen's (1972) depiction of the Mods and Rockers in Britain in the 1960s; Welch, Price and Yankey's (2002) representation of the Wilding in America (notably New York) in the 1980s, to the portrayals of neo-Nazi gangs in Israel by Sela-Shayovitz (2011), societal reactions to the behaviour of youth deviancy has commonly engendered notions of a 'threat' to social order. Moreover, media depictions of youth criminalities are often conveyed in sensationalist reporting, implicit of a growing crisis of criminal youths (Davis & Bourhill, 1997; Greer, 2007; Franklin, 2002). For example, youth deviancy such as the London riots, knife enabled crimes (predominantly stabbings) or gangs of youths on mopeds committing robberies, suggests that youth crime is ubiquitous and increasing in both severity and frequency. Also, political hyperboles and the concomitant response of criminal justice officials to justice-involved youths appear to have further fuelled public anxieties of youths, either causing risk or being at risk (Welch, Price & Yankey, 2002).

Over time, young people, crime, and risk have become a politically charged issue: young people are seen as either causing risk or being at risk (Austen, 2009; Cieslik, & Pollock, 2017; Sharland, 2005). However, it is now officially acknowledged that since the peak in 2007, the overall number of young people getting involved in the youth justice system has reduced significantly over the last 10 years (MOJ, 2017c). Currently, young people (except for Blacks, Muslim, White working-class boys and Care-Leavers) as a collective, are no longer regarded as over-represented in the CJS (MOJ, 2017c). The Charlie Taylor review of the youth justice system in England and Wales (Taylor, 2016) revealed that in 2015, only 47, 000 children were cautioned/convicted; a downward trend of 79% since 2007. The report implies that this dip may be due in part to the police and the youth offending service exploring more informal channels of dealing with offending by children. Of significance, the report advises that the demand for youth justice services has changed within the UK and currently the youth justice system is undergoing a significant period of reform. It could be

conjectured that the substantial reduction in the amount of young people becoming entangled in the CJS has shifted the focus away from children and young people, whilst also creating a gap for a new group to be the focus of attention.

As a homogeneous collective, the criminality of youths has also attracted an array of official policy and practice responses; although, more recently heterogeneity within the group is being realised with efforts to explore more bespoke approaches. Evidence suggests that growing concern and emphasis is now being placed on a subset of youths labelled as young adults (House of Commons, 2016; 2018; MOJ,2019c; Transition to Adult Alliance, 2016; Prison Reform Trust, 2012; Uggen, & Wakefield, 2005). Young adults are considered to be going through a complex transition period (from childhood to full adulthood) which renders them, on the one hand, more susceptible to offend prolifically and on the other, less likely to respond to standardised rehabilitative techniques. Consequently, there is now believed to be an 'epidemic' of youths within the criminal justice system in some Western jurisdictions (Cook, & Laub, 2002). But is the public's perception of youth criminality worse than the reality? Do, for instance, available statistics corroborate public perception that youths offend disproportionately?

2.4 Offending Statistics: Facts or Figures

Official offending data in England and Wales is collated from two primary sources: Police Recorded Crime (PRC) and the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW), formerly the British Crime Survey (MOJ, 2017). This data is routinely published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and the Ministry of Justice (MOJ). It is believed that self-reported crimes such as those collected by the CSEW are likely to be more accurate, compared to those of the police (Junger-Tas, Turlouw & Klein, 1994). For instance, the ONS crime statistics released in January 2017 indicate that, during the year ending March 2016, 4.5 million crimes were reported to the police in England and Wales; however, the CSEW reported 6.3 million (MOJ, 2017a). It is of note that at the time when these crimes were reported, the ages of the perpetrators were not normally known, and according to the MOJ (2017a), in almost half of these cases no suspects were ever identified. Hence, it is challenging to ascertain with any degree of certainty how many of these crimes were committed by young people. Remarkably, the Office of National Statistics (ONS, 2016) acknowledges that none of these methods of data collection, and therefore resulting figures, can be considered flawless.

It can be reasoned that if officially published statistics do not precisely reflect all crimes, then available crime figures may, at best, be only a partial representation rather than an exact picture of offending by young people. Furthermore, on the premise that many crimes go unreported, and not all reported crimes are

processed, recorded crimes by young people could be far greater or lesser than official statistics show. Moreover, establishing exactly how many crimes young people commit may also be further compounded by the existence of diversion schemes such as Community Resolutions or Triage Programmes, which offer alternative means of dealing with some deviant youths, thus diverting them from formal criminal justice processes.

Public opinion of youth crime being disproportionate cannot be validated by current statistics as there remains no reliable method of measuring the level of crime committed by young people (Buonanno, Galbiati, & Vertova, 2018; Maguire, 2017; Hope, 2005; May, Hough, Bhardwa, Boyce & Oyanedel, 2010). Nonetheless, it can be reasoned that in the absence of empirical alternatives, looking at available crime statistics is a reasonable place from which to commence an examination into the extent of crime committed by young people and young adults.

2.5 Offending Data: Young People and Young Adults

Offending data from the Office for National Statistics (6th August 2017) on young people in the Youth Justice System (from 1st April 2015 to 31st March 2016) indicates that, in the year ending March 2016, 88,600 young people (aged 10-17) were arrested by the police in England and Wales – representing 10% of all detentions (YJB, MOJ, 2017a). Of that figure, 79,600 were convicted or cautioned. Historically, young people are also believed to have a higher rate of re-offending. Proven re-offending statistics from 2011/2012 confirm that of the 71,000 juveniles who were cautioned, convicted or released from prison between April 2011 and March 2012, approximately 25,000 re-offended. The reoffending rate was 35.5 %, with an average of 2.88 re-offences per re-offender (MOJ, YJB, ONS, 2014). This figure went up to 38.0% in the year ending March 2014, with an average rate of 3.12 re-offences per re-offender. However, reoffending figures decreased in 2015/2016 by a 0.1 percentage point compared with that of 2014. Of the 36,300 young people who were followed up in the year ending March 2015, 13,700 (37.9%) re-offended within a year (YJB, MOJ, 2017a), with an average of 3.3 offences each. The evidence suggests that although fewer young adults are offending, those who are, re-offend at a higher rate.

As of summer, 2017, there were 14,932 young adults in custody in England and Wales, accounting for 17% of the total custodial population (Prison Reform Trust, 2017). As mentioned, young adult offenders are also overrepresented amongst those subject to probation supervision and those on community orders. Reoffending rates are also substantially higher amongst young adults in the criminal justice system compared to older adult offenders (Beyond Youth Custody, 2017). For example, except for those aged 15

to 17, those aged 18 to 20 have the highest rate of recidivism. The data suggests that over half of young adults who receive custodial sentences reoffend within 12 months, and around two-thirds reoffend within 24 months of being released from custody (Prison Reform Trust, 2012).

Although indications are that proven reoffending amongst this cohort has declined over the last decade, the characteristics of those offending suggest that they are likely to continue offending well into adulthood and commit more serious types of offences, unless efforts are made to enable them to change (MOJ, 2011). This seems to give validity to the adolescent limited versus life course hypothesis conceptualised by Moffitt (1993). In her construct of a dual taxonomy theory of offending as a means of explaining the age-crime curve, Moffitt (1993) posits that there are two main types of offenders: adolescence-limited and life-course-persistent. Of these two groups, the life-course-persistent (usually smaller in number) is responsible for a disproportionate amount of crime and will continue to offend unless something is done to interrupt their offending cycle. In fact, it has been posited that the Criminal Justice System may be inadvertently prolonging the criminal careers of these young adults by not doing enough to enable them to desist during the period when they should be growing out of offending (Farrington, Loeber & Howell, 2012; House of Commons Justice Committee, 2016; T2A, 2016; Prison Reform Trust, 2017).

2.6 Do Young Adults Commit More Crimes?

Drawing from the aforementioned statistics, it could be conjectured that the overrepresentation of youths within the CJS, correlates with a higher aggregate of crimes being committed by members of this cohort. Although a logical deduction, such a simple extrapolation might risk ignoring the processes by which crimes are recorded and what the granularities of crime statistics may show in reality. Remarkably, gathering accurate data on young adults' offending is not without complexity. In fact, at first glance, it appears rather uncomplicated to gather data on offending by young people via the above-mentioned Youth Justice Statistics. However, on closer examination the process is beset with inherent challenges. On the most basic level, officially published offending data is divided into two main groups: young people aged 10 to 17, and adults 18 years and over. Furthermore, where precise data on young adults offending was located, the emphasis seems to be on those aged 18 to 20; those aged 21 and over are categorised as adults, thus contributing to the overall adult offending figures (McVie, 2004; MOJ, 2017b).

However, implicit within this challenge is an opportunity to contextualise this dichotomy of data. Given the inextricable link between young people and young adults, there may be some intrinsic benefits in not dividing the data, instead seeing it as a continuum. On a most rudimentary level, viewing this data holistically provides

a useful platform from which to contextualise the trajectory of youth to young adult offending and their transition from the youth justice system into the adult CJS. As noted earlier, evidence indicates that although offending by young people has seen a steady decline in recent times, the characteristics of those who are offending has given rise to a number of concerns. The evidence indicates that a smaller cluster who began offending as children will most probably continue to offend long into adulthood and are likely to commit more serious crimes, and therefore likely to be given lengthier sentences (MOJ, YJB & ONS, 2014). If a young person aged 16 or 17 is arrested for a crime, the average time from arrest to sentence is 45 to 58 days (in Magistrates' court) and 58 to 222 days in the Crown court (MOJ, 2009). With an average sentence length of 16.1 months and an average custodial sentence of 16.4 months (MOJ, 2017b), it is possible that between conviction and sentencing, a 16 or 17-year-old may reach the age where they would be classified as a young adult. Accordingly, an interpretation of young adult offending can be augmented by interpreting the data of young people.

Also, as pointed out above, some of these young adults will straddle both justice systems, many having begun their criminal justice journey and offending career from within youth justice. In such instances, their offence/s would be picked up under the statistics relating to young people rather than young adults. Therefore, current statistics imply that young people offend disproportionately (Prison Reform Trust, 2012; ONS, 2016).

This predisposition to offend copiously is claimed to have led to an overrepresentation of young adults within the CJS. There is an official acknowledgement that in recent years, particularly the last decade, there has been an incremental downward curve in the number of young adults who are becoming implicated in the Criminal Justice System (Youth Justice Board, 2016). Nonetheless, current data on offending rates, prison population, and community and custodial disposals indicate that young adults are still disproportionately overrepresented within the CJS of England and Wales (House of Common Justice Committee, 2016). Existing evidence suggests that despite accounting for less than 10 % of the British population, young adults (18-24 years old) account for more than a third of those involved in the Criminal Justice System (Livingstone, Amad & Clark, 2015). Furthermore, statistics also show that three out of four young adults who leave prison, and two out of three who have served a community sentence, will most likely reoffend within two years (Barrow Cadbury Trust, 2012). These youths are considered to share particular characteristics that make them more susceptible to becoming enmeshed in the CJS.

2.7 Accounting for the Prevalence of Youth Offending

2.7.1 *Age and Crime*

The relationship between age and crime has been extensively explored, as evidenced by the plethora of complementary, and at times, conflicting explanatory postulations (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990; Hirschi, 2017; Hagan 2010; Moffitt, 2017; Sampson & Laub, 2005; Theobald & Farrington, 2010; Sweeten, Piquero & Steinberg, 2013). As discussed within the previous section, the existence of a proliferation of offending in adolescence and the overrepresentation of young adults within the CJS is largely agreed and substantiated by available statistics. Much research, time and energy has been spent in attempting to better understand the causes of youth delinquency and the factors that cause young people to offend excessively (Shader, 2014). There is general agreement within the literature that whilst there is no single path to youth delinquency, the constellation of certain risk factors is more likely to promote the onset, frequency and persistence of offending (Wilson & Hernstein, 1985; Farrington, 2007). These 'risk factors' are broadly understood as variables that, if present for a given youth, increase the probability that he/she will offend, in contrast to another youth in whose life these features are absent (Kazdin, Kraemer, Kessler, Kupfer, & Offord, 1997; Farrington, 2007; Shader, 2014). The following sections of this chapter aim to examine some of the factors put forward to account for the foundations and prevalence of offending among youths. However, given the vastness of the cause-of-crime literature, I have elected to discuss only a few of these key causative factors, covering two broad areas: traditional criminological theories anchored mainly in sociology and life course persistent theories influenced largely by psychology.

2.7.2 *Traditional Explanation of Delinquency and Crime*

It has been postulated that conventional delinquency and cause of crime theorising frequently excludes girls and often attributes the fundamental factors for offending by boys to acquisitive type motivations (Belknap, 2006). Drawing on the works of early theoreticians and academics such as Cohen (1955) and Merton (1949). Belknap (2006) points out that the frustrations boys encounter in pursuit of culturally determined objectives and markers of adulthood result in unmanageable strains that eventually lead to offending. Many of these early putative cause-of-crime theories, such as Anomie and Strain, share common themes. They usually portray young people as willing actors reacting to social strains in the quest for adult-like roles, responsibilities, and privileges (Loeber & Le Blanc 1990; Jang, 1999; Agnew, 1992;1997; 2002; Cernkovich & Giordano & Rudolph, 2000). Strain theory, for example, advocates that deficits in adult-like attainments and privileges create tensions and stresses amongst young people who, in order to acquire or access certain desirable assets or opportunities, frequently turn to crime (Agnew, 2003). Agnew (2003) further explains that

strain encourages everyone to pursue ideal middle-class values and goals through financial success. However, because it is difficult for lower-class youths to realise these goals through legitimate means, they turn to crime.

Evidence from youths' self-reports of offending (in the UK) revealed that one in every two adolescent males admitted to committing an offence (Graham & Bowling, 1995). Noteworthy, however, was the discovery that property type offending was the most commonly reported crime amongst this cohort. Similarly, analysis of the Uniform Crime Reports (UCR), which compiles official data on crime in the United States, shows that acquisitive type offending - robbery and theft from motor vehicles, for example - outstrips other crimes (Baumer, & Wolff, 2014). In reality, property crime in America is argued to outnumber other crimes by about ten to one, with a property crime being reported approximately every three seconds (Criminal Justice Degreehub, 2018). Comparable statistics have likewise been documented in Canada (Perreault, 2012).

Nevertheless, these strain-inspired explanations came under criticism on several fronts (Hirschi, 1969; 2017; Cole, 1975; 2017; Kornhauser, 1978; Bernard, 1984; Farnworth and Leiber, 1989; Agnew, 1991). For instance, in a precis of this criticism, Agnew (2002) noted that strain-oriented theorem fail to adequately explain the broad range of middle-class delinquency or the pursuit of non-financial middle-class status. Also, they neglect to explain obstacles to goal achievement other than social class and why only some individuals who experience strain turn to crime.

Other sociologically inspired cause-of-crime theories (for example, rational choice, social learning and routine activity) posit that crime results from a defect in social relations and regulations. Social learning theorists contend that crime is a learnt behaviour which emanates from social interactions (Akers & Jensen, 2003; Akers, 2009; Pratt, Cullen, Sellers, Winfrey, Madensen, Daigle, Fearn & Gau, 2010; Chavis, 2012). Accordingly, negative social influences that can come from associating with, and spending unsupervised time with, antisocial peers can contribute to serious and persistent offending (Chung, & Steinberg, 2006; Herrenkohl, Maguin, Hill, Hawkins, Abbott, & Catalano, 2000; Dodge, Dishion & Lansford 2006; Simons, & Burt, 2011). Routine activity theory, for example, posits that the prevalence of offending amongst young people results from their involvement in unstructured and unsupervised day-to-day activities that are more likely to place them in situations where strain is high and crime is more likely to be reinforced by delinquent peers (Agnew, 2001a; Loeber & Le Blanc, 1990; Haynie, 2002; Osgood, Foster & Courtney 2010). These unsupervised activities are said to sometimes stem from a deviant subculture. Certainly, the emergence of a youth subculture in Britain is well documented by many cultural observers and commentators. Initially, the emphasis was on issues such as social contexts and musical expression (Bentley, 2010). However, the focus later shifted toward issues of class, deviancy and subsequently criminality (Newburn, 2007). This

growing connection between criminality and subculture (mainly that of urban ethnic minority groups) has been theorised and re-theorised (Gabbidon, 2010; Brake, 2013; Ferrell, 2017; Unnever & Gabbidon, 2011). According to typical social disorganisation theorising, delinquency and crime are to be expected in areas characterised by poverty, population growth and ethnic heterogeneity (Jobes, Barclay, Weinand & Donnermeyer, 2004; Stansfield, 2014).

Conversely, whilst traditional subculture theorising intrinsically links youth criminality to a deviant youth subculture and is broadly accepted, the corollary that such subcultures are marked by homogenous representations of deprivation and marginalisation is being challenged (Burney, 2013; Terpstra, 2006). For instance, positioning this argument within the wider concepts of strain theory, and Cohen's (1955) description of delinquent subcultures, Terpstra (2006) contends that delinquent youth subculture is no longer driven by middle-class values. According to Terpstra (2006), the social and economic conditions of urban lower-class youth has experienced fundamental changes, and youth subculture is now marked by issues such as autonomy, smartness in relation with the outside world, masculinity and the awareness of being viewed as a 'failure by the dominant society'.

Likewise, the family structure, including poor parenting and offending family members, has also been implicated in the factors that contribute to youth delinquency. It is argued that poor self-control (a significant risk factor to youth deviancy) is a learnt behaviour rooted in social factors and parenting, and it is caregivers who are responsible for fostering and nurturing it (McClun & Merrell, 1998; Chao, 1994; Cheong, Balhorn & 2001; Finkenauer, Engels & Baumeister, 2005; Patock-Peckham, Watts & McNulty, 2014). Effective child-rearing, according to Watts and McNulty (2014, p.2), should result in children who are adept at self-regulation, whilst ineffective nurturing results in children with little self-control. According to these researchers, effective child rearing involves observing children's conduct, identifying antisocial behaviours and correcting them. The expected result is that parents will nurture children who are better able to delay their gratification in consideration of others (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990).

It has been speculated that many of the young people involved in the criminal justice system are exposed to multiple negative social influences because of the environment from which they come (De Coster, Heimer, & Wittrock, 2006; McAra & McVie, 2010; Social Exclusion Unit, 2002; Seddon, 2005;). Evidence confirms that justice-involved youths are more likely to come from dysfunctional homes and/or family environments (Cullingford, 1999; Frick & Jackson, 1993; Fagan, 1995; Matthews, & Young, 2013). Mooney, 2013). Also, they are more likely to experience material and economic deprivation (Chester, 1976; Hirschi & Gottfredson, 1993; Kennedy, Kawachi, & Prothrow-Stith, 1998; Lederman, Loayza, & Menendez, 2002) and more likely to come from disadvantaged neighbourhoods (Cambron, Catalano, & Hawkins, 2019; Bass, & Lambert, 2004;

Herrenkohl, Hawkins, Abbott, 2002). It is argued that, collectively, these features serve to push young people towards the periphery of society (Young & Matthews, 2013; Grover, 2013) and make them more susceptible to offending (Farrington, 1998; Murray, Janson, & Farrington, 2007; Thornberry, Huizinga, & Loeber, 2004).

2.7.3 Life Course Perspective of Crime and Deviancy

The life-course explanation of crime causation is intricately linked to concepts of human development and takes much of its influence from the discipline of developmental psychology. It locates delinquency and criminal behaviours in youth as age-related, owing to maturation processes and phases of development that youths undergo on their way to adulthood (Loeber & Le Blanc, 1990; Sampson & Laub, 1990; Laub & Lauritsen, 1993). In similar ways to sociologically informed theories of delinquency, developmental psychology offers perspectives that enhance traditional criminological understanding of crime, especially regarding the transformations that take place between childhood and adulthood, and how offending decisions are made (Loeber & Le Blanc, 1990). Principally, how psychosocial and cognitive variables converge to influence the evolution of offending choices (Pogarsky, Kim & Paternoster, 2005; Monahan & Khan, 2009). It is implied that while cognitive capacities may shape the process of decision making, it is psychosocial immaturity that influences decision-making outcomes. Accordingly, it is the psychosocial factors that influence adolescents' values and preferences, and drive cost-benefit calculus in offending choices. So, based on this conjecture, the degree of an adolescent's psychosocial maturity will determine the efficacy of his/her decision-making capacity, despite their level of cognitive maturity (Cauuffman & Steinberg, 2000; Scott, Reppucci, & Woolard, 1995; Steinberg & Cauuffman, 1996). Notwithstanding minor discrepancies in explicatory expositions, a fundamental position of general agreement amongst life course scholars is that youths offend prolifically during a particular period of life, between adolescence and early adulthood: an occurrence widely referred to as the age-crime curve.

2.7.4 Age Crime Curve

There is a preponderance of age-crime research attributing the proliferation of offending amongst young people to the existence of a phenomenon characterised as the 'age-crime curve'. (Eggleston & Laub, 2002; Farrington, 2003; Farrington, Loeber & Howell, 2012; Forrest & Hay, 2011; Loeber, & Farrington, 2014; Nagin, Nagin & Farrington, 1992; McAra & McVie, 2010; Piquero, & Moffitt, 2005). Broadly, the age-crime curve hypothesis proposes that offending peaks during adolescence but gradually decreases thereafter. More precisely, it proposes that when the ratio of crime is measured in tandem with age, there is a quantifiable

increase in criminal activities during mid-adolescence, followed by a correspondingly precipitous decline during early adulthood (Shulman, Steinberg, & Piquero, 2013).

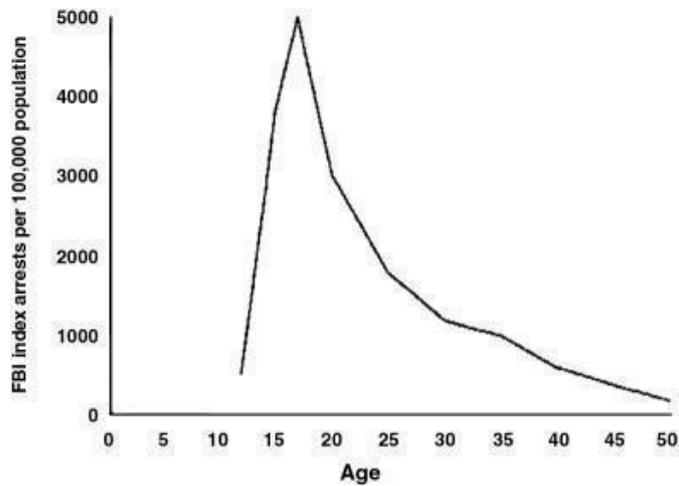


Figure 2.1: A Graphical representation of the age-crime curve adopted from Blonigen (2010, p. 90)

There are four observable stages to the age-crime curve: it begins with a sharp surge in mid-adolescence; followed by a notable peak in late adolescence; there is then a steep decline in early adulthood; trailed by a gradual decline thereafter (Blonigen, 2010). Mostly, it is hypothesised that during this period of life, these young people are more susceptible to a broader pool of risk factors and consequently are more likely to be involved in a wider range of risk-taking behaviours. At the heart of this risk-taking proclivity sits a number of potentially problematic developmental concerns, including a renowned deficit in maturity.

2.7.5 *Maturity and Crime*

As remarked by Prior et al (2011) the maturity hypothesis is used explicitly in two main bodies of research literature concerned with deviancy and offending behaviour: (1) neurobiological studies of brain development, which focus on the structural and functional changes that happen as the human brain matures, and how this shapes our understanding of behaviour; and (2) psychological enquiries, concerned with the development of maturity in adolescents and young adults, particularly in relation to attitudes and behaviours. The role of maturity, specifically the lack of maturity, is a pivotal argument within the age-crime debate. Given its centrality in the breadth of literature discussing maturity and crime straddling various disciplines, theoretical models and concepts of analysis (Prior et al, 2011), it seems prudent to begin with a fundamental conception before advancing to a fuller discourse.

Contextually, maturity is concerned with the process through which a young person grasps the statuses of adulthood (Caffman & Steinberg; Steinberg & Schwartz, 2000; Applegate & Davis, 2006; Modecki, 2008). As noted by Mahmud (1994, p.286), a mature individual 'possesses a well-developed value system, an accurate self-concept, stable emotional behaviour, satisfying social relationships, intellectual insights, and a realistic assessment of future goals'. This conceptualisation implies notions of adulthood evidenced by adult-like behaviours, thinking capacities, adult responsibilities, and the accruing of adult capitals. Ideally a young person should acquire these assets in order to successfully attain the perceived status and privileges of adulthood (Gross, 2000; Steinberg & Schwartz, 2000; Hogan & Roberts, 2004). As such, maturity is regarded as a desirable and inevitable outcome of human development (Hogan & Roberts, 2004) and society expects all young people to eventually make this transition (Chung & Little, 2004). It is claimed that most healthy youths will experience typical physical, and sometimes intellectual maturity, during their adolescence and progress towards full psychosocial development during early adulthood (Steinburg & Schwartz, 2000; Vizard, 2006). However, it is noted that human development is understood to occur incrementally; not all individuals develop at the same pace, and not all areas in which one can mature, mature at the same time (Galambos, Barker & Tilton-Weaver, 2003a; 2003b).

It is typically agreed that physical maturity does not commonly feature in criminal justice matters and, except for a low intelligence quotient (IQ) and coexistent learning difficulties, neither does intellectual maturity. (Piquero and Brezina, 2001; Prior et al, 2011). However, Prior et al (2011) assert that physical and intellectual maturity can be concurrent with other aspects of maturity; for example, cognitive and psychosocial maturity, which are traditionally associated with offending. A deficit in these areas of development, as will be discussed later in this chapter, are of significance within both criminal justice research and practice. Not only do they provide a window of enlightenment through which one can contextualise the prevalence of youth offending and the influx of young adults within the CJS, but they also offer insight into why engaging this group may pose particular challenges.

2.7.6 Conceptualising Maturity

Although the issue of maturity/immaturity amongst offending youths has long been a topic of interest and deliberation, it has been noticed that a precise definition remains challenging (Steinberg & Caffman, 1996; Caffman & Steinberg, 2000; Galambos, Barker & Tilton-Weaver, 2003). According to Prior et al (2011), this may be because the concept of maturity cannot be considered entirely objective and measurable due to inherent, unavoidable, and normative dimensions. Whilst at its simplest, maturity denotes a state of being fully developed (Collins English Dictionary), connotatively, maturity is seen as a continuum categorised by biological, psychological, and sociological changes (Gough, 1966). Adding another dimension, Steinberg

and Schwartz (2000) conjecture that maturity also encompasses elements of intellectual development over time.

2.7.7 *Psychosocial Maturity*

One of the most fundamental principles of criminal justice in the UK and a number of other jurisdictions is that a person should only be punished if they have been found guilty of committing the act or omission in question and therefore is blameworthy. To be considered blameworthy or culpable, it must be established that the offender has not only committed the offending act but that she/he is responsible for the act in question. These two features: the 'actus reus' (the criminal act) and the 'mens rea' (the guilty mind or intention) are essential to establishing an individual's guilt and subsequently punishment and treatment (Davies, Croall & Tyler, 2015). Whilst the issues of the 'guilty act', traditionally addressed via adversarial justice (i.e. the police identify a suspect from the available evidence, prosecute and establish guilt), appears more forthright, the developmental differences between adolescents and adults have made the issue of juvenile culpability more contested. On the one hand, the prevailing view that juveniles are inherently less mature than adults and therefore ought to be treated differently in CJS matters has been challenged from many quarters (Steinberg & Cauffman, 1996). On the other hand, emerging knowledge from legal, academic and practice literature, particularly around the cognitive, psychosocial, and neurobiological development of adolescence, supports the assumption that juveniles should not be held to the same standards of criminal responsibility as adults (Cauffman, & Steinberg, 2000; Steinberg & Scott 2003).

Psychosocial maturity (PM) in the context of adolescence development, refers to particular competences young people should develop and master in order to navigate life's challenges and to function effectively in society (Greenberger & Sorensen, 1974). It is contended that as a child grows up, society expects them to develop a level of autonomy and social responsibility that enables them to manage themselves, their interactions with others, and with the wider society (Greenberger, Josselson, Knerr, 1975; Monahan, Steinberg, Cauffman, & Mulvey, 2009). Unlike physical maturity, psychosocial maturity is argued to be protracted, occurring later in life (Monahan, Steinberg, Cauffman, Mulvey, 2013; Steinberg, Cauffman, & Monahan, 2015). According to Steinberg and Cauffman (1996), three aspects of psychosocial maturity develop during adolescence and early adulthood: temperance, perspective and responsibility. These competences enable the individual to operate adequately across three spheres: the personal, the interpersonal and the social (see table 2.1 below).

Table 2.1: An Illustration of Steinberg and Cauffman’s model of psychosocial Maturity

Temperance	The ability to control one’s impulse and suppress behaviour such as aggression. It encompasses the capacities to limit impulsivity and to evaluate situations before acting.	Personal
Perspective	Consideration of others and future orientation: the ability to take into consideration the views of others and to consider situations from different viewpoints, placing them in a broader social and temporal context, consideration of others and future orientation.	Social
Responsibility	Personal responsibility and resistance to peer influence: the ability to take personal responsibility for one’s conduct and behaviours whilst resisting the influences of others.	Interpersonal

2.7.8 Psychosocial Maturity and Decision Making

Psychosocial maturity within the relevant research literature on maturity and offending is concerned with decision making (maturity of judgement) and ‘moral reasoning’. In this regard, it is suggested that the capacities to make self-regulated choices, calculate risks, and consequences, are deficient in youths (compared to adults) because typical features of adolescent development contribute to immature judgment (Scott & Steinberg, 2002).

Direct correlations between psychosocial maturity and youth crime have been empirically examined (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990; Caspi & Moffitt, 1995; Dishion & Patterson, 2006; Moffitt, 2006); with results indicating that antisocial decision making is influenced by a deficit in psychosocial maturity (Cauffman & Steinberg, 2000, p.756). Monahan, Steinberg, Cauffman, & Mulvey (2013) investigated how individual variability in the development of psychosocial maturity is linked with desistance from antisocial conduct in a sample of 1,088 serious juvenile offenders. They followed the behaviour of the participants from adolescence to early adulthood (ages 14-25) and discovered that psychosocial maturity continues to develop well into the mid-twenties. Moreover, different patterns of maturation were observed among those who desisted and those who did not. Significantly, they noted that those individuals who continued offending exhibited diminished development in psychosocial maturity. They conclude that the psychosocially mature young

people were able to desist from offending as a consequence of their ability to self-regulate, consider the implications of their actions and delay immediate self-gratification in the interest of others and longer-term goals (Modecki, 2008).

These self-regulatory capabilities are argued to be allied to cognitive processes in the brain, which continue to develop well into adulthood. Consequently, poor self-control - which manifests in acts of impulsivity and self-gratification - often resulting in offending, is understood to be a typical feature of psychosocial immaturity (Cruise, Fernandez & McCoy, 2008).

2.7.9 Psychosocial Maturity and Poor Self-control

Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) conceptualise poor self-control as a 'tendency to pursue short-term, immediate pleasure' rather than consider the long-term effects of one's actions (p. 93). Additionally, Barkley (2001) reasons that self-control is 'a response or series of responses by individuals, which functions to alter the probability of their subsequent response to an event and thereby change the likelihood of a later consequence related to that event' (p.5). A deficit in self-control is theorised as a causative factor underpinning many offending behaviours - notably, as an explanation for why some individuals persistently commit crimes throughout their life and others do not (Gibbs, Giever & Martin, 1998; Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990; Gibbs & Giever, 1995; Grasmick, Tittle & Bursik, 1993; Pratt & Cullen, 2000; Forrest & Hay, 2011).

In summarising some of the qualities and manifestations of low self-control, Gottfredson and Hersh (1990), suggest that individuals lacking in self-regulatory skills are likely to be self-centred, impulsive thrill seekers with a high threshold for self-gratification, a preference for simple physical tasks over mental ones, and have anger issues. In recent times, the connection between self-control and offending has been subjected to both criticism and empirical testing (Hirschi & Gottfredson, 1993a; Grasmick, Tittle & Bursik, 1993; Miller & Burack, 1993; Gibbs, Giever & Martin, 1998; Pratt & Cullen, 2000), with general accord that the evidence linking poor self-control to crime causation has been substantiated (see for example Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990). In an attempt to validate the empirical status of Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) 'general theory of crime,' Pratt and Cullen (2000) conducted a meta-analysis of existing empirical self-control studies and concluded that the evidence supports a strong correlation between the lack of self-control and criminal behaviour. Likewise, De Ridder, Lensvelt-Mulders, Finkenauer, Stock and Baumeister (2012;2018) conducted a meta-analytic study exploring the relationship between dispositional self-control and behaviour and found that self-control - or the lack thereof - was connected to a host of anti-social and pro-social behaviours and outcomes.

There are further studies which have explored theories of self-control with specific offence types, offending groups and risk factors. In an effort to test Gottfredson and Hirschi's theory in relation to a particular crime type, Keane, Maxim and Teevan (1993) studied the relationship between self-control and driving under the influence of alcohol. They examined secondary data from a roadside traffic survey and found that the results supported their hypothesis that there was a correlation between the two. Similarly, self-control theories were tested in relation to violent offending and homicide victimisation (Piquero, MacDonald & Dobrin, 2005); shoplifting and drunkenness (Piquero & Tibbetts, 1996); drug misuse and fraud (Longshore, Rand & Stein, 1996) and in relation to fraud cases (Holtfreter, Reising, & Piquero, 2010). Furthermore, self-control studies were conducted amongst samples of youths (LaGrange & Silverman, 1999), as well as trials focussing on particular geographies, cultures and with different ethnicities, all with similar outcomes and predictive efficacy (Hwang & Akers, 2003; Simons, Simons, Burt, Brody & Cutrona, 2005; Rebellon, Straus & Medeiros, 2008).

In essence, it is presupposed that young people offend disproportionately because they are psychosocially immature. Psychosocial maturity is broadly concerned with how offending decisions are made, particularly whether or not young people are competent and capable of making offending choices and consequently are to be held culpable. It is argued that psychosocial immaturity in juveniles mitigates their criminal culpability in three main ways. First, the level of cognitive and psychosocial development in youths is likely to shape the choices they make, including those choices deemed criminal. Second, because adolescents' decision-making capacities are immature and their autonomy constrained, they are more susceptible to the influence of coercive situations (for example, provocation, duress, or threat) that mitigate culpability unlike their adult counterparts. Lastly, because adolescents are still developing, and their personal identity is still under construction, their criminal behaviour is less likely than adults to be a reflection of ingrained bad character (Steinberg and Scott, 2003). Consequently, young people may be less responsible for illicit behaviour because they have not fully experienced the requisite complex psychological changes associated with adulthood (Zimring, 2013; Fried & Reppucci, 2001; Steinberg & Scott, 2003; Srivastava, John, Gosling, 2003). Therefore, rather than treating young adults as adults because they have reached adult age, the operative question should be whether young adults are psychosocially and cognitively mature.

2.7.10 Cognitive Maturity in adolescence and young adult

Over the last two decades, studies concerning adolescence development have taken on particular importance as researchers sought to alter long-standing representations of adolescent behaviour in light of new knowledge about brain development (Steinberg, 2005). Psychosocial development, otherwise referred to as 'neuromaturation' (Johnson, Blum, Giedd & Johnson, 2009) has sought to bring broader understanding

into how the brain continues to develop during adolescence and young adulthood. Within this enlightened knowledge construction, adolescence/young adulthood is constructed as a period of heightened vulnerability and riskiness, resulting from disjunctions between the developing brain and the behavioural and cognitive systems, controlled by both common and independent biological processes (Casey, Getz, & Galvan, 2008; Steinberg, 2005).

By demonstrating that adolescence is a period of continued brain growth and changes, evolving research in longitudinal neuroimaging has challenged established assumptions that the brain has largely finished maturing by puberty (Paus, 2005). Longitudinal neuroimaging studies indicate that the adolescent brain continues to mature well into the 20s, a finding which links neuromaturation to immaturity of judgment, deviancy and offending (Edwards 2009; Johnson, et al., 2009; Walsh 2010). Neurological research is propagated on the premise that the part of the brain (the executive function) that is responsible for key skills such as the ability to plan or to control one's impulse is located in the frontal lobe, which is purported to be the last area of the brain to mature (Johnson, et al., 2009).

2.7.11 Neuropsychological Causality: Brain Function and Offending

Although contested, efforts to theoretically and empirically link neurology to criminality is prevalent and increasing (Martell, 1992), evidenced by a plethora of existing studies (see, for example, Blair, 2003; Collins, 2004; Blake & Grafman, 2004; Beech & Mitchell, 2005; Rocque, Welsh, & Raine, 2012; Scott, & Steinberg, 2008; Loeber & Pardini, 2008). At the centre of this neurological causality debate is the theorising that the brain controls behaviour and therefore is to be credited for every human action (Miller, 1999; Pinelli, 1997; Singh, 2013) including those actions categorised as deviant or criminal (Miura, 2009; Syngelaki, 2008; Syngelaki, Moore, Savage, Fairchild, & Van Goozen, 2009). Moffitt (1993), explains that childhood delinquency is a characteristic of neurological dysfunction, which manifests in immaturity and later adolescent delinquency. According to this theorising, the functional architecture of the neural network determines what goes on in the brain, and since all decisions, and subsequently all actions (including criminal actions), are based on neural processes, the brain must be considered deterministic (Frith, & Frith, 2006; Frith, & Singer, 2008; Urbaniok, Laubacher, Hardegger, Rossegger, Endrass, & Moskvitin, 2012). Accordingly, the aetiology of criminal conduct is contended to be located in neuropsychological brain functions or dysfunctions (Coid, 1999; Vloet, Herpertz, & Herpertz-Dahlmann, 2006). From this evaluation, a healthy functioning neurological system correlates with 'normal', expected, and acceptable behaviour while an underdeveloped or malfunctioning brain is likely to manifest in atypical, and in some instances, deviant behaviours. Accordingly,

given that young people's brains are claimed to be still evolving, deviancy, and at times criminality, are inevitable.

Neuropsychological researchers have identified a collection of cognitive abilities, labelled executive cognitive functioning (ECF), commonly referred to as executive function (EF), that they believe are responsible for regulating and managing critical brain functions (Luria, 1976; 2012; Roberts, Robbins & Weiskrantz, 1998; Miller, & Cummings, 2017).) Executive functioning is theorised to be responsible for regulating vital brain activities such as planning and problem solving (Zelazo, Carter, Reznick, & Frye, 1997; Alexopoulos, Raue & Areán, 2003); working memory (Carpenter, Just & Reichle, 2000; Bull & Scerif, 2001; Carlson, Moses & Breton, 2002;); organising of behavioural strategies (Clark, Prior & Kinsella, 2002; Biederman, Monuteaux, Doyle, Seidman, Wilens, Ferrero, & Faraone, 2004); delayed gratification and self-directed actions (Brown & Pluck, 2000; Fuster, 2002; Baumeister & Vohs, 2003; Ross, 2012; Ross & Hoaken, 2010; Becerra-García, 2014). The area of the brain responsible for these tasks is located in the frontal lobe and is supposed to be amongst the last parts of the brain to mature. Children are believed to be born with the potential to develop these capabilities which mature throughout their adolescent years and into early adulthood. However, they are often not fully developed until later in life, sometimes extending into the mid-twenties (Hirschi & Hindelang, 1977;2017; Johnson, Blum & Giedd, 2009).

Executive functions include abstract thinking, motivation, planning, attention to tasks and inhibition of impulsive responses. A lesion within the frontal lobe of the brain is believed to be associated with changes in personality; hence those who experience underdevelopment or impairment to the frontal and temporal region of the brain may experience character and emotional reactions, predisposing them to offend (Miller, 1999; 2000; Fabian, 2010). For instance, such disorders may cause a young person to become impulsive. It has been affirmed that impulsivity is one of the principal features underpinning the development and maintenance of risky, poorly conceived, antisocial and criminal behaviour. Furthermore, impulsivity has been shown to be an indicator of neurological challenges amongst youths (Higgins, Kirchner & Ricketts., 2013). When Higgins et al (2013) explored the development of impulsivity during childhood, and its connection to offending in adolescence and young adults, they employed Moffitt's (1993) dual taxonomy theory, and concluded that high levels of impulsivity in childhood correlate to high rates of offending later in life.

There is a shared consensus amongst some researchers that the brain's executive function is responsible for deviant (and sometimes criminal) behaviour because it controls functions such as moral reasoning, perspective taking, planning, and initiation of goal-directed actions (Luria, 1980; 2012; Lezak, Howieson, Loring, & Fischer, 2004; Ross & Hoaken, 2010; Peterson, Rothfleisch, Zelazo, & Pihl, 1990). This may be

because the brain is either underdeveloped or dysfunctional. Raine (2008) offers an illustration into how this process functions in his “from genes to brain to antisocial behaviour” thesis. Raine summarises that specific genes result in structural and functional brain alterations that, in turn, predispose individuals to commit antisocial acts. There is a plethora of research evidence supporting claims that antisocial behaviour is linked to impairments in the prefrontal cortex of the brain (Raine, Moffitt, Caspi, Loeber, Stouthamer-Loeber, & Lynam, 2005; Raine & Yang, 2006; Ling, Raine, Yang, Schug, Portnoy, & Ho, 2019; Lynam, Caspi, Moffitt, Raine, Loeber, & Stouthamer-Loeber, 2005; Raine, Laufer & Yang, 2012).

The development of cognitive neuroscience technologies, in particular, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), have led to better understanding of brain structure and function, and it is now possible to explore differences between adolescent and adult brains (Steinberg & Schwartz, 2000; Spear, 2000; Steinberg & Scott, 2003; Raine, 2008; Steinberg, 2008; Sercombe, 2010; Ross & Hoaken; 2010). This brain scanning technology has enabled researchers to recognise that during the teenage years, children experience a regression in (grey) cell matters, while neuron projections covered in the protective fatty sheath (white matter) take over; a process believed to be essential for the brain to prepare for adulthood (Beckman, 2004; Powell, 2006). A general extrapolation made from this pool of knowledge is that underdeveloped brain function in youths makes them more susceptible to take risks for self-gratifying reasons (Beckman, 2004; Gullone & Moore, 2000; Carroll, Riffenburgh, Roberts, 2002; Johnson, Sudhinaraset & Blum, 2010; Dayan, Bernard & Olliac, 2010).

Links have also been made between brain function/dysfunction and specific types of criminality. For example, Ermer; Cope; Prashanth; Calhoun, & Kiehl (2012) found evidence linking brain function to psychopathy. Psychopathy was associated with decreased regional grey matter in several paralimbic and limbic areas of the brain, including the bilateral temporal pole, posterior cingulate cortex, and orbitofrontal cortex. Likewise, associations have been established between brain function and sexual offending (Emory, Cole & Meyer III, 1995; Schneider, 2004; Simpson, Tate & Ferry, 2001; Bezeau, Bogod & Mateer, 2004; McKillop, Smallbone & Wortley, 2012).

There is, however, some incongruity with the submission that behaviour is determined by dysfunctional or underdeveloped neurology (see, for example, Morse, 2005; Martell, 2009). Urbaniok, Laubacher, Hardegger, Rossegger, Endrass, & Moskvitin, (2012), made the observation that although there is indisputable neurobiological evidence between certain deficits and abilities, it remains unclear if these shortfalls are the cause of delinquency or the result of other causative factors. Urbaniok et al (2012) noted that neurobiological research on offenders involves individual cases or selected control groups of volunteers. However, the use

of volunteers may not be sufficient to establish general causality. Furthermore, Morse (2005, p.379), in an extended conceptual argument: 'Brain Overclaim Syndrome', cautions against linking neuroscience, or for that matter any material explanation of human behaviour, to criminal responsibility, from the standpoint that 'brains do not commit crimes; people commit crimes'. According to Morse (2005), brain blaming as a means of explaining criminal conduct amounts to scapegoating. Therefore, more attention should be placed on human agency and a person's ability to accept responsibility.

Similarly, Miller (1999) contends that brain dysfunction by itself is not a precipitator of offending. It could also be said that links between neurology and offending, risk pathologising a healthy and fundamental phase of human evolution, which individuals require to operate efficiently and independently in society (Bishop, 2004). It could be speculated that if this were the case, then the offending population within this cohort would be much greater, given the aforementioned observations about psychosocial maturity. Perhaps a more reasonable assumption is the alternative perspective presented by both Miller (1999) and Johnson et al, (2009a); they propose that brain dysfunction may collaborate with other variables such as sociological factors to propel young adults into offending.

Conjointly, these (aforementioned) theories sit amongst a wider plethora of criminological, sociological and biological opinions, which at least, provide some degree of insight and explanation into youth delinquency. However, whilst psychosocial factors may predispose some individuals to act in particular ways by imposing some constraints on their capacity to exert free will, there is evidence to suggest that it is possible to be more aware of one's behaviour and in so doing reduce mechanical and or reactive actions and decision making (Hay, & Forrest, 2006; Piquero, Jennings, & Farrington, 2010; Piquero & Tibbetts, 2012; Piquero, Farrington, Welsh, Tremblay, & Jennings, 2008).

2.8 General Characteristics of Young Adults Within the CJS

In spite of the aforementioned reduction in the number of young adults who are becoming involved in the CJS, it is noted that the characteristics of those who are presently involved have given rise to major concerns amongst agencies dealing with this group of justice-involved youths. In sum, although fewer youths are offending, those who offend commit more recordable offences, perpetrate more serious crimes and offend for a longer period. For example, available offending data from 2014 to 2015, shows that whilst there was an 8% reduction amongst the 18-25 cohort (T2A, 2015), those who are being sentenced perpetrate more grievous crimes and have a more fully established pattern of offending. Likewise, they are prone to re-offending and present with more complex life experiences, which are regularly punctuated by trauma and

abuse (Beyond Youth Custody, 2017). Other noticeable shared qualities amongst this cohort of offenders include a disproportionate number from ethnic minority backgrounds, young adult care leavers/looked-after children, underachievers in education, and those who were more likely to have experienced poor housing conditions (Mason, & Prior, 2008; T2A, 2015). The catalogue of characteristics mentioned above is by no means an exhaustive list; in actuality, there are many more variables that could be examined. However, I have chosen to be selective due to word limitations and will concentrate instead on a few of those attributes which present as the most pervasive, beginning with young black men, who are overrepresented in the crime figures.

2.8.1 *Young Black Men: evidence of overrepresentation*

“It is likely that the foremost contributor to the formation of the public’s association between Blacks and criminality is the sheer number of Blacks represented in crime statistics and the criminal justice system (Welch, 2007, p.276)”.

The disproportionate presence of black people within the criminal justice system has been a topic of considerable debate and research for some time (Bishop, Leiber, & Johnson, 2010; Conley, 1994; Mauer, & Huling, 1995; Bhui, 2008; 2009; Snowball & Weatherburn, 2007; Taslitz, 2003; 2006; Petersilia, 1985; Pruitt, & Wilson, 1983). A manifest overrepresentation of young black (usually male) offenders within both the youth and adult justice systems of several major western democracies (Unnever, 2008) is now largely accepted (Bowling & Phillips, 2012; 2017; Warde, 2013; Parmar, 2017), and evidenced by criminal justice statistics (House of Commons Home Affairs Committee, 2007; MOJ, 2013). Evidence suggests that the experience of the black populations within the UK criminal justice system is markedly dissimilar to that of their white counterparts. Despite the realism that ethnic minorities (primarily those from Afro-Caribbean origins) are themselves at higher risk of criminal victimisation, they are more likely to be involved in criminal justice processes in non-victim capacities. For instance, members of this group are more likely to be stopped, searched, arrested and imprisoned by law enforcement (Bowling & Phillips, 2002). Also, records show that black males in general, and young black men in particular, are more likely to be detained in custody, convicted and imprisoned (Denney, 1992; Webster, 2000; 2007; Dizaei, 2006; Bhui, 2009; 2016). A recent investigation into the experience of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) citizens in the UK criminal justice system affirmed that black defendants – mainly but not exclusively male – are more likely to go to prison for particular crimes (208 black and 193 Asian to every 100 white males); BAME males are 56% more likely to be tried in the crown court, and are 16% more likely to be remanded in custody (Lammy, 2017). Despite ‘accounting for just 14% of the population BAME men and women make up 25% of prisoners and 40% of

young people in prison' (Lammy, 2017, p.3). Also, young black adults are four times more likely to be in prison compared to their young white adult counterparts, and six times more likely than young Asian adults (The Poverty site, 2017).

2.8.1.1 Why are more Black youths entangled in the CJS?

Public opinion about racism and crime are assumed to be shaped by compound factors, which are sometimes altered by perceptions and stereotypes (Bowling & Phillips, 2006). However, there is a palpable absence of consensus amongst the reasons put forward to explain the causes behind black criminality and the overrepresentation of black people within the CJS. Early biological, psychological and cultural explanatory philosophies (e.g., Rushton, 1995; 2009 Herrnstein & Murray 1994) that assumed correlations between ethnicity and crime have been examined by researchers, disproving any empirical links (Bowling & Phillips, 2002; Gabor, & Roberts, 1990. Henry, Hastings, & Freer, 1996). Having transcended these assumptions, the race and crime debate now appears to be concerned with exploring correlations between young black overrepresentation and claims of discrimination within criminal justice processes.

Some observers claimed that the unfavourable treatment of black men transcends the criminal justice system - black men - like black people overall, they contend, are generally treated more negatively in society (Crow, 1987; Pettit & Western, 2004). Taking a critical race perspective, some academics contend that race as a social construct functions as a mechanism for protecting the interests of the white populace (Curry, 2016; Delgado & Stefancic, 2017; Glynn, 2013). Inequalities that manifest, for instance, in social, economic and legal discrimination are devised to maintain elite white interests and, as such, create the conditions that give rise to issues such as poverty and criminality in many minority communities (Curry, 2016). Accordingly, it has been proposed that offending by young black men may be a deviant counter-response to perceptions of marginalisation and powerlessness (Anderson, 2015; Cohen, 2004; Glynn, 2013). This powerlessness, according to some scholars, derives from a 'strategy of acceptance' presented to first-generation black people on their entry into the UK. This 'strategy of acceptance' presented to, and accepted by first generation black immigrants, manifested in them accepting the offered role of 'second-class citizens' (Hall, Critcher, Jefferson, Clarke & Roberts, 2013). In other words, the price for being accepted into the UK was an implicit acknowledgement that they were not equal to the white population.

Furthermore, young black men, often from Afro-Caribbean backgrounds, have at times, been regarded as 'outsiders' or 'the others' (Bailey, & Harindranath, 2005; Ladner, 1971; Wright, 2010). This process of 'othering' according to Williams (2015), promotes the creation of ethnic hierarchies by attaching moral codes of inferiority to characteristics such as skin colour, place of ancestry or culture. This, in turn, helps to reinforce

oppressive and inequitable practices. Racial and social inequalities can result in reduced life opportunities for individuals from marginalised groups (Wakefield, & Uggen, 2010, p.29). A report commissioned by the House of Commons Justice Committee (2016) shows that young black men are more likely to be socially excluded and are socioeconomically deprived. This notion of exclusion and marginalisation may, in part, explain why acquisitive offences such as robbery or drugs related offences are prevalent amongst this group (Freeman, 1991; Western, & Pettit, 2000). These non-meritocratic structures converge to reduce the life chances of ethnic minorities, thus creating an environment in which black people as a minority group not only offend, but commit specific types of offences (Chiricos, Welch, & Gertz, 2004; Welch, 2007; Unnever, 2008). This is further compounded by evidence of an inherently racialised criminal justice system marked by issues such as disparity in sentencing practices and over-policing of black communities (Bowling, & Phillips, 2007; Hall, Critcher, Jefferson, Clarke, & Roberts, 2013; Phillips, 2011; Wortley, & Owusu-Bempah, 2011).

Conversely, some researchers have suggested that the overrepresentation of Black people in the CJS, evident from conviction data and propagated by media reports of black crimes, are not reflections of injustice, stereotypes or prejudice; they simply illustrate the realism that black people do disproportionately offend (Jones, 2011; Cordner, 2014). This argument, as to whether or not people from ethnic minority backgrounds commit more crimes relative to their white counterparts, has occupied the race and crime debate for some time now (Hall, et al., 2013; Gabbidon, 2015). Studies in the US show that, whilst around 13 percent of Americans are black, black offenders were responsible for 52 percent of homicides recorded between 1980 and 2008 (Worrall, 2014). Accordingly, this over-representation is symptomatic of complex issues including those most likely to commit crime and those more likely to be arrested (Howarth, 2018). Jackson (2003) postulates that what may appear to some people as the over-policing of black communities is simply just reflecting the fact that black people often live in communities that are monitored more often by the police due to the reality that these communities have higher levels of criminal activities. Phillips (2011) agrees that a probable explanation for the unequal level of stop and search experienced by black men, stems from the high levels of street crime they commit. Accordingly, Jones (2011) counsels that rather than focus on alleged stereotyping, and the arrest rates and convictions of black people, the operative question with which society (including the black communities) should be concerned, is whether or not statistics confirm the fact that black men disproportionately commit more crimes.

Additionally, it has been argued that the overrepresentation of black youths within the CJS, particularly as evidenced by a disproportionate incarceration of young BAME men, could be perceived as a way of managing marginalised and potentially problematic groups. Although contentious (Spohn, 2018), evidence has been offered to suggest that black offenders often receive harsher penalties than their white counterparts for similar

offending (Burch, 2015; Kleck, 1981; Spohn, & Holleran, 2000; Steffensmeier, & Demuth, 2000, Zatz, 1984). According to Howarth (2018) the targeting of young black men for arrest, prosecution and incarceration has socio-structural implications and is motivated by wider social inequalities embedded in retributivist ideologies, and the overrepresentation of economically and socially excluded groups is fuelled by neoliberalism and a retributivist approach. These policies are argued to be used as a means of social control (Spohn, 2018). Lea (2003) submits that the over policing of black communities should be viewed as part of a long-standing necessity to control and manage elements of the population seen as problematic and threatening. In these contexts, ethnic disproportionality in policing is not a product of racism; instead, it stems from a basic requirement to control groups seen as marginal, problematic and dangerous (Bradford, 2017).

In their articulation of the 'new penology,' Feeley and Simon (1992, p.469) make the case that criminal sanctions can be exploited as a technique for controlling – not rehabilitating – those assessed as most troublesome in society. Within this 'new penology,' the apparatus of the law is regarded as a means of social control: used to manage criminals rather than criminality. Accordingly, incarceration is used as a social management instrument rather than a tool for effecting the purported aims of the criminal justice processes. Viewed in this manner, black people in general and young black men in particular are seen in comparable ways to the 'underclass' in poor American neighbourhoods (see Murray, 1999).

2.8.1.2 Black Intersectionalities: Race and class

"Social class is one of the most interesting and important issues in the social sciences. Many social problems are connected to it - Crime, poverty, ill health, mental disorder and political unrest" (Argyle, 1992: preface)".

The Global stratification of society has traditionally been explained from a sociological perspective as serving an essential societal function (Argyle, 1992). However, the extent to which classifications such as race and class, independently or conjointly, serve to determine criminal justice outcomes for young black men is highly controversial and contested. Although class definitions alter over time the Weberian influence of wealth, occupation and education, which correlates with an individual's position in the labour market (Weber, 1922) remains largely fixed (Argyle, 1994). According to Murray (1999), the American 'underclass' embodies those at the bottom of the social ladder. They sit below the working class and are often identifiable by variables such as their 'worklessness', antisocial behaviour and dependency on welfare, they are unlike the other classes in society and represent a threat to social order. UK social scientists also explored whether there was an emerging or existing underclass in the UK (Buckingham, 1999; Marshall, Roberts & Burgoyne, 1996; Roberts, 1997). Within the UK the National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC) list eight socially stratified categories ranging from 'higher managerial, administrative and professional occupations' at

the highest point of the ladder to 'never worked and long-term unemployed' at the lower end (ONS, 2016). However, when Savage, Devine, Cunningham, Taylor, Hjellbrekke, Le Roux, Friedman and Miles (2013) analysed the largest UK survey of social class (the BBC's 2011 Great British Class Survey) they identified seven classes, ranging from the 'elite' (at the top) to the 'precariat' at the bottom of the social hierarchy. They based their analysis on three important markers: economic, social and cultural capital, in order to develop their approach to class stratification.

Parallels have also been drawn between Murray's depiction of the American underclass and those within the UK. Buckingham (1999) identified a group detectable by their lack of academic and or professional qualifications, low cognitive abilities, chronic joblessness, patterns of family formation and political allegiance. According to Savage et al., (2013) the precariat is discernible by their lack of, or poor social, cultural and economic capital. In his definition of the precariat, Standing (2011) suggests that the group can be recognised by their distinctive socio-economic positioning. This criterion is useful, Standing (2011) argues, because in terms of images and analyses, it allows for an 'ideal type' (p.11). Drawing comparison between the more established class identities, Standing (2011) further claims that because terms such as the 'working class', and the 'proletariat' are culturally embedded, when 'people describe themselves in class terms, others recognise them by the way they were dressed, spoke and conducted themselves (p15)'. Taylor (2012) articulates it this way:

'We know them when we see them – hoods up, trousers halfway down to their knees, swaggering along the pavement in small groups, playing loud music on their phones, swearing, spitting. These are the children Michael Gove described in September as the "educational underclass". Most of the teenagers arrested in last summer's riots were in this group. There were a few exceptions, where a young adult was pulled into crime by a temporary shifting of the moral compass, a moment of madness. But the rest were the usual suspects. Most had no qualifications. Many had been expelled from school or were serial truants. They were attached to gangs and living a life of crime, drugs, computer games and fast food. Look at the shops they raided, and you see what their values seem to be: trainers and mobile phones. The state came down hard on them, and rightly so. Although a short custodial sentence is unlikely to do these youngsters much good, the courts needed to send a message that the public should not be intimidated' (Taylor, 2012, p.24).

This negative description does not highlight how these young people are socially disadvantaged, marginalised and excluded from mainstream society. These socially disadvantaged youths are increasingly depicted within the media, and society more generally, as problematic (White & Cunneen, 2006), who should be dealt with by a justice system in which both black and white working-class male youths

are disproportionately represented. Deficit in appropriate social, economic and cultural capital is believed to serve to limit the opportunities of marginalised youths (both whites and ethnic minorities) to engage fully in economically and socially productive labour (Hayward & Yar, 2006). Moreover, the link between poor economic capital and increase in youth crime, particularly in inner cities are well documented. In a study of crime amongst inner-city youths, Sullivan (1989) found that acquisitive crimes committed by inner-city youths was rationalised as a way of getting over the system and getting paid; expressions of both cultural dimension of shared meaning and economic dimension of rational cost benefit calculations (p.11).

Black and white working-class (primarily male) youths are traditionally seen as a social problem in school, at work and in urban public spaces (MCDowell, 2011). White working-class boys from disadvantaged communities are amongst the lowest performing group of pupils in schools, the lowest being those from the Traveller community (Curtis, 2008). White working-class youths are belittled for their appearance' and behaviour, disparagingly labelled with names such as white trash 'or 'chav'. According to Webster (2008) this amounts to both racism and classism towards marginalised white working-class youths who are also criminalised in ways similar to the criminalisation of working-class black minorities (p. 293).

Although white ethnicity appears to be largely unexamined in debates about racism, crime and justice, Webster (2008, p.293) argued that some segments of the white population are seen as 'less white' than others within a hierarchy of 'whiteness'. For example, evidence suggests that people from Gypsy Roma and Traveller (GRT) communities are amongst the most marginalised and disadvantaged of all ethnic groups within the UK (Chiesa, & Rossi, 2016, Cemlyn, 2009; Lammy 2017; House of Commons Women and Equalities Committee, 2019). Moreover, people from GRT communities are also disproportionately represented with the criminal justice system (Lammy, 2017).

It could also be reasoned that class ascription in itself is stigmatising and alienating. For example, Hayward and Yar (2006) make associations between marginalised and excluded people, drug abuse, violence and crime. Although their analysis relates to media constructions of 'chavs', Hayward and Yar's located this discourse within broader socioeconomic and marginalisation influences. In a related discussion about class, Reay (2005) asserts that class inequalities can engender powerful feelings of ambivalence, inferiority and superiority, as well as visceral aversions. This is likely to have significant policy and practice implications for the administration of justice since both the underclass and the precariat are regarded as 'dangerous' classes' (Allen & Ainley, 2011; MacDonald & Marsh, 2001; Stanley, 2011), and the descriptors seems to point towards black and marginalised white working-class boys.

Some activists (e.g. Glynn, 2015) argue that, to understand this overrepresentation and the negative events experienced by black people within criminal justice, there is the need for a 'Black Criminology' that delves into the dynamics of black offending. Russell (1992) asserts that in its study of black criminality, criminology (as a discipline) has failed to nurture a 'cohesive, continuous and established body of research'- termed "black criminology". This failure limits the theoretical lens that underpins policy proposals and, consequently, the policies adopted by the criminal justice system are limited in addressing black criminality.

Marilyn (2010) posits that in the face of rising crime figures, official research has turned away from the social or psychological causes of crime, focusing instead on research about crime prevention that limit the situations and opportunities in which crimes occur. Accordingly, the extent to which we perceive crime as a "black problem" influences our thinking in addressing the problem and shapes how we design solutions (Mauer, 2004). It is reasonable, therefore, to argue that the efficacy of a crime policy may lie within the evidence that underpins its development in the first instance, and in the ways it is applied. If certain crimes (e.g. youth gangs, knife violence, and county line drug dealing) are considered as a black problem (i.e. located in the annals of black pathologies) this will most likely shape both the policy and practice responses. It is highly probable that concomitant policy may be void of black realities, which perhaps could be resolved by the availability of a black criminological perspective - i.e. 'a black criminology'. It seems a reasonable postulation that, if ignorance of black issues can potentially lead to inequitable policy formation, then education becomes a useful antidote. Crucially, a black perspective is essential; it is to this end that Russell (1992) contends for the development of a black criminology as obligatory to fill a gap in criminology - in much the same way that feminist criminology filled a void.

Unnever, Gabbidon and Chouhy (2019) also offered justifications for a black criminology. First, they suggested that the creation and maintenance of racial stratification has resulted in both historical and contemporary racialised experiences for black people that are not comparable with the experience of others. Second, the assumptions of a black criminology are incompatible with the hegemonic general theories of crime (e.g. racial invariance and rational choice) which suggest White and Black people commit crime for the same reasons. Essentially, a black criminology accepts that the subjugated and racialised experiences of some black people serve as preceptors of their offending. Therefore, whilst both groups may experience the same criminogenic risk factors, their lived experiences would lead to different interpretations and responses. As such, a central resolve of a black criminology is to determine the when, why and how of the differences in the causes of black offending. It is to this end that other scholars (e.g. Hawkins, McKean, White & Martin, 2017; Unnever & Gabbidon, 2011; Unnever, Gabbidon & Chouhy, 2019; Glynn, 2014; Onwudiwe & Lynch,

2002; Parmer, 2017; Penn, 2000) support Russell's (1992) clarion call for the development of a black criminology as a necessary subfield to fill a void in the scholarship of criminology.

A second and related concern that emerged from Russell's work was the limited number of black academics in the field of criminology, which has a cumulative impact on how race shapes criminal ideology. In their American stratified community study, which explores whether race shapes perceptions of the criminal justice system, Browning and Cao (1992) discovered that race was indeed related to criminal justice ideology and that African Americans viewed crime through a different lens than White Americans did. However, it could be contended that almost three decades have passed since Russell (1992) made her clarion call, and the presence of a black criminology (although not exclusively from black criminologists) is now alive and operational within the field (see for example, Gabbidon, 2019; Goffman 2014; Jones 2008; Penn, 2003; Potter, 2008). Russell herself acknowledges, some 28 years later, that at least within the last decade, the notion of a black criminology has gained slow, but steady momentum, evident from the number of criminologists who have either supported the call, or who have directly written about the issue (Russell, 2019). Support has also come from related disciplines such as sociology (The Association of Black Sociologist, 2020; Quillian, & Pager, 2001; Sampson, 1987), and psychology (Eberhardt, Goff, Purdie, & Davies, 2004; Feldman, & Feldman, 1993).

The debate appears to have moved on and perhaps a second-generation argument should be for greater integration of black perspectives within the criminological sphere, including in academia as well as in policy and practice settings. Russell also contended, first in 1992 and now more recently in 2019, that it is vital for black criminologists to lead on this work, both for its legitimacy and longevity (Russell, 2019, p.102). It is also acknowledged that, although the issue of race has become more main stream within criminology, an ahistorical analysis of crime is still dominant within the discipline (Onwudiwe & Lynch, 2000; Penn, 2003) and with only a limited number of black criminologists (e.g. Agozino, 2004; Glynn, 2014; Kitossa, 2012, Phillips & Bowling, 2002). This does not mean, though, that only Black academics should be involved in the development of a black criminology. Penn (2003) and others agree that a black criminological perspective should be open to all who want to contribute, regardless of their ethnicity. This is because a black criminology cannot be constituted as a body of work written by blacks for blacks, instead it should be a body of work underpinned by sound research principles to understand the multiple factors that shape black crimes. Besides, it appears that despite a calculable increase, the number of black criminologists is still very limited and those that exist appears to have inadequate access to influential platforms. Russell (2019, p.109) notes that in America, between 1980 and 1990 only 27 Black individuals were awarded criminology doctoral degrees compare to 297 White individuals during the same period. In 1990 Black individuals comprised only

about 5% of criminology doctorates (2 out of the 37 that were awarded). Furthermore, Russell noted that currently Black academics comprised only about 7.1 of the American Society of Criminology's membership.

Similar observations have been made in relation to the UK. Recent statistics show that whilst the number of academic staff is increasing within UK universities, only a few are from black backgrounds. Out of 21,000 professors, about 18,000 (85%) identified as white, 1,360 as Asian, and another 2,000 were either unidentified or from other ethnic backgrounds (Higher Education Statistics Agency, 2020). A recent report (Guardian, 2020) revealed that fewer than 1% of professors employed at UK are from a black background. Also, current Higher Education Statistics showed that there were only 4,140 black academics employed at higher educational institutions in the UK during the period 2018/19, compare to 165,755 from a white background. Moreover, as previously noted, evidence suggest that Black Criminologists sometimes struggle to find suitable contexts to explain how race and racism influence black crime. A struggle attributed partly to high levels of intellectual assault, stress and feelings of alienation some Black Criminologists report experiencing from their departments and the academy (Ruffins, 2002; Russell, 2019).

An additional second-generation question inherent within Russell's (1992) call for a black criminology and the need for more black criminologists, is whether what currently exists can be considered cohesive, continuous and established. Judging from some of the proposed structures offered by proponents of a black criminology, it seems reasonable to assume that this aspect remains in a state of flux. Unnever, Gabbidon and Chouhy (2019, p.408) offered three principles on which they feel a black criminology can be developed in America: the assumption of a racially stratified society; the assumption that America is a racialised society and how the history of black Americans is incompatible with the histories of other groups; and the assumption that some Black Americans commit crimes because of their unique past and current racial subordination. Russell (2019) after almost three decades of reflection and rephrasing of her original thesis, agrees that this proposal remains to date, the most operational.

It could also be contended, that in relation to probation, implementing aspects of black criminology in the education and training of probation officers is essential. However, this may also require a policy shift, since practice is normally influenced by policy orientation.

2.8.2 Young Adults and Trauma

Academic and applied policy research evidence illustrates that children and young people are more likely to be victims than offenders and those who offend are more likely to have encountered violence and/or abuse (Porteous, Adler & Davidson, 2015). Evidence suggests that offenders often experience an array of serious

(and less serious) traumatic life events and stressors in the community prior to becoming involved in criminal justice processes, but also during periods of being involved, including being imprisoned (Widom & Widom, 1989; James & Glaze, 2006; Maschi, 2006; Maschi, 2006). Traumatic events such as being a victim of physical or sexual assault, stressful life events such as being exposed to family and community violence, and the demise of loved ones during childhood and or adolescence are purported to be prevalent amongst offenders (Fox, Perez, Cass, Baglivio, & Epps, 2015; Erwin, et al, 2000; Eitle & Turner, 2002; Teplin, et al., 2002; Messina & Grella, 2006; Renn, 2002). For instance, Martin, Sigda, and Kupersmidt (1998) observed that amongst a sample of 178 young offenders studied, 96% reported witnessing violence (44% of whom reported witnessing physical assault of family members) and 21% reported being assaulted by a family member.

Within the UK, trauma stemming from abuse and/or neglect by parents or caregivers is not an uncommon experience amongst young adults. Evidence from a national study exploring the maltreatment of children conducted with over 28,000 young adults (ages 18 to 24 years) revealed that 7% of the sample experienced serious abuse by parents or carers (Cawson, Wattam, Brooker & Kelly, 2000). In a follow-up study nine years later, it was discovered that 25% of young adults aged 18-24, had experienced severe maltreatment in childhood.

Similarly, physical traumas, especially those resulting in traumatic brain injuries (TBI) are common amongst adolescents (Farrer, Frost, & Hedges, 2013; Huw Williams, Cordan, Mewse, Tonks, & Burgess, 2010; McKinlay, Grace, Horwood, Fergusson, Ridder, & MacFarlane, 2008). In fact, it has been suggested that adolescence is a hazardous period, both for offending and for TBI, and TBI is a risk factor for both poor mental health and offending (Yates, Williams, Harris, Round, & Jenkins, 2006; Tennant, 2005). Yates, et al. (2006) further advance that TBI can lead to cognitive, behavioural and emotional difficulties. This may be because, as noted by Stambrook, Moore, Peters, Deviaene, and Hawryluk (1990), moderate to severe TBI is associated with neuropsychological deficits, behavioural problems and poor social control. It has been noted that prison environments are conducive to the promotion of trauma and stress amongst both young and older prisoners (Ferguson, Pickelsimer, Corrigan, Bogner, & Wald, 2012; Goff, Rose, Rose, & Purves, 2007; Maschi, Gibson, Zgoba, & Morgen, 2011) particularly resulting from the physical and sexual assaults that they encounter (Hochstetler, Murphy, & Simons, 2004). Some scholars argue that, if left unidentified and untreated, the cumulative effect of trauma and life event stressors may negatively impact an individuals' adaptive capacities, resulting in adverse consequences. This includes the risk of poor physical and/or mental health, violence and a predilection to recidivate (Ditton, 1999; James & Glaze, 2006; Leach, & Goodwin, 2014; Steadman, Osher, Robbins, Case, & Samuels, 2009).

The relationship between trauma and offending has been researched and the evidence shows correlates between moderate to severe trauma (including traumatic brain injury), antisocial behaviour and offending (Weeks, & Widom, 1998; Huw Williams, et al., 2010; Maschi, et al., 2011; Ardino, 2011; 2011b; Foy, Ritchie, & Conway, 2012). Available data suggests that, when compared to the general population, there is a higher occurrence of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and associated symptoms amongst those who offend (Ardino, 2012; Wright, Borrill, Teers & Cassidy, 2006; Perron & Howard, 2008). Also, evidence from a 2010 study which explored self-reported traumatic brain injury amongst young male offenders in the UK revealed that 46% of respondents reported having experienced traumatic brain injury (Huw Williams, Cordan, Mewse, Tonks, & Burgess, 2010). In a related meta-analysis across nine studies looking at TBI amongst delinquent juveniles, Farrer, Frost, & Hedges (2013) found that about 30% had sustained a prior brain injury. Across five studies, they found that juvenile offenders were more likely to have a TBI compared to other groups.

When Beyond Youth Offending conducted a review of the research and practice literature in 2016, exploring trauma amongst young offenders, they discovered that a notable number of young adults in the CJS disclosed traumatic experiences such as child abuse and/or neglect, domestic violence, bullying and the effects of racism (Beyond Youth Custody, 2016). Also, Davies, Williams, Hinder, Burgess, & Mounce, 2012) conducted research aimed at exploring the prevalence of traumatic brain injury amongst incarcerated youths in an attempt to understand whether the frequency and severity of traumatic brain injuries correlates with violent offending and the age of a first conviction. They interviewed 61 incarcerated youths (male) and learnt that more than 70% disclosed having at least one head injury in the past. Miller (1999a) conducted a review to test the hypothesis that head injury may be a predisposing factor in offending. The results suggest that the psychological changes that follow significant head injuries, such as irritability and impulsivity, might put individuals at increased risk of carrying out criminal acts.

A survey of the applicable literature denotes a coherent correlation between lifetime trauma, life event stressors and young adult offending. Although on balance, this body of research is primarily about incarcerated youths (Maschi, Gibson, Zgoba, & Morgen, 2011). Nonetheless, when these observations are analysed in tandem with other evidences, particularly those indicating that the majority of young offenders involved in the CJS come from marginalised and disadvantaged neighbourhoods (Moore, Gaskin, & Indig, 2013; Paton, Crouch, & Camic, 2009), the extrapolation underpinning submissions that this group are likely to be over-represented within the CJS seems reasonable.

2.8.3 *Young Adults in Care: Looked-after Children*

“Around half of the children currently in custody in England and Wales have been in care at some point. At the very least, that tells us that we are missing opportunities to turn young lives around, and prevent future crime (Prison Reform Trust, 2016, p.5).”

The term ‘looked-after children,’ or ‘children in care’, refers to those children subject to care orders and those who are accommodated in accord with the Children Act 1989 (Cocker & Allain, 2017). The relationship between young people who have been in care or looked-after, and later involvement with the criminal justice systems, is well documented (Fitzpatrick, & Williams, 2016; Cashmore, 2011). The evidence demonstrates that there is an over-representation of this group of youngsters within the criminal justice system (NACRO, 2012; Prison Reform Trust, 2016; 2017). In fact, a recent investigation into this phenomenon revealed that ‘around half of the children currently in custody in England and Wales have been in care at some point (Prison Reform Trust, 2017, p.5)’. In England, looked-after children are believed to be five times more likely to be cautioned or convicted of an offence, relative to children in the general population. The above mentioned 2015/2016 survey, conducted by HM Inspectorate of Prisons, verifies that 37% of children in Young Offender Institutions (YOIs), and 39% of those in Secure Training Centres, have experience of local authority care (Prison Reform Trust, 2017, p.2). This statistic is of interest, given that only 1% of children in England and 2% of children in Wales are looked-after children (Prison Reform Trust, 2017).

Fitzpatrick and Williams (2016) set out several probable personal and social reasons that may have led to this disproportionate overrepresentation of looked-after children in the CJS. Ensuing from a study of assessments completed on care-leavers in probation, employing the Offender Assessment Systems (OASys), Fitzpatrick and Williams (2016) noticed that, compared to the general population, the needs of looked-after children were more prominent in areas such as accommodation, employment, training and education.

Indications are that care leavers have been found to encounter considerable social disadvantage: they have poorer educational outcomes, are less likely to be employed and have inadequate social support systems (Mendes & Moslehuddin, 2006; Taylor, 2016). These factors are commonly linked to offending. It has likewise been postulated that, once entangled in the justice systems, looked-after kids are more likely to have repeated exposure, owing to what McAra and McVie (2007) called a ‘recycling of the usual suspects.’ Elsewhere, Taylor (2006) articulated an alternative viewpoint which may account for the over-representation of looked-after children in the CJS. Taylor suggests that the influx of looked-after children in the CJS may

be attributed to the fact that their behaviour is usually under much greater official scrutiny than others. This factor, according to Taylor (2006), coupled with a lack of tolerance for 'challenging' behaviour in some care homes, serve to shove looked-after children unjustly towards the CJS. In a later review of children in care involved in the CJS, Taylor (2016) concedes that many of the factors resulting in children being taken into care are linked to offending. It is likely that the way care homes and the police respond to offending by youths in care contributes to their over-representation' (2016:23).

Taylor is not alone in this conjecture. In a later article published by the Western Mail (Anonymous, 2016), it was suggested that police were being called out by care homes to address minor matters that would not ordinarily come to the attention of the police if they took place in family homes. The report further warned that the police were being used to substitute for shortfalls in the social care system and, as a consequence, children were being pushed into criminal justice processes as opposed to getting the care and support they needed from local authorities and children's homes. A key point within the claims raised by Taylor (2006) and others is that children in care are overly scrutinised and policed. On the one hand, it could be reasoned that if looked-after children are heavily scrutinised and policed, this extra attention and affiliated resources, should in principle act as a deterrent or a protective factor, rather than a risk variable. Hypothetically, this should redress some of the key problems looked-after children encounter and deter them from the CJS. On the other hand, it could be debated that, whilst extra scrutiny may provide a level of supervision, it may do little to provide the type of social and other assistance that looked after children require.

Others (for example, Narey, 2016) draw attention to the wider social issues faced by looked after children that may be contributing to their over-representation in the youth justice system. Narey (2016) speculates that children in care are not just catapulted into the justice system; often these children only spend a minor portion of their sometimes troubled and neglected childhoods in care. Accordingly, the experience of being in care may not be a compelling influence in their involvement in criminal behaviour.

2.8.4 *Summary*

The arguments presented so far in this chapter offer some insights into youth development and delinquency, how offending decisions are formed and ways in which maturity, or the lack thereof, can or may influence offending. Whilst both the supporting data and evidence focus inordinately on children and young people (10-17), it is nonetheless accepted that the prevailing literature and associated statistics straddle both age groups (10-17 and 18-24). This is, in part, owing to inherent challenges in gathering and compartmentalising the data and literature on both groups. A fundamental challenge lies in the discrepancy that exists regarding

the age range (officially) recognised as being that of young adults (House of Commons 2016, MOJ, 2017). For the purpose of detention in a Young Adult Institution, current UK legislation (Powers of Criminal Court (Sentencing) Act 2000; 2015) defines young adults as a person aged at least 18 and under the age of 21. This demarcation is accepted by most, if not all, criminal justice agencies and some institutions. In response to the ongoing campaign to increase the upper age limit from 21 to 24, the Government maintains that, rather than alter the chronological age range, the focus should be on considering maturity as a concept (MOJ 2017).

However, in concurrence with developmental science and the wider research literature on neuromaturation, there is wide consensus that the principles defining young adulthood transcend current legislation, terminologies and age ranges, (Hughes, Williams, Chitsabesan, Davies, & Mounce, 2012; Prior et al, 2011). Within these broader disciplines, young adulthood is intricately interlaced with the continuum of adolescence, spanning the period between the ages of 10 and 24. Therefore, young adulthood can be perceived (and has been used synonymously) with the term late adolescence to refer to the distinctive phase of development occurring between the ages of 18 and 24 (AMCHP, 2013).

In similar ways to statistical information, the literature on young adult offenders, for the most part, also straddles both groups. Furthermore, the literature appears to be dichotomised along two broad theoretical positions: Theories that locate the causes of youth delinquency in issues such as strain and deprivation (sociological), and those that perceive youth delinquency as psychosocially / neurobiologically caused (psychological). Criminological theories (in the main) aim to generate understanding of crime, criminals and criminal justice and evaluate which policies are more likely to be effective (Akers 1999). Therefore, it seems reasonable to envisage that the perspectives taken are likely to influence how research is conducted and how this ultimately impacts how one works with young adult offenders (Clarke, 1980). However, my epistemological and ontological perspectives are pluralistic: I accept that there are multiple ways of being and knowing. Therefore, the aims and objectives of this research, its design, and methodology are intricately aligned to these perspectives and the theories that inform them. The case for adopting an interdisciplinary (rather than a single) approach to criminology is acknowledged by both sociologists and psychologists (Wolfgang & Ferracuti, 1982). Accordingly, rather than seeing these tensions between theories as conflicting, they could be viewed as complementary: an eclectic constellation of opinions, beaming individual rays of light into the dark world of youth delinquency, rehabilitation and management.

This chapter summarises and describes how methodological techniques were considered, and activities negotiated and operationalised within the research. The chapter commences with a precis of the research paradigm and the research questions. The overarching philosophical and theoretical frameworks underpinning the methods adopted for the study are discussed. I then outline my ontological and epistemological perspectives and present the chosen mode of enquiry in conjunction with my supporting rationale (Scotland, J. (2012). Additionally, the chapter delineates the following: my chosen method of data collection; how participants were selected, interviews conducted and techniques of data analysis. Ethical considerations are also discussed, emphasising the tensions and challenges encountered and mitigated as the research progresses (Jupp, 1989). Finally, the reflective stance taken during the process is discussed in conjunction with the challenges of being an insider researcher.

3.1 Ontological, Epistemological and Axiological Perspectives

*“All men by nature desire to know”
(Aristotle, 350 B.C.E)*

The pursuit of knowledge has traditionally been theorised and dichotomised between empiricism and rationalism; propositional (knowledge of facts) and practical (know how) knowledge (Croissant, 2014; Heidegger, 1996; Rescher, 2009a; 2009b) in bids to justify what one truly believes. There is also broad consensus within the relevant philosophical and associated literature that one's ontological position embodies his or her perspectives on theories of being - the nature of existence and what constitutes reality (Marsh & Stoker 2010; Braun & Clarke, 2013; Grey, 2013). Nonetheless, the quest for knowledge through existential realities can easily be blurred by the lenses through which researchers interpret the world. A Positivist, Constructivist, or Criticalist axiology (value) can have much bearing on what is discovered and, as such, the researcher's values cannot be ignored in the administration of research (Ponterotto, 2005).

Criminology is believed to have evolved through early classical and positivist thinking (See Radzinowicz, 1966; Quinney 1973). However, there has been a progression towards the use of a plethora of theories and methodologies, and the advent of an interdisciplinary paradigm is now more readily accepted (Barak, 1998; McNicol, 2003; Durrant & Ward, 2012; Krohm & Eassey, 2014; Wincup, 2017). Jupp (1989), a proponent of this diversity, contended that the current 'criminological enterprise' exhibits plurality, variety and sometimes eclecticism in a number of unrelated ways (p.9). Fundamentally, conditional to the phenomenon under

consideration, different methodologies can facilitate the exploration of essential social enquiries. Thus, Jupp advised that methods of criminological research should always be considered and examined within the context of this plurality. Correspondingly, Höjjer (2008, p.288) suggests that it is not irrational to assume that disparity and commonality can exist simultaneously; although “they may reflect different aspects or levels of a complex reality.” I take the view, in exploring effective engagement, that young adult offenders are free moral agents, acting within a coercive environment that may have a material impact on outcome and behaviour. Nonetheless, young adults, as a collective, and offender managers, operate within a social context which may also shape outcomes.

Even though ontological pluralism – the notion that there are multiple modes of being, perspicuous descriptions of reality and means of existence (McDaniels, 2009; Turner, 2012) – is accepted, it is noted that ontological pluralism remains a contested philosophical term (McLeod-Harrison, 2009; Clapton, 2011; Paoletti, 2015).

Similarly, epistemological pluralism recognises that, in any given research context, there may be several ways of knowing, and that accepting this plurality can lead to more successful integrated studies (Miller, Baird, Littlefield, Kofinas, Chapin III & Redman, 2008). Assuming a pluralistic stance allows for a meaningful exploration of the practice context (Healy, 2003). Likewise, I believe that taking a critical realist position in this study enables me to deal more efficiently with the granularities of the data (Cruickshank, 2004). Again, it is acknowledged that there are diverse perspectives of critical realism and a lack of a unified definition (Danermark, Ekstrom, & Jakobsen, 2001). I share the perception that knowledge is relative: people develop knowledge based on perceptions and experiences of their material world. However, a critical realist stance advocates that research findings can only be considered as partial and as an interpretation or representation of a phenomenon, rather than the discovery of a singular truth.

There are some perceived advantages in assuming a critical realist position, three of which are offered by Riley, Sims-Schouten and Willig (2007). They suggest that taking a critical realist approach, as opposed to a relativist approach, encourages researchers to reflect on why participants may choose to draw upon particular discourses in constructing realities. Also, critical realism facilitates the exploration of how material practices can impact discursive practices. Lastly, they advocate that a critical realist approach allows participants to use discourse to construct particular versions of realities by positioning their discourse within the material world they negotiate. Therefore, there is a shared view that in making sense of participants’ discourse, it seems more ethically prudent to view expressed realities in context with lived experiences (Riley, Sims-Schouten & Willig, 2007).

As an insider, the values underpinning my approach to this study (my Axiology) is also pluralistic. There is recognition that, whilst it may be improbable to absolutely dissociate oneself from professional values, undue influence can be acknowledged and mitigated ethically and methodically (Ponterotton, 2005). Also, I acknowledge that my desire to study an under-researched phenomenon is intricately tied to a desire to ameliorate a social situation (Cox, Geisen, & Green, 2008). Moreover, critical realism enables the researcher to consider the complexity of the therapeutic alliance between practitioners and probationers: it aids an understanding of how their behaviours are shaped by agency, social processes and mechanisms, as well as the meanings ascribed to them. Therefore, a method has been chosen that is appropriate to embrace and explore such complexities (Clark, 2008).

3.2 Research Design

It has been suggested that, when conducting criminological research, careful consideration should be given to the method to be applied; for instance, how issues such as data will be collected and evaluated (Jupp, 1989). Although qualitative research is one of the most commonly used methods of gathering information in social science research (Bless & Higson-Smith & Kagee, 1996) it has been underutilised in criminal justice research. This may be because criminology, as a discipline, traditionally favours a quantitative approach (Tewksbury, Dabney & Copes, 2010). Nevertheless, more recently, qualitative methods are progressively being used because they facilitate a more in-depth understanding of crime and criminals, allowing researchers to focus on issues such as meaning, experiences and interactions (Tewksbury, 2009). A qualitative approach allows both consumers and deliverers of criminal justice interventions to become active participants in a research project that has a real-world effect on their lives and practice (Benison, Polkinghorne, Bauman & Vallejo 2004). Essentially, the approach facilitates a partnership between the researcher and those being researched, and the ability to employ local, action-oriented resolution strategies (Sax & Fisher, 2001).

As a probation practitioner, I am interested in the lived subjective experiences of both practitioners and probationers located contextually within a coercive therapeutic alliance. Employing a qualitative method seemed the most appropriate approach to explore the views of both practitioners and probationers in a structured and inductive manner. A semi-structured interview format was chosen to address the research questions because of its purported efficacy as a useful, practical and flexible tool (Hepburn & Potter, 2005). This approach also facilitates the exploration and memorialisation of perspectives from participants who are often overlooked in research (Parker, Banister, Burman, Taylor, & Tindall, 1994). Finally, the acknowledged

paucity of qualitative studies on effective engagement with young adult male offenders supports the relevance and timeliness of an in-depth qualitative study.

3.3 Research Objectives and Questions

Contextually, the idea for this research originated from - and is situated within - my experience as a probation practitioner. Although 16 years as a criminal justice professional provided me with a broad understanding of many case management issues relating to young adult management, exactly how to effectively engage this cohort of offenders remained unclear. As previously noted, this may be because first generation offender modification work (based mainly on the 'what works' agenda) paid little attention to programme delivery, particularly the vital role practitioners play as change agents (Matthews & Hubbard, 2007). However, both desistance research and second generation rehabilitative oriented research now suggests that the efficacy of offender rehabilitation programmes are, to some degree, reliant on how these programmes are delivered (King, 2013; Mcneill, 2006; Trotter, & Evans, 2012; Raynor, 2012; Raynor, Ugwu-dike, & Vanstone, 2014). Furthermore, a review of the effective practice literature reveals that a liberal amount of contemporary desistance study and offender management practices now pay tribute to the centrality of practitioners' contributions in the design and delivery of offender case management work (Ward & Brown, 2004; Lewis, 2014; Judd & Lewis, 2015). Additionally, evidence indicates that a substantial proportion of the existing effective practice literature is concerned with the design and delivery of interventions by practitioners (Stephenson, Giller & Brown, 2010). Having said that, little is known about the characteristics of these practitioners or the specific knowledge or skill sets they need to possess in order to be effective in engaging young adult offenders in these rehabilitative interventions. Likewise, desistance-based studies are awash with evidence of being informed and influenced by listening to, and learning from, those directly involved in offending: offenders and ex-offenders (Chui, 2003; Farrall, 2002; Waldram, 2007; Walters, Clark, Gingerich, & Meltzer, 2007;2003). Some criminologists believe that since change occurs in the context of relationships (both personal and professional) and interactions with significant others, offenders' accounts of how change is realised are crucial; therefore, offenders should have a say in how they are supported in rehabilitating themselves (Maruna, 2001). It has been proposed that taking account of offenders' experiences and expertise and using this data to inform the development of criminal justice interventions, may augment the credibility, meaning and legitimacy of such interventions (Maruna, 2001; Farrall, 2002). Given the submission and emerging evidence that the amalgamated views of probationers and practitioners are vital in understanding the change process and case management, I took the view that both perspectives on engagement would potentially be invaluable in answering the research question. Essentially, both purposely

selected groups, by virtue of their knowledge and lived experiences, could provide valuable insight into my enquiry.

Accordingly, I wanted to frame questions that would help achieve the objectives of the study: to enhance understanding of what - and who - works, or works better, in engaging young male adult offenders under probation supervision in order to re-orient them away from crime. Therefore, I sought to construct and ask questions that would advance awareness of how to effectively engage young adult male offenders, whilst simultaneously addressing gaps within the literature. With these objectives and gaps in mind, this research aims to address the following questions:

- How do practitioners attract and sustain offenders' interest and foster their active participation in the supervisory relationship and processes?
- Are there fundamental engagement techniques/competencies that practitioners and probationers credit as effective in ameliorating engagement?
- Are there styles of therapeutic alliances that best support engagement?

3.4 Data Collection: Rationale and Method

In-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a group of offender managers and a cohort of young adult male offenders. As a qualitative technique, a semi-structured interview offers an efficient, practical and flexible tool to utilise words as data in order to describe experiences and interpret meaning (Finlay & Evans, 2009). This approach facilitates insights and analysis into a social problem (engagement with young adult offenders) from an organisational (the CJS in general and Probation in particular) as well as individual (probationers and practitioners) perspectives.

Interviews for both groups of participants were informed by a variety of available literature on offender management and engagement (e.g. Garner, Knight, Flynn, Morey, & Simpson, 2007; Polaschek, 2012; Mason, P., & Prior, 2008). The purposely devised interview questions were explorative and covered three broad domains (see table 3.1 below). Consistent with an inductive (theory-generating) approach (Rosenthal, 2016), questions were intended to elicit information from participants that could generate insight and meaning into how they make sense of their lived experiences of engagement within a case management setting (Creswell, 2013).

Table 3.1: Interview domains

Domain	Rationale
Personal competences	Questions to focus on the knowledge, skills and characteristics that both groups of participants consider to be effective engagement abilities.
Organisational structure/barrier	Questions to explore if, how, and in what ways organisational structures influence/impact the supervision environment or engagement process.
Resources	Questions to explore any potential impact between resources and engagement.

Interview questions were asked in an open-ended manner, which enabled participants to express themselves and freely elaborate on salient points (Creswell 2013). This approach also facilitated nuanced description of emotions and thoughts of subjective experiences (Finlay & Evans, 2009) as told through their narratives (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). To maintain consistency, questions were essentially similar. However, the way they were asked, and how participants were probed, was refined over time as the process evolved to elicit more in-depth answers. This approach enabled both practitioners and young adult men to describe their subjective realities of engagement, including barriers to engagement and the strategies adopted to overcome perceived adversity.

Documenting versions of realities for later analysis as they naturally unfold in real time (using audio-recording technology) was not without its challenges (Hutchby, 2008). Of concern was how to operationalise the concept of turn-talking and sequencing these discourses as they unfolded (Duncan, (1972; Duncan, & Fiske, 2015; Roulston, 2006). In analysing discourse, turn talk (turn-taking) is concerned with the administration/allocation of talk opportunities so that both researcher and participants can contribute fruitfully in conversations (Lerner, 2004). Turn-taking is crucial to understanding human behaviour because actions executed through conversation are shaped by how the talk is administered. Hence, speaking in turns helps to shape how speakers compose and position their contributions within the communication (Hutchby, 2008). Whilst most interviews went smoothly with offender managers, I had to adopt a more prodding approach for the offender cohort, most of whom presented as monosyllabic.

3.4.1 Sampling: Selective and purposeful

Research sampling is frequently concerned with generalisability to a wider population. However, in qualitative research, improving the understanding of complex human issues are considered to be more significant than the generalisability of results (Marshall, 1996). Schatzman and Strauss (1973) advise that selective sampling for qualitative research is a practical necessity, shaped by factors such as the researchers' time, and other everyday restrictions.

Furthermore, purposeful sampling allows a researcher to select information-rich cases for deeper analysis (Patton, 1990). Coyne (1997) describes information-rich cases as those from which one can learn a great deal about the phenomenon under investigation. Ayers (2007) asserts that qualitative research typically involves smaller samples of information-rich and information-specific cases. Consequently, participants are chosen for their ability to provide insight into the phenomenon under investigation, and less for their representativeness of a population. Glaser (1978) further clarifies that selective sampling refers to a calculated decision by the researcher to sample within a specific locality according to a preconceived but reasonable initial set of dimensions such as time, space, and identity, which are normally decided at the beginning of a study.

My rationale for employing a selective and purposeful sampling approach was to try to better understand engagement with young adult offenders, that could help to inform the development of an engagement approach. I recruited a sample of 15 practitioners who supervised young adult offenders, with sufficient practice experience. Similarly, 15 young adult offenders were chosen to potentially provide information about their experience of probation supervision. Furthermore, London is the most inhabited probation division within England and Wales, with a wide range of crime and criminals, including the young adult population who share challenges similar to those from other major UK cities. London recorded 912,000 crimes in 2019/20, the most of any region of England and Wales in that reporting year (Clark, 2020). crimes in 2019/20, the most of any region of England and Wales in that reporting year (Clark, 2020).

3.4.2 Identifying and Recruiting Young Adult Offenders

A cohort of 15 young adult male offenders were recruited from amongst service users being supervised in Local Delivery Units (LDUs) across Greater London by the National Probation Service, none of whom were known to me or supervised by staff that I was managing.

They were:

- Young adult male offenders between the ages of 18 and 24 years old.

- All were being supervised within the last three months in the community by the NPS.

Profile of Offenders

Note: Pseudonyms are used for each offender and aspects of their offending profiles altered to protect their identities.

- Participant 1: Sam is a 24-year-old Black British African male who was convicted of Grievous Bodily Harm (GBH) and received a determinate sentence. Sam was recently released from custody and was being supervised on post release licence. He disclosed no disabilities but indicated some experience of trauma, and was identified as involved in serious group offending (gangs). Sam was being managed by a white female officer and was assessed as posing a high risk of harm.
- Participant 2: Winston is a 19-year-old young adult male of Black Caribbean descent who was made subject to a Community Rehabilitation Order for the commission of a violent offence. Winston disclosed no disabilities but acknowledged experiences of trauma. Assessed as posing a medium risk of harm, he was being managed by a white female officer.
- Participant 3: David is a 21-year-old young adult male who identified as Black British. He disclosed no disabilities but divulged having experienced trauma in earlier years. A known gang nominal, David was sentenced to a determinate sentence and was being supervised on a post release licence by a Black female officer. He was assessed as posing a high risk of serious harm to the public, particularly peers involved in serious group offending (SGO) activities.
- Participant 4: Anthony is a 23-year-old young male of Black Caribbean descent. He was being case-managed by a black female officer following his release from a standard determinate sentence for committing a violent offence. Like most participants within the sample, he disclosed experiences of trauma and had no diagnosed or self-reported disabilities. Anthony was assessed as posing a high risk of harm to members of the public, particularly to offending peers from local gangs with whom he was in conflict.
- Participant 5: Brad is a 21-year-old young adult Black British African. Assessed as posing a high risk of serious physical and psychological harm to members of the public, he was being supervised by a White female officer. Brad was released from a Young Offenders Institution (YOI) and was being supervised on a YOI licence, for an offence of GBH committed against another young male. His experience of trauma

is situated within an incident in which he witnessed serious physical harm to members of his group, one of whom died from his injuries. He disclosed no disabilities.

Participant 6: Mark is a 20-year-old Black British male. At the point of interview, he was on licence in relation to the commission of a violent offence. Mark was assessed as posing a high risk of harm and of re-offending. He was living away from home due to violence both as a potential victim and perpetrator and was in full time education. Mark disclosed no disabilities but revealed two significant traumatic events: the treatment received in custody and the demise of a close friend. Mark was being supervised by an Asian Caribbean female officer.

Participant 7: Derek is a White British male. He is 24-years old and was being supervised by a black female officer. Derek has a long history of offending, which started in his early teens. Currently on a Community Order with regards to domestic violence, Derek was notably loquacious and spoke candidly about his criminal versatility and knowledge of the CJS. He disclosed multiple traumatic experiences, indicated that he had a hidden disability and was assessed as posing a high risk of harm to females.

Participant 8: Charles is a 24-year-old White British Male with an established history of acquisitive offending. He had been assessed as posing a medium risk of harm and had a noticeable disability. At the point of interview, Charles was unemployed and was not in education or training. He disclosed some experiences of trauma and was still receiving psychological support. He was the first participant within the cohort without a history of serious group offending. Charles was being supervised by a Black British Caribbean female officer.

Participant 9: Marlon is a 22-year-old male of dual heritage. However, he identified as Black British (East) African. Marlon has one previous conviction and, at the time of interview, was being supervised by a female officer who identified as British Indian. Marlon was sentenced to a significant period of time in adult custody for a serious violent offence and was now on post release licence. It was noted that Marlon understated his risk level (although this may be because he was not sure) stating he was low when he was registered as high risk. His disclosed experience of trauma involved the demise of a close friend. Marlon was involved in full time education and presented as motivated and engaged, disclosing no disability.

- Participant 10: Mohammed is a 23-year-old young male who identifies as Black British African. Assessed as posing a high risk of harm, he was being supervised by a Black British female officer. Mohammed registered no disability and, although he cited several traumatic incidents, he said he sees this as just part of life. Mohammed was released on licence having been given a substantial jail sentence for possession of a dangerous weapon with intent to do harm. This was his third serious offence.
- Participant 11: Gregory is an 18-year-old male who identifies as White Other. Gregory is currently on a Detention and Training Order (DTO) following his release from custody for causing serious physical harm to another. He was being supervised by a Black female officer. Gregory disclosed no disabilities or experience of trauma and was, at the point of the interview, in part-time employment. Although only aged 18, it was noted that Gregory has an established offending history marked by the use of serious violence. He was assessed as posing a high risk of serious harm.
- Participant 12: Sean is a 20-year-old male who identifies as Mixed Black/White British Caribbean. He was currently being supervised in the community following his release from youth custody, which had resulted from offences relating to weapon possession. Sean was assessed as posing a medium risk of harm and was being supervised by a black female officer. He disclosed no disabilities or experience of trauma. Sean has an established offending history and was identified as being involved in serious group offending.
- Participant 13: Trevon is a 22 year- old male who identifies as Black British Caribbean. Trevon was being supervised on an Offender Rehabilitation Act (ORA) Adult Custody Licence with post sentence supervision for having an article with a blade/point in a public space. He was being supervised by a Black female officer. His record indicates he has some disabilities and he disclosed multiple traumatic experiences. Trevon has two prior convictions and (at the time of interview) was assessed as posing a medium risk of harm to the public.
- Participant 14: Floyd is a 19-year-old male who identifies as Black British Caribbean. Floyd was being supervised by a male officer of Indian descent, on an ORA Youth Custody sentence, including post sentence supervision (PSS) for serious violence. He was assessed as posing a high risk of serious harm and was being managed under the MAPPA arrangements. He has a recorded disability and was (at the time of interview) not in education, training or employment (ETE). He presented as

pleasant and (at times) jovial during the interview but was, in the main, one of the most monosyllabic of the participants.

Participant 15: Junior is a 24-year-old male who identified as Black and from another Ethnic Group. Assessed as posing a high risk of serious harm, he was being managed under Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangement (MAPPA) arrangements and had a number of alerts on his record. He was not in employment or training at the time of interview and reported having multiple experiences of trauma with no significant childhood difficulties. Junior was being managed by a Black female officer.

3.4.3 Offenders' Interview Schedule

The questions contained within the offenders' interview schedule (see appendix 11) were designed to elicit views of engagement as experienced within their therapeutic relationships. I wanted to explore and understand what prompts these young men to willingly engage, relate and comply with their supervising officers. Also, what competencies they believe officers need to possess in order to secure their attention, interest and willing participation. The questions were informed by a plethora of literature on engagement with involuntary clients (see for example, Trotter, 2015; Chui & Ho, 2006; McNeil, Bachelor, Burnett & Knox, 2005), specifically within coercive / CJS settings (Burnett & McNeil, 2005; Annison, Eadie & Knight, 2008). This body of literature asserts that the relationship between the practitioner and probationer (generally labelled as the 'offender management relationship', the 'supervisory relationship' or 'one-to-one work with offenders') is essential in helping offenders change. However, given the assertion that little is known about how engagement happens in practice (Dowden & Andrews, 2004; Prior, et al., 2011), questions were designed to elicit pertinent information that would augment this understanding. To formulate questions around organisational structure and resources, and their potential impact on the therapeutic environment and process, I also drew on my practice knowledge in offender management. to formulate questions around organisational structure and resources.

3.4.4 Offenders Interviews: Process and Tensions

My aim in this study is to increase knowledge and awareness regarding the competencies that both practitioners and probationers consider essential to effectively engage young adults in supervision. The reason for interviewing young adult male offenders was to capture their outlook and experiences of being supervised, with particular emphasis on their relationships with supervising officers. However, it could be reasoned that those who agreed to participate may, by virtue of their willingness, be emblematic of the

engaged or the easy to engage and may therefore be atypical of the cohort (Denscombe, 2014). Conversely, it could be argued that those who hold negative perceptions of the service or their offender managers - or who otherwise may have reasons to be disgruntled - may seize the opportunity to discuss their experience. I accepted that both scenarios were possible, given the likelihood that respondents are more likely to participate if the topic is of salience. However, evidence suggests this apprehension is generally unfounded and people are more likely to participate in research if they believe that their input will make a difference (Denscombe, 2014). Officers were asked to identify, approach and recommend participants that had mixed experiences of supervision. This approach ensured that the sample included some service users perceived as more difficult to engage.

All participants complied with the request and signed a consent form prior to being interviewed (see appendix 2a and 2b). Whilst conducting the interviews, my principal focus was to create a supportive environment for the young men: one that offered confidentiality and enabled them to share their experiences of engagement freely. I drew on my skills, knowledge and experience as a practitioner and practice manager to explore their experiences of supervision and traumatic life encounters as young adults within the CJS. Although it was anticipated that each interview would last for about an hour, each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes. Offenders were interviewed privately and individually (Burns & Grove, 2005) in probation offices across London. Although I offered the option to have a break during the interviews, each interview ran uninterrupted. The interviews were audio-recorded and later transcribed verbatim.

The identity of all participants was protected through the secure storage and handling of the data. All features that could potentially lead to the identity of the participants were removed. Similarly, all answers given to questions remained anonymous and confidential. However, young adult participants were warned in writing (see final paragraph of appendix 2b) and reminded at the start of each interview that, should they disclose the intention to commit a crime or cause serious harm to self or others, the researcher would have to inform an appropriate person. Participants received no direct payment, benefit or preferential treatment as a result of their participation.

3.4.5 Identifying and Recruiting Staff

In similar ways to identifying and recruiting offenders, I solicited the participation of a group of Offender Managers/Probation Officers with knowledge and experience of working with young adult offenders. Whilst not all officers worked with young adults as a specialism, they all fit the following criteria:

- At least six months post-qualification experience as an offender manager.

- Qualified for at least six months or otherwise worked as a supervising officer / offender manager for a similar period.
- Supervised at least three young adult offenders within the last six months or is currently supervising at least one young adult.

To recruit participants, information explaining the nature of the research and research objectives was sent by email to offices across probation offender management units and youth offending teams in London (see appendix 1). Although this approach generated some initial interest, the response was moderate. Following limited take-up, I approached officers directly and attended team meetings to discuss the research. Respondents who indicated a willingness to participate were sent additional information about the research in advance of the interviews (see appendix 10). To recruit Seconded Officers and those working in specialist teams, a Single Point of Contact (SPOC), normally a known associate, was given a summary of the study and asked to share with potential participants. Participants who indicated an initial interest to the SPOC were then sent a letter with further information in order to secure their willingness to participate.

Although relevant demographic data such as participants' average age, ethnicity and gender were collected on offender managers (see table 3.2 below), this was not part of the selection criteria. Nonetheless, like the offender sample, efforts were made to secure a diverse demographic sample in order to have a cross-section of participants of different ages, gender, ethnicity and work experience.

Table 3.2: Staff Demographics

Officer	Ethnicity	Age	Gender	Organisation	Work Experience in years	Specialism
A= BS	White Irish	25-35	Male	NPS	3	Yes- Young adult unit
B= WJ	Black British	20-25	Female	NPS	5	Yes- SGO Unit
C= GM	Black British	35-40	Female	CRC	8	Yes- Young adult cohort
D= BD	Black British	45-40	Male	NPS	20	No
E= BG	White Other	40-45	Female	NPS	15	Yes- Young adult unit
F= SA	Mixed Black British	45-50	Female	CRC	20	No

G= SB	White Other	30-35	Female	NPS	20	No
H= EH	Mixed Black British	40-45	Female	NPS	10	Yes- SGO Unit
I= LM	White British	30-35	Female	NPS	1	No
J= WP	Black British	45-50	Female	NPS	15	No
K= FS	Black British	30-35	Female	NPS	8	Yes- Secondee
L= SM	Black Other	20-25	Female	NPS	1	No
M= FF	White British	20-25	Female	NPS	5	Yes- SGO Unit
N=CK	British Indian	25-30	Female	NPS	2	No
O= CM	Black British	30-35	Female	NPS	8	Yes- Young adult unit

3.4.6 Staff Interview Schedules

The research evidence and practice experience underpinning the development of the practitioners' interview schedule, the criteria for selecting interview questions and procedure of refinement were similar to those described above relating to the offenders' interview schedule. The offender managers' interview guide was aimed at probing issues such as techniques of engagement; knowledge / experience of working with young adults, organisational tensions and barriers to engagement. I was purposeful that staff interviews echoed my genuine interest in their individual experiences as well as in their welfare. Therefore, I tried to create a relaxed atmosphere during interviews. It was my intention that this approach would provide an encouraging and safe space for practitioners to speak freely about their experiences of engaging offenders, and share knowledge and skills pertinent to their role as offender managers within an organisational context. Staff interviews also explored the impact (if any) of issues such as changing organisational structures, available resources, and specific professional training.

3.4.7 Staff Interview Process

Similar to offenders, the interviews with practitioners were intended to capture their views and experiences of supervising young adult offenders. Staff interviews followed a similar protocol to that of the young offenders: all interviews were audio recorded in private at probation offices and other suitable locations across London. Interviews were scheduled for 60 minutes with an offer of a break if necessary: the interviews lasted between 19 to 57 minutes.

3.5 Transcription Notation: Tensions and Dilemmas

“...for researchers concerned with socio-political issues in discourse, transcription is not a straightforward tool but a highly problematic yet necessary form of linguistic representation (Bucholts, 2008, p.784)”.

It is widely accepted within the relevant literature that audiotaped interviews should be transcribed verbatim, capturing not just what was said but the way in which it was said - with a degree of accuracy - so as to preserve the integrity of the data (McLellan, MacQueen, & Neidig, 2003; Najman, Cobb, Hagemaster, Cook, Corbin, Strauss, & Daly, 2003). However, it has been noted that although the development of transcripts is fundamental to the work of researchers, the questions of what and how researchers transcribe has been given little attention within the qualitative research literature (Davidson, 2010). As an analytical tool for representational and spoken language, transcript notation is thought of as being theoretical, selective, interpretive and representational (Ochs, 1979; Butholtz, 2008).

From a theoretical perspective, transcription is understood not just to reflect theory: it also shapes it (Du Bois, 1991). The shaping process is claimed to occur as researchers ‘reflexively document and affirm their theoretical positions’ (Mischler, 1991, p. 271) during the transcription and analytical process. Transcription is also considered to be a representational process (Bucholtz, 2000; Green et al, 1997) featuring that which is within the transcript (e.g., talk, time, nonverbal actions, speaker/hearer relationships, physical orientation, multiple languages, translations). Also, who is representing whom, in what ways, for what purpose and for what outcome (Green, Franquiz, & Dixon, 1997, p. 173).

As a selective process, it is reasoned that transcript notation of talk and interaction can be varied to meet the specific goals of individual studies (Ochs, 1979; Duranti, 2007). Thus, transcription is not just a mechanical selection and application of notation symbols; on the contrary, researchers make considered choices to express certain theoretical positions and how they locate themselves and others within the research process (Davidson, 2009; Kvale, 1996; Jaffe, 2007).

3.6 Notation Choice and Rationale

“Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted (Attributed to Albert Einstein)”.

It is believed, that since data can be transcribed in numerous ways (Coates & Thornborrow, 1999) researchers need to think carefully about the method of transcription that is congruent with their research before they start the process of transcription (Lapadat, 2000). The transcription notation formula applied in this research was purposefully selected and adapted from Gail Jefferson (Jefferson, 2004) as cited in Potter & Wetherell (1994). Jefferson deliberates the value of carefully reproduced transcripts and outlines a set of transcription conventions. The process involves translating/converting sound from audio recorded texts (Duranti, 2007; Slembrouck, 2007; ten Have, 2007). As a selective process, certain features of talk and interaction were transcribed. However, whether or not spoken data can be captured and reproduced with such isomorphic precision so as to retain absolute integrity is questionable (Coates & Thornborrow, 2009). In fact, Coates and Thornborrow (2009) contend that this is impossible given the limitation of written language as a representation of that which is spoken. They suggest that a more realistic stance is to recognise and accept the restricted nature of all data transcription.

However, whilst I acknowledge that selectivity needs to be accepted and explained in relation to the goals of a study, rather than to be taken as commonplace (Davidson, 2009), I do not view this selectivity as problematic. Instead, I understand and accept this as a practical and theoretical necessity (Cook, 1990; Duranti, 1997). As Bucholtz (2007, p.785) observes, the preponderance of studies exploring this topic intellectualise the differences between written representations of spoken data, seeing it as a methodological problem, marked by 'inconsistency', 'inaccuracy', or 'error, and offer techniques for overcoming such problems. However, Bucholtz advises that representational differences in transcription can be seen not as 'inconsistency' or 'error' but as 'variation'. Bucholtz's (2007) thesis is that, by cogitating the issue from this perspective, transcription can be understood as more than just a research method for understanding dialogue. Rather, 'and just as importantly', it can be seen 'as a sociocultural practice of representing discourse' (p785).

The purpose of this transcription is to understand, contextually, the competencies that are effective in engaging with young adult offenders subject to probation supervision. Therefore, the focus will primarily be on the discourse content rather than the discourse structure. Accordingly, unintended and deliberate variations may occur in minute details of the notation and format. Following transcription, the data was initially analysed thematically, to examine participants' views and experiences in relation to engagement.

3.7 Data Analysis

“Realities are multiple. All are subject to endless formation, reformation, construction and reconstruction, including those of self...there is no objective reality, and truth and reality lie in the meaning we construe regarding our own subjective perceptions of our experiences (Grbich, 2004).”

There exist a number of ways to operationalise qualitative research, including methods of collecting and analysing data; thematic analysis being one. Whilst some analysts may only be interested in looking at the content or structure of the language being used, and how this structure functions, others may be interested in themes or issues being discussed in a talk and how such themes or talk provide meaning in specific contexts. Whatever approach is taken, each linguistic method will be shaped by a particular theory that influences how discussion about meaning is descriptively or critically analysed (Gee, 2014). The approach chosen to analyse the discourse within this study – thematic analysis – is purposeful and consistent with the research’s overarching aim and purpose: to shine light on how to best engage young adult offenders in order to divert them from offending and enable them to build purposeful lives. Given the constructive and formative nature of language, it is accepted that what participants disclose during interviews may not necessarily be the truth or, in reality, precisely what they were thinking at the time (Sims-Schouten, Riley, & Willig, 2007). It is therefore not realistic to assume there exists a single version of the truth concerning effective engagement awaiting discovery. As noted by Grbich (2004) and others, a range of situated and contested knowledge is more probable. Appropriately, a starting point for analysis may be to accept that the views and experiences that participants share are but mere versions of what may be construed as truth and reality.

Thematic analysis is concerned with identifying patterns of meaning within a data set via a systemised process, which includes: data familiarisation, data coding, developing and refining themes and analysing them in order to find meaning so as to answer the research question (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2006). Fundamental conceptualisation, theoretical underpinning and procedural guidance on how to execute the process was adopted from Braun and Clarke’s (2006; 2013) model of thematic analysis. The process begins with a recursive reading and re-reading of verbatim transcripts of audio-recorded interviews, followed by the six phases of thematic analysis recommended by Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 86-94) as outlined in the table below.

Table 3.3: Adaptation of Braun and Clarke’s phases of thematic analysis

1. Becoming familiar with the data	During this phase, the researcher immersed himself in the data by reading and re-reading the entire data set, paying close attention to
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	the early emergence of relevant and relatable content for more in-depth analysis later.
2. Generating initial codes: Coding	Through this phase, the researcher begins the process of selecting and coding interesting features of the text and gathering data relevant to each code.
3. Searching for themes	This next iterative stage involved organising the prior identified basic codes into themes. To accomplish this, the researcher applied a process of thematic networking (a web-like diagram that condenses the previously identified codes ideas within the data (Attride-Stirling, 2001).
4. Reviewing themes	Following on from the aforementioned thematic networking process, the researcher now revises the themes, scrutinising, defining and ensuring the relatedness between emerging themes and extracted codes was not compromised.
5. Defining and naming themes:	Once a flexible and practical thematic layout of the data had been achieved, a period of fine-tuning took place where the identified themes were redefined and refined.
6. Producing the report	In this ultimate phase, the researcher seizes one final opportunity to select and analyse rich and compelling extracts, linking them back to the research question and literature, before producing a scholarly report.

3.8 The Analytic Process

The analytic process was underpinned by a thorough familiarisation with, and recursive revisiting of the data, whilst collection and organising of further data continued throughout (Braun & Clark, 2013). As noted by Basit (2003) qualitative data analysis is not a detached procedure carried out at the last stage of a research project, rather it is an all-encompassing activity that lingers throughout the life of the project. The analytic processes outlined below intentionally included tasks that may be seen as pre-analytic (e.g. transcribing data, reading the data and taking notes of first impressions). However, these processes, although preparatory (to

facilitate later, more in-depth analysis) laid the foundation and were essential analytical blocks within the analytic structure.

Step One (A): Transcribing the data

I undertook a verbatim, semi-paralinguistic transcription of the audio recorded interviews, incorporating the catalogue of notation keys (see glossary of transcript symbol in Appendix 3) adopted from Jefferson (1994). Whilst paralinguistic, such as emphasising certain words, a gasp, sigh or even a clearing of the throat may convey a clearer understanding and bring rich and nuanced meanings to communication (Braun & Clarke, 2013), I took the view that to apply a purist paralinguistic approach to the transcript would not enhance the meaning being sought or provide a clearer understanding of the phenomenon being explored by the research questions. In addition, given the heterogeneity of participants involved in the study, I was concerned that there may not be a homogenous approach to understand or interpret all paralinguistic expressions (Knox & Burkard, 2009). For instance, I noted during interviews that there were sometimes noticeable nuances in modes of expressions, slangs and colloquialism based on the area of London where participants live, peer group association, and ethnic and cultural backgrounds. The transcription process, which comprises a ‘good’ (not perfect) representation of the audio recording (Braun & Clarke, 2013) provided an initial opportunity to become immersed in the data. Issues of interest salient to the research question were noted as I played and replayed short segments of the recordings before typing them up. I made efforts to capture and type words as verbalised rather than corrected; even where such words would not conform to conventional spelling.

Step One (B): Data Layout

I read through the verbatim transcribed interviews one-by-one before arranging each one into three labelled double-spaced columns: the left column contains the interview question, the middle column contains the transcribed raw data, whilst the right column was reserved for first cycle codes (see table 3 below).

Table 3.4: Example of Layout of transcript

Interview Question	Participant response (transcript)	First Cycle coding
Observable Differences Between YAO and Older offenders	Yes, when you are working with young people you know there will be obstacles because they are still developing.	

Step One (C): Data familiarisation and data Pre-coding

An exploratory pre-coding process known as holistic coding, adopted from Saldina (2016. P 165-170) was applied. This process facilitated a macro-level type familiarisation and insight into the transcribed data before taking a more granular look. Notes taken at this point were mainly descriptive; however, this was intentional, to lay the foundation for later interpretative analysis. This initial attempt to absorb the data as a whole helped in identifying basic words, phrases and preliminary themes of interest in the data before a more refined system was applied. According to Saldina (2016) in completing this process, the researcher is seen as a 'lumper' rather than a 'splitter' (P. 166). During this phase, I observed a suggestion offered by Auerbach and Silverstein (2003) and kept a printed copy of the research title and primary questions to hand, reminding myself regularly of the aim and objectives of the research. Also, to focus on this early attempt to make meaning of the data, I relied on the below compiled list of questions (see table 4).

Table 3.5: Questions asked during pre-coding

What are the participants trying to tell me about effective engagement, probation supervision and, by extension, the probation service?
What experience are they describing?
What strategies do they describe (OMs)?
What approach are they describing (both practitioners and probationers?)
What was surprising/not surprising about their disclosure?
What are the differences/similarities in experience, expressions?
What did I find interesting in relation to the research question?
What have I missed?
Was I uncomfortable about what was said?
Are there ethical issues?
What question did responses raise for me as an insider, manager or colleague?
What assumption/s did I make and was/were my assumption/s confirmed?
How do offenders make sense of, and express their experience of supervision, and is it similar or different to that of the officers?
If both practitioners and offenders make sense differently, in what ways and why?
Do both groups see the world through the same or similar lenses, despite using different words to explain it?

Step One (D): Deciding What gets Coded

“There is little point in conducting qualitative work if one does not want to draw on the naturalistically occurring themes evident in the data itself” (Joffe, 2012, p. 2009).

Whilst some researchers (e.g. Attride-Stirling, 2001) suggest developing a coding frame, it is accepted that there are several ways to code data (Guest, Macquen & Namey, 2012; Harding, 2018). There is, however,

a consensus that coding should be the derivatives of variables such as theoretical interests, research questions, and salient issues arising from the text itself or on pre-established criteria (Attriide-Sterlig, 2001; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Braun & Clarke, 2006; 2013). Given the limitation and duality of the sample, I took a more conventional approach: coding organically (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005) rather than adopting a strict regime. The codes constructed from the first four of each set of interviews were used as a benchmark for coding the rest of the interviews. In advocating for an organic approach, Braun and Clarke (2013) argued that, while there may be some benefit in applying the suggestions made by others, it does not result in more accurate coding.

Coding was inductively driven (Terry, Hayfield, Clarke & Braun, 2017) and induced by my aforementioned anthropological and epistemological perspectives. Essentially, I wanted to (1) understand the factors that influence effective engagement as well as (2) the lived realities of practitioners and probationers' coercive therapeutic encounters. Consequently, I felt that an 'eclectic' coding approach (using more than one coding method) would be more efficacious to explore the phenomenon under investigation. The below table provides a precis of the methods used. Although various sources were consulted, Saldina (2016) was drawn on primarily for the first cycle coding.

Table 3.6: Coding Methods

Method	Coding style	Description	Purpose	Example
Grammatical	Magnitude Coding	Apply alphanumeric or symbolic code/sub code to data to indicate intensity, frequency etc	To explore/analyse views such as the importance of probationer/practitioner rapport	Question - How important is rapport and how is it built Ans - very important
Affective Investigate Subjective qualities of human experiences (e.g. emotions, values, judgements, conflicts)	1. Values Coding 2. Versus Coding	Apply codes to reflect participant's values, attitudes, and beliefs of his/her world(probation) Identify dichotomous or binary positions between individuals, groups, organisations often indicated by asymmetrical power balance	To capture explore/analyse practitioner/probationer views of personality characteristics. To explore/analyse, compare and contrast 'us and them' views between practitioners and probationers	Honesty as a personality characteristic that enhances engagement OM, YAOs are immature
Literary and language	Narrative Coding	Applies literary analysis to data in the form of stories	To explore how stories are used as a major method of expressing knowledge and experience of probation supervision	"Let me tell you about one of my offenders"

Only the most relevant portions of the data (those segments believed to be explicitly or implicitly linked to the research questions) were coded (Seidman, 2013). Although codes reflected both the semantic and latent content of the data (Joffe, 2012; Heather, 2015), emphasis was placed on applying – primarily – a semantic coding style during first cycle coding (Strauss, 1987; Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Cope, 2005). Using an 'open coding' method enabled me to pay close attention to what emerged from the data at a textual level (Gale, Heath, Cameron, Rashid & Redwood, 2013), yet remain alert to the risk of placing too much emphasis on the descriptive (Saldana, 2016). Consequently, I reserved most of my conceptual, theoretical and professional assumptions for the second iteration: modifying initial codes through a second cycle coding process. Relevant words, phrases and sentences (e.g. those that expressed behaviours, beliefs, processes or practice) were labelled. Conversely, content which was not considered to contain anything pertinent to the research question was left out (Terry, Hayfield, Clarke & Braun, 2017). I observed the guidance to "look out for the unexpected" (Gale et al, 2013, p.7), and there were a few such responses. During first cycle coding, particular attention was paid to issues such as:

- Are standardised practices being explained?

- Are common words/phrases being repeated by participants?
- Were participants describing elements of professional relationships?
- Are participants describing power structure/dynamics (practitioner, probationer or practitioner, organisation)?
- Are participants describing elements of equalities/inequalities?
- Are participants relating issues about ethnicity or gender?
- Are participants describing meanings, self-concepts or identities?
- Are participants describing cultural practice (organisational practice and National Standards)?
- Are participants describing or defining roles?
- Did participants express something deemed relevant to established research or practice?

Step Two: First Cycle Coding and Method

In discussing the coding process, Hahn (2008) uses the metaphor of a gold miner in search of gold who must first sift through large quantities of material in order to isolate precious stones. Having read and re-read the interview transcripts with my research questions, aims and goals of the study in mind (Patton, 2015), I elected to use a 'complete coding' approach as opposed to the 'selective coding' method (see Braun & Clarke, 2013, p.55 for a protracted explanation). This method was preferred for its purported benefits in identifying everything of significance within the data that might answer the research question. Complete coding also complemented the aforementioned decision to code mainly organically rather than by developing a strict coding frame. Not having predetermined codes freed me from analytic preconceptions (Bree & Gallagher, 2016) and enabled me to broadly record those things that appeared relevant before I applied a more selective process (Frith & Gleeson, 2004). Reading line by line, I highlighted and labelled relevant pieces of the data, paying meticulous attention to noteworthy words, short phrases, sentences and repeated words and phrases (see table 5). This table (specifically the right-hand column) illustrates how the coding process built on the earlier processes of laying out the data illustrated in table 4.

Table 3.7: First cycle coding example

Interview Question	Participant response (transcript)	First Cycle coding
Observable Differences Between YAO and Older offenders	Yes, when you are working with young people you know there will be obstacles because they are still developing.	There will be obstacles

The labelled items were deemed significant if they conveyed participants' opinions, described processes or activities of relevance. In addition, expressions that I felt were thought-provoking were captured in bold italics to be used later as meaningful quotes. I systematically worked my way through segments of the data searching for words, sentences and, at times, entire chunks of data that potentially provided an answer to the research questions. Table 3 below illustrates how this was achieved. The sentence, ¹she doesn't really like stereotypes or ²tell me lies, in the left-hand column directly captures the content of what an offender said about the qualities of probation officers. This was then recorded in the right-hand column as ²My PO don't stereotype and ²My PO don't lie to me. The right-hand hand column showed the labelled code whilst the left-hand column represents the corresponding text.

Table 3.8: Example of Initial Coding

Interview question	Participant response	First cycle coding
What works well in the relationship between you and your PO?	My probation officer ¹ she doesn't really, like stereotype, ² or tell me lies, ³ she will be honest with me, LIKE. ⁴ She will tell me, yeah, she can do this or do that, ⁵ she is not like sneaky, or does sneaky things or stuff like that. I used to hear about probation officers that do stuff like that when I was in prison but when I first met her she was like. I got along well with	¹ My PO don't stereotype ² My PO do not lie to me ³ My PO is honest with me ⁴ My PO tell me as it is ⁵ My PO is not sneaky ⁶ My PO sometimes make jokes ⁷ My PO knows when to be serious

Step Three (A): Second Cycle Coding and Code Modification

Coding is an organic, evolving and iterative process: I accept that rarely will anyone get their coding right on the first attempt (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Gayles et al., 2013; Saldina, 2016). Second cycle codes were intended to (1) augment efforts made during first cycle coding to identify those segments of the data deemed most efficacious in answering the research questions. Coded text (in Microsoft Word) was re-saved, revisited and revised to extract the focus of the data. Additionally, I began cataloguing items that appeared frequently- for example, a group of codes referring to a specific concept such as staff characteristics as well as items displaying sequences, similarities and differences (Uprety, 2009). Table 3.9 below exemplifies the iterative evolution between first cycle coding (table 5) and second cycle coding. In particular, column four shows how the first cycle code “⁵ My PO allows jokes but knows where to draw the line” was modified to read “⁵ My PO knows how to use authority well”. Also, how a code that I missed (“She will tell me, yeah, she can do this or that) in the first sweep of the data was then captured in the second pass to formulate the code “my PO sets realistic expectations”. Thus, making it six codes instead of five.

Table 3.9 :Example of second cycle coding progression

Interview Question	Raw data: Offenders response	First cycle coding	Second Cycle coding
Thinking about your current relationship with your PO, what do you think works well in this relationship?	<p>Resp: Hh (2) my probation officer she doesn't really, like ¹stereotype, or ²tell me lies, ³she will be honest with me, LIKE. *She will tell me, yeah, she can do this or do that, ⁴ she is not like sneaky, or does sneaky things or stuff like that. I used to hear about probation officers that do stuff like that when I was in prison but when I first met her she was like. I got along well with her.</p> <p>Intvr: So, she is straight up with you she is not, you used the word sneaky?</p> <p>Resp: YEAH, ⁵ you can make jokes and that, sometimes but she knows when to be serious, but sometimes she knows where to joke, and that.</p> <p>Resp: YEA.</p> <p>Intvr: So, you can reason with her, you can have a laugh but there is a point where she can say, its serious time now?</p> <p>Resp: YEAH</p> <p>Intvr: Anything else?</p> <p>Resp: No, that is mainly it.</p>	<p>¹My PO don't stereotype me</p> <p>²My PO tells me the truth</p> <p>³My PO is honest with me</p> <p>⁴My PO don't do sneaky things</p> <p>⁵My PO allow jokes but knows where to draw the line</p>	<p>¹My PO don't stereotype me</p> <p>²My PO tells me the truth</p> <p>³My PO is honest with me</p> <p>⁴My PO don't do sneaky things</p> <p>⁵My PO knows how to use authority well</p> <p>⁶MY PO set realistic expectation</p>

Step Three (B): Third Cycle Coding and Early Theming

There is agreement within the qualitative analytic literature that a redaction of the transcript is an essential prerequisite in the analytic process (Attride-Stirling, 2001; Gale, Heath, Camero, Rashid & Redwood, 2013). I used third cycle coding as an eventual attempt to reduce, refine and consolidate conceptualisations and to generate basic themes.

Step Four and Five: Generating and Refining Themes

The derivatives from earlier iterative code generation were initially grouped into themes (see table 3.9 above) that were later refined and organised in a hierarchical structure of basic, organising and global themes (Attride-Stirling, 2001).

Step Six: Compiling the report

3.9 Proposal to Test Validity

Unlike quantitative research with well-established methods to test reliability, the measures used to judge qualitative research appear more fluid (Marks & Yardley, 2004). Furthermore, although the criteria used to test the reliability of quantitative research cannot be strictly applied to qualitative research, it is debatable whether terms such as reliability and generalisability are appropriate for evaluating qualitative research (Noble & Smith, 2015). Perhaps, as suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985) there may be other more appropriate criteria for testing the validity and reliability of qualitative research. For this study, the 'test re-test' method will be applied. Subsequent to the development and refinement of the coded themes, reliability will be tested by subjecting the results to the 'test re-test' reliability, as suggested by Marks and Yardley (2004). This involved re-applying the codes to the data after a two-week break. Although it is recognised that perhaps a more enhanced method of reliability may be to subject the data to at least two or more separate coders, this would require more resources than were available.

3.10 Ethical Issues Throughout the Research

"Knowledge production comes with a moral responsibility towards research participants" (Silverman, 2016, p.42).

There are many contextual, situational and relational challenges that a researcher is likely to encounter and will need to negotiate and manage when conducting social research, particularly when it comes to collecting and using data on people, and when analysing and disseminating such data (Liamputtong, 2007; Punch, 2013). Most vital is to ensure that the welfare, rights and privacy of the people that form the focus of the study are protected (Lune, & Berg, 2016; Creswell & Creswell, 2017). As an "insider researcher", much of my ethical awareness was influenced by the views of Costley, Elliott and Gibbs (2010). On the one hand, I was keen to protect participants from any harm, on the other, according to a professional code of ethics, to be alert to professional misconduct or indecorum that could reflect negatively on the NPS. Potential ethical issues were anticipated, deliberated and purposefully manoeuvred. I, therefore, followed a number of steps to ensure the research conformed to the applicable law and was conducted in accordance with current best principles and practices. Measures were taken to ensure it also adhered to the Middlesex University's Code of Practice for Research: Principles and Procedures. I refreshed my awareness of the civil service code of ethics and its seven fundamental principles: honesty, integrity, objectivity, impartiality, political impartiality,

rights and responsibilities. Additionally, I consulted with my academic supervisors, accessed the university's ethics resources and perused the following documents:

- Middlesex University definition of research
- Middlesex University research ethics review framework
- Natural Sciences Ethics Committee (NSEC) ethics codes
- Middlesex University data protection checklist for researchers
- Code of practice for research: principles and procedures
- Risk Assessment form for individuals

Ethical approval was sought from both the University of Middlesex's Ethical Committee (see Appendix 4) and the National Probation Service (see appendix 5). To navigate many of these challenges, I devised an ethical inventory list. Bouma and Ling (2004) advise that a way of identifying ethical issues in research is to put yourself in the position of those you are researching and ask yourself questions.

3.10.1 First Things First: Managing Participants' Well-being

Separate after-care and support packages were put in place for both groups of participants. Yet, although both groups deserved equal concern, I was particularly anxious about the well-being of the offenders. I felt that, as a group that is frequently marginalised in society (Holland & Scourfield, 2000), extra effort may serve to avoid further real or perceived oppression/disadvantage. Probationers were provided with contact details for locally based support services such as the Samaritans (See appendix 6). Practitioners who participated were advised of and provided with details of the Employee Assistance Programme (an organisation contracted by the Ministry of Justice to offer free and confidential advice and support to employees). All participants were given the contact details of the researcher's Director of Studies, to provide feedback or submit complaints, if necessary, about their research experience. All participants were debriefed at the end of each interview to explore whether they were in any way distressed by their interview and to determine if they required any support.

3.10.2 Managing Informed Consent

One recognisable benefit of informed consent is that it offers contributors the opportunity to have some knowledge regarding pertinent issues of the research, such as its procedures, benefits and risks. It also informs them of their rights to withdraw consent and at any time. Conversely, the reality that informed consent carries inherent challenges in practical application for both researcher and participants has been noted (O'Neill, 2003; Speer & Stokoe, 2014). Corrigan (2003) indicated that how informed consent is

operationalised is “constricted and polarised, and centred (mainly) on the rights of participants to be fully informed in their decision making. Nonetheless, while this “right” (used here in a legal sense), embodied in the use of signed consent forms, is usually a prerequisite by research regulators, it is argued that signed consent forms in criminological research are merely a means of protecting researchers and ethics committees (Roberts & Indermaur, 2003). Roberts and Indermaur’s evaluation is that signed consent forms hold potential risks for offenders, especially since it documents their participation in the research project. They further suggest that if the offender then discloses a criminal act or intent, he or she could potentially be summoned, given that such disclosure would not be subject to confidentiality.

It has also been noted that, whilst in principle, informed consent is sought and given at the beginning, there are inherent applied challenges in how this is maintained throughout the research process. Escobedo, Guerrero, Lujan, Ramirez and Serrano (2013) highlighted that obstacles between the engaging parties could potentially lead to confusion and impede research participants from making a wholly informed autonomous decision. These barriers can relate to issues such as culture, language or even false expectations.

The focus of this research is on engagement; no question was asked regarding past criminal behaviour or future criminal intent. Practitioners were asked to comment on issues of practice, how their practice is contextually located in organisational policies and practice, and how these variables may or may not impact on engagement. However, participants were made aware of limits of informed consent and that the use of the information would be limited to the purpose for which it was given. Also, they were made aware via the consent form, information leaflet and debrief letter, that initial consent does not imply perpetual consent: they retained the right to withdraw consent at any time.

3.10.3 Managing Confidentiality

It has been made clear to participants that informed consent is not without limitation, and disclosure of criminal activities or intention to harm themselves or others would have to be shared with the appropriate individual/authority. Undoubtedly, concerns about poor practice by the researcher’s colleagues contained a degree of tension to be managed and involved ensuring that participants received the confidentiality promised (unless service users or the public are being put at risk). I secured the support of my direct line manager as a contingency to address policy/practice related issues and to offer support.

Practitioners were provided with a secure space in which they openly spoke about their practice. Young adult offenders were assured that the information they disclosed would remain confidential and would not have an adverse impact on them. Both groups of participants were assured that their information would be collected,

used and stored in accordance with strict data management, confidentiality and information handling procedures, and that their identities would be anonymised. Participants were made aware of their rights to withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice. Offenders' responses were not shared with officers. Information gathered from practitioners was not shared with other colleagues or entered into evidence to form part of any malpractice, disciplinary or other human resources' related procedures.

3.10.4 *Managing Diversity and Equality*

The researcher collected demographic information from both groups of contributors. Participants were asked to disclose (if they wished to) any diversity need/s that they would like to be considered during the research process so that appropriate arrangements could be made to mitigate potential challenges. Before interviewing offenders, the researcher liaised with the responsible supervising officers to ascertain if there were any concerns with literacy. Without compromising the integrity of the interview questions, efforts were made to simplify, rephrase or reconstruct questions to ensure that any literacy issues or learning difficulties were dealt with appropriately. In constructing the interview schedule for offenders, reasonable efforts were made to simplify questions and avoid jargon.

3.11 **Reflectivity**

“Reflectivity is a difficult concept to define and an even harder one to practice” (Gabriel, 2015, p.332)”

Reflectivity is concerned with one's ability to ruminate on how personal experiences, values, interests, beliefs and partisan allegiances converge with social context to shape identities and influence behaviour and practices (Enosh & Ben-Ari, 2011). Furthermore, reflectivity allows researchers to interrogate personal assumptions in tandem with the interests served by their research, the implications of their findings and the ethical foundations of their practice (Gabriel, 2015, p.332). Enosh and Ben-Ari (2016) suggest that a reflective researcher is one who constantly shifts between being in the phenomenon and then stepping outside of it. This observation is in line with Wilkinson's (1988) outlook that reflexivity is both functional and personal: the functional is concerned with the research process (for example, ensuring the research is conducted ethically) whilst the personal relates to the researcher's internal gaze on himself or herself.

3.11.1 Reflections on Being an Insider Researcher

“The researcher cannot be separated from his/her background, life experiences and memories...It is important to recognise that the self is not a clean slate waiting to be written on (Grbich, 2004, p.60).”

I am a Black British Caribbean male, father of two young adult males (not known to the criminal justice system), a criminal justice practitioner and more recently a manager. I am an insider researcher studying a phenomenon of which I am a part, and being an insider shapes my position within this study. The rising prevalence of work-based research has undeniably facilitated a corresponding body of literature, drawing attention to the benefits and challenges of conducting insider research (Taylor, 2011). An insider researcher is one who conducts research amongst a group of which he or she is a member (Kanuha, 2000; Dwyer, 2009) or with whom he/she may share certain characteristics (Asselin, 2003). Being an affiliate of this group may afford the researcher a certain amount of accessibility and acceptance, which in turn could make participants more amenable to the researcher, thereby enhancing the quality of data collected (Adler & Adler, 1987; Talbot, 1999). However, Dwyer (2009) notes that the opposite outcome is also very likely. This is because having such congruence with participants can potentially reduce objectivity which can ultimately negatively affect the collection and analysis of data. It is therefore necessary to reflect on my insider position as well as those of my participants. Although we assumed different roles within the research, we were - to some degree - willing and unwilling actors in a broader neoliberal criminal justice apparatus. As previously noted, this research commenced at a time of significant change to the administration of criminal justice in probation. Essentially elements of the service were being privatised as part of wider modernisation and managerialist agendas. Teague, Whitehead, and Crawshaw (2012) noted that to maintain social control in a deregulated criminal justice system, there is normally increased punitiveness and a less liberal approach to procedural justice. As an employee and a practitioner, it is likely that my perspective is shaped by prevailing criminological theories, policies and putative practice responses. Ahrne and Papakostas (2002) suggest that human activities within organisations are governed by their cognition, values and norms, and although an institution cannot act, the human actions within it are influenced by their institutional cognition. Accordingly, elements of institutionalisation, if not carefully reflected on and managed, can potentially impact the research.

Svensson, K. (2004) indicates that whilst the central purpose of probation is to help offenders change from a life of crime, there is a high likelihood that in doing so the service becomes institutionalised. From this perspective, probation help is seen as institutionalised help. The helper (practitioner) defines what is best for the helped (probationers) by offering the possibilities of a better life if s/he complies with the advice given. In

this way, the helper dictates the conditions and the helped accepts. As an agent of the organisation, motivated by a desire to help young offenders change through effective engagement, it was crucial for me to reflect on how such motivations were shaped by my institution.

As a probation practitioner, reflective practice is embedded within our training and the way we work; evidenced by habitual self-reflection on practice (reflection-on-action) and also during practice (reflection-in-action). Although not without inherent challenges and requiring a spontaneous reflective attitude as events unfold (Yanow & Tsoukas, 2009). This self-regulatory thinking remained pervasive throughout the research process and influenced my actions and inactions throughout. As a manager who last worked as a practitioner some seven years prior to the start of the research, I was unsure if I still shared the characteristics of a front-line practitioner to be seen as one of them (a practitioner) or was I, as one colleague noted, “one of them” (the managers). Moreover, despite trying to arrive at a common understanding of engagement, did I understand enough of the offenders’ realities to be perceived as an insider? Furthermore, if I lacked the primary characteristics to be perceived by both groups of participants as one of them, did that make me neither an insider nor an outsider researcher and more of a hybrid?

The decision to conduct the research within London was partly motivated by resource practicalities in accessing participants, but also a desire to improve local practice. However, having worked in London for my entire professional career as a probation practitioner and practice manager, it was highly probable that I would have had contact with some practitioners volunteering for the study. This dilemma was further compounded by the multiple roles I assumed as a researcher, colleague and manager. As a manager, I could be perceived, as one colleague suggested, as “belonging to the other side” which could potentially create issues with trust.

On one hand, being an insider helped me identify and enlist participants, on the other, it offered little guarantee of the quality of rapport I would have (Blythe, Wilkes, Jackson & Halcomb, 2013). For example, it was unclear if probation colleagues were (a) being candid about their practice out of mutual shared interest, knowledge and respect, or (b) seeking to self-modify in order to create a good impression as a competent practitioner (Collins, Shattell & Thomas, 2005). In order to minimise this possibility, I decided to exclude colleagues working within my own team, along with offenders who were being supervised by members of my immediate team. During the process, an opportunity arose which allowed me to remove myself entirely from offender management: I accepted a role working in a court team that focused on offender assessment rather than management.

Likewise, consideration was given as to whether or not offenders would be honest about the nature of their relationships, treatment and experiences. It is acknowledged that interviewees may have alternative agendas to those of the interviewer (Jacobsson & Åkerström, 2013). For example, participants may seek to engage in the research process as they view it as an opportunity to highlight particular concerns they may be having with their supervising officer. Therefore, it was made clear to the offenders that the information shared would be used only in accordance with the aims of the research project and any concerns or complaints about officers would need to be directed through the appropriate complaint process.

3.11.2 Reflection on Issues of Power

The power dynamics inherent within the relationships between researchers and participants has long been a subject of concern within qualitative research (Limerick, Burgess-Limerick, & Grace, 1996; Kvale, 2003). Of particular interest is how the imbalance in power within these relationships can potentially create a conducive environment for exploitation (Ben-Ari & Enosh, 2011; 2013). From the outset, I was cognisant of how my role as a manager within the NPS might amplify these power dynamics with both practitioners and probationers: practitioners were my subordinates and offenders were twice removed from the power hierarchy. Although the literature on managers conducting research within their own organisation seems sparse, the practice has attracted scholastic attention in some disciplines, including the many challenges and benefits. Coghian and Casey (2001), speaking from within the framework of action research, highlighted several challenges with which an insider manager-researcher will need to contend. They assert that manager-researchers can become susceptible when combining their research role with their regular organisational role. This 'role duality', according to Coghian and Casey (2001) creates the potential for role ambiguity and conflict. The awareness of the power inherent within my role as manager combined with that of being a researcher were foremost in my thoughts when planning access to participants. However, I was mindful that participants also had power over issues such as whether or not they did the interview, where and under what conditions, and what information they shared or not during interviews.

To navigate these challenges, I took time to reflect, sought counsel from my academic team, consulted with relevant research and checked with other researchers. In particular, I drew on the work of Ben-Ari and Enosh (2011) and the advice they offered on how such conundrums might be creatively circumnavigated and resolved. They proposed that researchers consider taking a reciprocal approach to understanding research relationships. A reciprocal type of relationship, according to Ben-Ari and Enosh, is based on mutual dependence, the actions and influence of both research and research participants. They also warn that an approach that takes for granted the contribution of the research participant, is essentially an obstacle to the

construction of knowledge. Therefore, rather than focus on the power dynamics between researcher and participants, the focus should be on the value of each contributor. Accordingly, I chose to view the research participants as equal partners: not research subjects.

3.11.3 Reflection on Issues of Bias

Likewise, I was aware that researchers are not impervious to personal biases, which could potentially influence the result of a research project. For instance, when Graham and Lowery (2004) conducted research with police and probation officers who were working with juvenile offenders, they discovered that judgments about culpability, recidivism and punishment were affected by belief about ethnicity. Elsewhere, Rachlinski, Johnson, Wistrich, and Guthrie (2009) explored the implication of unconscious bias within the judiciary and found that judges harboured the same kinds of implicit biases as others and that these biases could influence their judgment. To help safeguard against this, I updated my biannual unconscious bias training that all probation practitioners are required to undertake and secured the requisite pass mark.

I was aware of many of the prevailing assumptions about young adults and crime, in particular, how the criminality of young black males within the criminal justice system is constructed and polarised (Miller, 1996). Similarly, there was an awareness about how deficits in maturity were perceived and associated with youths, particularly how perceptions of immaturity could potentially influence engagement (Iselin, DeCoster, & Salekin, 2009; Monahan, Steinberg, Cauffman, & Mulvey, 2009; Romer, 2010). It was therefore likely that I could have held, and extended, unintended congruence with colleagues or unconscious bias towards the young adult offenders.

I was also alert to many of the challenges and perceptions held by practitioners about how probation was operationalised (Humphrey, & Pease, 1992; Gaarder, Rodriguez, & Zatz, 2004). For instance, the tensions of adhering to prescribed National Standards for the management of offenders. National Standards provided the framework for offender management and officers would sometimes comment on how restrictive they felt certain elements were to using professional discretion. A frequently cited example of this was around enforcement, particularly initiating breaches or recalls. Officers expressed that on occasions they would have rather taken a short-term risk (note; breaching or recalling an offender) in order to encourage future engagement/compliance but felt restricted by National Standards. Also, there were expressed tensions about adjusting to the broader challenges and changes in probation brought about by the Transforming Revolution (TR) initiative and Efficiency, Excellence and Effective programme (E3). Being an insider and a manager, I was well aware of the petulance and protest against the changes and strategies managers employed to

ensure services were not impacted, staff morale was maintained, and staff expressed their rights to voice their opinion. Perhaps a lack of a coherent narrative around the E3 project also raised tensions for some staff, including myself. Administering a process and having challenging conversations with staff who sometimes had questions with answers I did not possess, left me with strong feelings and views that had to be managed. I was mindful that whilst bias and stereotypical assumptions could occur subconsciously - as a researcher- I had a moral imperative to ensure that any potential bias would not become a research problem. Accordingly, it was important that I identified potential sources of bias and employed appropriate strategies to manage them in order to deliver the highest-quality research (Sarniak, 2015).

Ultimately, this conscious self-reflection also extended to keeping a check on my own thoughts, feelings and well-being. I regularly discuss these matters with my academic team. One of my supervisors is a qualified Clinician and agreed to provide additional advice or support should the need have arisen. I also had access to free and confidential advice from the Employee Assistance programme as well as access to clinical supervision.

CHAPTER Four: Youth and Young Adult Work in the UK

This chapter examines how work with children and young people in conflict with the law evolved over time. It trails the trajectory of successive initiatives and legislations aimed at improving the welfare of justice involved youths and discusses the dance of public perception, policy and practice. The chapter further explores the recent decline in numbers and concerns associated with children and young people as an over-represented and threatening group, as well as the emergence of young adult offenders as an ominous faction demanding attention. It looks at current operational practises and discusses how offending children and young people, as well as young adults are divided, transitioned and managed by the National Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Companies.

4.1 Youth Justice: A Transitory Overview

Youth justice in the United Kingdom (UK) charts a rich and colourful history, extending well beyond the present statutes, policies and practices from the late 1700s. During this era, the Royal Philanthropic Society opened a centre in London to support children who may have otherwise been transported overseas (Bateman & Hazel, 2014; Beyond Youth Custody, 2014). Likewise, in the early 1800s, prison hulks (ships) were employed to house young offenders. However, it was not until 1838 that the first land-based penal institution (Parkhurst Prison) opened on the Isle of Wight, as a place where juvenile delinquents could be incarcerated. The Juvenile Offenders Act of 1847 signified the first attempt to stratify – legislatively – adults and children for justice purposes by allowing summary trials in the magistrates' court for lesser offences (NACRO, 2014). In 1854, the Youthful Offenders Act, in conjunction with the Reformatory School Act, allowed the courts to sentence children under 16 to Reformatory Schools; for between two and five years, although they would have had to spend an initial 14 days in custody (Arthur, 2010; Barber, 2005; Higginbotham, 2012; Shore, 2008). Conversely, the 1893 Reformatory Schools Act subsequently provided the court with the opportunity to impose the initial 14 days in custody, which was later abolished by the Reformatory Schools Act of 1899 (NACRO, 2014). Nonetheless, it was the establishment of the Borstal System, backed by the Home Secretary, Mr Ruggles-Brise, in 1900, which paved the path for modern young offenders' institutions (Warder & Wilson, 1973). Yet, even in the nineteenth-century due process for children was still considered summary and harsh (Youth Justice Board, 2008; Carrington & Pereira, 2009; Goodman, 2012). For instance, before 1908, children involved in criminal justice proceedings were dealt with in the same ways as adults; they were subjected to the same criminal justice processes and received similar penalties as adults. Even

petty offences, for example, stealing food, could result in harsh punishment such as the loss of a limb, forced labour or being transported to other countries as labourers (Duckworth, 2002; Richards, 2011; Williams 2019).

As time passed, attempts were made to improve how offending children were dealt with and punished legislatively, and the 1908 Children Act brought some changes. Under this legislation, children were no longer executed for capital crimes or placed in adult prisons. Instead, they were cared for in juvenile detention centres (Bradley, & Shaw, 2009; Arthur, 2010; Graham, & Moore, 2006; Goldson, 2013).

During the 1900s, efforts to advance the welfare of children and to protect them from danger and exploitation within the justice system continued to improve, evinced by successive legislative reforms: The Youthful Offenders Act of 1901; the Children and Young Persons Act 1933; 1963 and 1969; and the Children Act 1989 and 2004, for example. However, it has been noted that later Acts, for instance the Crime and Disorder Act (1998), signified a shifting away from previous welfare-oriented youth justice policies and practices, toward approaches that were more about punishment, evidenced by a 'get tough' rhetoric and associated public protection policies (Gray, 2009; Goldson, 2010; 2011; 2013; Bateman, 2012). Mathews and Young (2012, p7) argued that the New Labour administration, in its quest to be seen as 'the party of law and order', and to evidence its commitment to take crime seriously, placed greater emphasis on young people, who were now being perceived as being responsible for a disproportionate amount of crimes, including some serious crimes. Gray (2007) attributes this demise of social-oriented youth justice, to policies aimed primarily at averting youth offending, by holding young people accountable for their actions. Citing the example of the James Bulger murder, Goodman (2004) highlighted the particular punitive element of the Act. With the country 'whipped into a frenzy' by the tragic killing of Bulger by two young boys, the Home Secretary overruled the sentence, shifting the eight years tariff to at least 15 years. Although the sentence was eventually overturned by the European Court, Goodman (2004) emphasises the point that this captured the principal mode of policy shift: that children needed to be punished, rather than understood as young people that might have problems (p, 12).

Regardless, this 'responsibilisation' of youths (Barry, 2009; 2013; Bennett, 2008, Gray, 2007; Smith, 2009) appears to have coincided with wider negative perceptions of offending by young people, such as the aforementioned 1993 killing of the two-year-old child, James Bulger, by two ten-year-old boys in Liverpool (Kelly, 2012; Delmage, 2013). These developments may have signalled a shift in policy thinking. The New Labour administration, for example, refused to enact proposed changes to the age of criminal responsibility

(Home Office, 1997), and ended the doctrine of *doli incapax* via the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, which hitherto had provided partial protection for 'child offenders' (aged 10–13 years).

The age at which children are now held criminally accountable varies across Europe, and even within the United Kingdom, there is a lack of consistency across jurisdiction (Crofts, 2009; Goldson, 2013). For example, until recently (11th June 2019) in Scotland, even though children under 12 were not prosecuted for criminal acts, the age of criminal responsibility was eight years old (Criminal Procedure Scotland Act 1995; Scottish Parliament, 2014; Sutherland, 2016). Children under eight were deemed to lack the legal capacity to commit a crime and so were not prosecuted in the criminal courts (McCallum, 2011; Scottish Parliament, 2014). Instead, they were referred to the Children's Hearings System on non-offence grounds (McDiarmid, 2013). Similarly, those between eight and 11 are not prosecuted but can be referred to the Hearings System on both offence and non-offence grounds (McCallum, 2011; McDiarmid, 2013). Correspondingly, (subject to the guidance of the Lord Advocate), young people aged 12 or older can be prosecuted in the criminal courts or referred to the Hearings System on both offence and non-offence grounds (McCallum, 2011). The Age of Criminal Responsibility (Scotland) Act 2019, now legislates that a child under 12 cannot be considered to have committed an offence (see <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/asp/2019/7/enacted>).

Within England and Wales, children under ten are treated differently to young people aged 10-17, and also dissimilar to those 18 years of age and over. Although children under ten are not charged with committing a criminal offence, there are available provisions to deal with lawbreakers under the age of criminal responsibility, such as the Child Curfew or Child Safety Orders (Gov.UK 2019). The Children and Young Persons Act 1933 (s.50), as amended by the Children and Young Persons Act 1963 (s.16), set the current minimum age of criminal responsibility in England and Wales at age ten. This legislation made it possible for children and young people over the age of ten, who have been found guilty of a crime, or who otherwise have indicated a guilty plea (after trial) to receive the full weight of the criminal law in the same ways as adults. However, young people between ages ten and 17, who are deemed competent and are presumed to have the capacity to make offending decisions (Arthur, 2012; Delmage, 2013; Bateman, 2012b), and are judged culpable of such transgressions, are dealt with by the Youth Justice System in England and Wales. Though, the issues of capacity and competency in establishing culpability remain controversial and contested in youth justice (Church, Goldson & Hindley, 2013; Skelton, 2013), and other disciplines (McCallum, 2011; McDiarmid, 2013).

Goldson (2013) arguing from both criminological and sociological perspectives, contends that the way childhood is socially and statutorily constructed in England and Wales, reinforces processes of responsabilisation and adultification of children. Reasoning from a medico-legal perspective, Delmage (2013) argues that establishing a child's ability to thoroughly understand their actions and assume criminal responsibility for said action raises a number of tensions between criminal statute and practice. These tensions, according to Delmage (2013, p.104), become apparent at the point of establishing a child's competence and capacity because of the age at which criminal responsibility conflicts with the age where civil responsibilities are attained. Accordingly, Delmage (2013) hints that neuroscience may be a suitable lens, through which one could both conceptualise and contextualise a child's capacity to be responsible. He asserts that a developmental continuum, as opposed to reaching a chronological age, might offer a better constructive foundation from which practitioners can consider culpability.

4.2 A New Era for Justice Involved Youths: Fluctuating Policy

"The ambivalence and conflict of social policies aimed at controlling deviance among the young are most apparent when the Juvenile Justice system is confronting persistent or violent young offenders (Feld, 1980, p.168)."

Although the criminality of the young has been a subject of fear and scrutiny since the period of industrialisation (Jeff, 1997) for the best part of the last century, policymakers were amenable to the application of welfare approaches in addressing juvenile delinquency (Beckett & Western, 2001; Downes & Hansen, 2006). However, in more recent times, tensions have emerged between traditional welfare-oriented and child centred youth justice policies and practices, and new modernising agendas of risk and responsabilisation (Muncie, 2006; Phoenix, & Kelly, 2013; Gray, 2009).

It is claimed that, although Western justice systems are intrinsically "retributive", focussing, in the main, on the punishment of crime (Bazemore, 2007; Zehr, 1990), it is often characterised as alternating between welfare and justice models (Dammer, & Albanese, 2013; DeMichele, 2014; Pratt, 1989; Smith, R. (2005). The 'justice model' is administered on the premise that the criminal justice system should primarily be involved with the equitable administration of punishment rather than the rehabilitation of offenders (Hudson, 1993; 2016). The welfare model on the other hand, even though still concerned with punishment, regards the needs and the rehabilitation of young offenders to be essential (Pratt, Pitts; 1988; 1989; Smith 2005). This may be in part because at the heart of the welfare model, is the assumption that offending behaviour stems primarily from factors outside the offender's control, such as family characteristics and delinquent peers.

However, contemporary policy responses to youth delinquency (both criminal and social) appear to have been progressively reoriented away from its past caring and diversion ethos, towards harsher, less child-friendly – but popular – punishment paradigms (Pitts, 2003; Goldson, 2010; Kelly, 2012). This shifting away from welfare to more punitive rhetoric and concomitant policies and practices appears to be, in part, attributable to changing perceptions about politics, youths, and crime. Within the UK, the relationship between criminal justice policy and youth crime is claimed to be highly politicised (Hollingsworth, 2012; Muncie, 2006; Pitts, 2003). According to Pitts, crime (particularly youth crime) as a ‘political issue’, is rarely informed by an impassive assessment of the nature, scope or effects of youth crime itself. Instead, youth crime is conventionally used by opposition parties during elections to highlight the government’s ineptitude in adequately dealing with youth criminality; whilst the government of the day uses it to divert the attention away from areas of failures in governance, as a ‘dramatic and inexpensive’ way of proving political effectiveness (p,1). In contextualising youth criminality and politics, Munro (2009), and Goldson and Muncie (2006) agree that penal-welfares were consistently undermined by neoliberal developments; motivated by the desire to redirect attention away from the responsibility of the government to protect the populace and rehabilitate offenders, towards individual accountability and governance from a distance.

Adding a contrasting perspective to this political theorising, Armstrong (2004) infers that in conjunction with the political climate, media hyperbole regarding children and crime also served to shape anxieties, conflicting social values, and public policies for managing problem youths. Youths were being regarded as willing actors who were either posing risks or at risk (Armstrong, 2002; Kemshall, 2008). Moreover, highly publicised acts of criminalities by some young people may have no doubt served to reinforce the construction of youths as being risky (Case & Haines, 2009). Consequently, there was a commonly shared view amongst some observers of youth justice that youths and risk are inextricably linked (Gruber, 2000; Heggen, 2000; Kelly, 2001). Accordingly, contemporary policies and practice relating to youth and crime are infused with risk-based approaches, underpinned by a ‘get tough on crime’ and the causes of crime mantra (Goldson, 1999; 2002; Armstrong, 2004; 2006; Garside, 2009; Bottrell, Armstrong & France, 2010).

Some analysts have sought to locate this shift in policy and practice (within England and Wales) at the door of the New Labour governance, having chronicled the reforms through its many legislative and policy documents (Brownlee, 1998; Kemshall, 2008; Garside, 2009; Fairclough, 2001; Newburn, 1998; Pitts, 2001). Case and Haines (2009) explain that in 1992, Tony Blair, who was Home Secretary at the time, assured the populace that his regime would be the one to restore law and order by being tough on crime and the causes of crime. Case and Haines (2009) further suggest that when the Labour Party assumed power in 1997, they attempted to make good this promise, and in so doing, employed the language of risk to highlight

the imminent danger and threats posed by young people, who were now progressively being characterised as risky on many fronts. This politics of crime, which focuses mainly on preventative and situational control (Stenson & Cowell, 1991; Stenson, 2005) worked to further reinforce this shifting ethos in youth policy. Now emboldened by a body of research, politicians started placing a stronger emphasis on tackling and preventing youth crime by focusing, in the main, on identifying, assessing and managing risk, and those youths who are causing it.

However, this risk-based approach to managing problem youths came under scrutiny from several fronts: Its efficacy was questioned, along with appeals to rethink the strategy, on the grounds that it fails to resolve the problem (Bazemore & Umbreit, 1995; Horner & Sugai, 1996; McLaughlin, Muncie & Hughes, 2001; 2002; Hough & Roberts, 2004). Also, critics contend that this approach fails to fully consider structural and contextual issues in crime causation (Boeck, Fleming & Kemshall, 2006) by placing too much emphasis on reinforcing 'moral discipline' and managing risk, rather than engaging with 'social justice' (Goldson, 2002; Gray, 2005; Kemshall, 2008; MacDonald, 1998). Moreover, it has been suggested that this approach conflicts with the need to help youths change and does not consider critical issues such as maturity and social context (Smith, 2012).

The issues of maturity and social context (discussed in detail in chapter 2) are fundamental in contextualising offending by both young people and young adults. Particularly, they are essential when confronting the issues of young adults transitioning into adulthood and into the adult justice system. It is believed that these young people have an array of social needs, which do not instantly change on their 18th birthdays; the date at which they become adults or more aptly put: young adults. Conversely, it is believed that during this crucial transiting period, many young people still lack the social, financial and human capital necessary to transcend successfully into the adult world, and so should be supported and treated differently (Arnett, 2004; Berzin, Singer & Hokson, 2014).

However, more recently, there appears to be a noticeable shift from past punitive rhetoric (politically and socially) about children and young people, replaced by a more moderate tone; one that once again 'sees the child first and the offender second (Haines, & Case, 2015; Taylor, 2016, p.19)'. The examination of the youth justice system resulting in the highly influential 'Misspent Youth' report published in 1996, caused a major rethink and a few changes, some of which led to the creation of the Youth Justice Board and Youth Offending Teams England and Wales.

Moreover, statistics confirm that there has been a substantial decline in the number of children and young people becoming enmeshed in the CJS within the past decade. The evidence suggests that following a rapid increase in 2003/4, climbing to an unprecedented peak in 2006/2007, there has been a noticeable year-on-year decline (MOJ, 2017b; Sutherland, Disley, Cattell, & Bauchowitz, 2017). It could be inferred from this drop in number and modified rhetoric that children and young people are no longer seen as an over-represented and ominous group, contending with the criminal justice system. In reality, except for a number of highly publicised knife-related crimes, growing concerns about serious group (gang) offending (notably the emerging phenomenon of young people plying the county lines peddling drugs), there is a perceptible absence of the James Bulger type public hysteria of the past. Worryingly, current evidence indicates that those young people who are offending commit more grievous offences (for example, the recent spate of fatal stabbings in London), get longer sentences, have a more fixed pattern of offending behaviour, and present with more complex personal and social problems (YJB/MOJ, 2019). Many of these young people now straddle both the youth justice and the adult criminal justice systems via transfer or because their trial concludes closer to their 18th birthdays. The appeal to recognise and deal with young adults differently is being heralded from many quarters and by vested organisations such as Clinks, The Transition to Adult Alliance (T2A) and the Prison Reform Trust.

Some of these protagonists maintain that the current approaches taken to deal with young adults involved in the CJS are not working effectively. Besides, it is speculated that there seems to be an absence of coherent strategies by the present administration, which is claimed to be failing young adult offenders (T2A, 2017). In response to some of the concerns being raised generally, and those suggested by the House of Commons Justice Committee specifically, the Government reiterated its resolute commitment to curtail the impact of crime through endeavours to rehabilitate offenders and address the challenges that their behaviour poses. The government affirms that 'young adults have been and must remain a priority group for criminal justice agencies – partly because of their prominence in terms of numbers, but also because we have an opportunity to steer them in a different direction, helping them to tackle the factors that increase the risk of offending so that they may have fulfilled lives (MOJ, 2017, p.3). The latter issue (the factors that increase the risk of offending) is contended to be multifaceted and usually socially situated. Actually, the role of social context in youth crime causation and risk management has for some time been the focus of attention and research interest (Boeck, Fleming & Kemshall, 2006; Kemshall, Marsland, & Boeck, 2006). Boeck, Fleming & Kemshall (2006), conducted research exploring how issues of context and structure are linked to young people and risk. They argue that social capital plays a central role in young people's ability to manage risky decisions. Locating this argument within a serious group offending culture (gang violence). Harding (2014)

draws attention to the role street capital plays in gang related offending: essentially it acts as a way of measuring, accrediting and exchanging types of capital in the gang's social field (p, 6).

When analysing social policy responses, Kemshall (2008, p.30) submitted that a policy response that manifested itself in increased regulation and control runs the risk of marginalising and excluding problem youths in transition to adulthood. She contends that "The tension between risk and rights needs to be located within a wider context of social opportunity and choices, and perhaps greater emphasis upon the resources young people have to enable them to make appropriate choices about risk." In this regard, Goodman (2012) makes a salient point; he suggests that focussing on criminals' social circumstances, rather than just their criminogenic variables, may yield more rehabilitative efficacy and, in the long-term, reduce recidivism. Viewed within the context of the aforementioned overrepresentation of black youth within the Criminal Justice System, Goodman is not isolated in his assertion. Others have implied that ethnic minorities are subjected to greater elements of social control because there is an absence of adequate social capital to ensure equitable treatment (Quinney, 1970; Bishop, Leiber and Johnson 2010).

On balance, it is believed that the New Labour administration did consider and made efforts to tackle issues of disadvantage and social exclusion faced by young people, including young black people (Lister, 1998; Hills & Stewart, 2005). However, it is noted that whilst many of New Labour's interventions targeted the most disadvantaged and socially excluded, the relationship between structural marginalisation and criminalisation is multifaceted and often the behaviour of individual participants will be guided by broader exclusionary processes (Kelly, 2012, p.102). It could also be assumed, that interventions aimed at ameliorating social exclusion experienced by disadvantaged youths, may have been motivated by efforts to improve community safety, rather than to improve the welfare of the youths themselves. On this premise, it is asserted that policy response based on community perceived risk, or social factors, may lack legitimacy where it matters most (amongst offending youths) and may therefore ultimately prove counterproductive (Goodman, 2012).

Conversely, drawing on youth research in some of Britain's poorest neighbourhoods, Webster, MacDonald, and Simpson (2006) explored the significance of social exclusion and later criminal pathways. Despite common and predictable risk factors, the majority of participants did not pursue full-blown criminal careers. It would appear that, although the life stories of socially excluded youths were marked by flux; these instabilities were not, by themselves, deterministic. It may be the case that the problem of juvenile crime has thus far remained unsolvable because it falls within a category of social problems labelled as "wicked problems" (Rittel & Webber, 1973). Wicked problems, according to these researchers, are social problems that are never solved: at best, they are resolved, over and over again (Rittel & Webber, 1973, p.136).

4.3 Youth to Adult Transition (Y2A)

In broad terms, the criminal justice legislation in England and Wales recognises and deals with two groups of offenders: young people aged 10 to 17, and adults aged 18 and over. The first group is dealt with by the Youth Justice System under the auspices of the Youth Justice Board. However, like most Western jurisdictions, the criminal justice system in England and Wales treats young people as adults once they reach the chronological age of 18. Accordingly, the latter are dealt with by the adult Criminal Justice System (Losel, Bottoms, & Farrington, 2012). There is, however, one exception to this legislative bifurcation. The line that dichotomies youth and adult justice becomes blurred when it comes to sentencing a young person to custody. Under the current arrangement, most young adults, ages 18 to 20, despite being considered as adults and processed under the adult CJS, are not sent to adult prisons. Instead, they are customarily held in a YOI: Young Offenders Institutions (Powers of the Criminal Court Sentencing A, 2000; MOJ, 2013), although it has been noted the conditions in YOIs are not significantly dissimilar to those of adult prisons (Losels, et al., 2012).

It is acknowledged that current transition processes between the two justice systems are not plain paths and more effort is required to help young adults to transition smoothly from Youth Justice to adult Criminal Justice (HMIP, 2013; 2016; Shepherd, 2013). For instance, a Criminal Justice Joint Inspection report (HMI Probation, 2013), exploring the transition between the Youth Offending Service and Probation Services, concludes that for custody and community cases, improvements were required in areas such as workers' professional judgement, communication and continuity of services. In addition, the report highlights that in order to reduce recidivism and promote rehabilitation during this period, where re-offending is believed to be rife, more efforts should be made to reduce disruption and engage young adults more productively.

Although in the main, this joint inspection focused on the transition arrangements for young adults, it inadvertently identifies two salient factors believed to be pertinent to effectively engage with this cohort. Firstly, practitioners would need to possess particular competences in order to adequately engage young adults (Heart & Thompson, 2009; Prior & Mason, 2010; YJB, 2016). Secondly, they would likewise need to be able to employ these techniques effectively in their interactions with this cohort of offenders (Clinks, 2015; Beyond Youth Custody, 2016). These deductions reinforce a fundamental premise of this research: a different approach for Young Adult offenders is needed.

Although concerns over the young adult transition have been a focus of attention for some time (Coleman, 1974; Hogan & Astone, 1986), young adult offenders, as a phenomenon within the CJS, appear to be a more recent construct. This is perhaps because the focus has historically been on young people as a homogenous group. Supposition aside, young adults now appear to be the new focus of concern as an over-represented group within the CJS. Although the drive to recognise the unique needs of young adults involved in the UK CJS as a distinct group, and devise strategies to support and manage them properly, is picking up momentum; the movement is more or less still nascent. Notably, the work by the Transition to Adulthood Alliance (T2A) has been acknowledged by the government as playing a pivotal role in highlighting the plights of young adult offenders (MOJ, 2017b). The T2A and others raised concerns about the failure of the system to identify and adequately deal with the unique needs and issues of justice involved young adults. Indications are that young adult offenders are now receiving added attention from the current administration. Although, judging from the government's formal response, advocates such as T2A and their allies have had to make significant concessions on their demands. For example, it was envisaged that a specific strategy for young adults would be developed with attached additional resources for young adult offenders in a way similar to a "pupil premium", but this was rejected. However, the MOJ conceded that early intervention must remain at the forefront of its efforts to tackle the issues relevant to young adults and that developing criminal justice responses in ways which take account of maturity is vital in improving results for young adults. It is the view of the MOJ that the principles inherent within current research, including the evidence provided by advocates, are best utilised in operational practices. The next chapter will explore operational work with young people and young adults within the UK criminal justice system.

4.4 The Bifurcation of Young Adult Offenders: Who Goes Where?

Despite the aforementioned complexity regarding sentencing, the process of transition from the youth offending teams to probation's offender management units is more linear. The transfer of young adult's supervision from Youth Offending Teams (YOT) to probation in England is guided by a Joint National Protocol for Transitions, which outlines the operational procedures and responsibilities for National Probation Service (NPS) and Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRC). In Wales, it is the Youth to adult transition principles and guidance. Despite some nuances in language and local provisions, both guidelines share similar principles. For instance, the allocation of offenders to either the National Probation Service or Community Rehabilitation Company remains the remit of the National Probation Service. This activity is operationalised through practitioners' use of the new case allocation system (CAS) following a Risk of Serious Recidivism (RSR) assessment. The National Probation Service is responsible for allocation of all cases from the courts, as well as for young people in the field and in custody at the point of eligibility for transition into adult services.

Following an RSR and CAS, the National Probation Service records their decision on the case management system (nDelius), and the decision of its allocating practitioner is final in each case. In addition, the YJB and NOMS (now HMPPS) have created a set of resources to help practitioners manage and improve transition processes for young adults in the community and in custody (YJB, 2017). In principle, the guidance sets out a list of expectations for local Probation Offender Management Units and YOS, to use in developing local transfer protocols (NOMS/Youth Justice Board, 2009). The guidance states that when a young person reaches 18, their transition from youth to adult supervision must be managed effectively. It should prepare the young person and their family for the transition in ways that minimise risk to the public, safeguard the young person and reduce the likelihood of re-offending. The process is also aimed at preparing the young person for adult life by providing continuity of service and interventions (YJB, 2017).

By way of standard practice, young people who receive criminal sanctions which extend beyond their 18th birthdays are routinely transferred to the adult criminal justice system, whereby they are then treated as adults (Prior, et al., 2011, Youth Justice Board, 2013; MOJ, NPS & YJB, 2018). Those whose criminal justice journeys commence on or after the age of 18 are normally sent directly to the probation service for supervision. Based on the current transfer protocols, the preparation process for a young adult's transfer should start ideally somewhere between three to six months prior to the young person's 18th birthday (YJB, 2012, MOJ2018). This is a three-stage process. Stage 1 (which occurs typically at 17yrs and 6months) the young person is identified, and the relevant worker updates the record/systems. The NPS Seconded completes the RSR and the CAS assessments to support their decision. This process decides whether the young person will be managed by the NPS or CRC based primarily on (1) a high RSR score (above 6.9), and (2) if the young adult is assessed as posing a high risk or harm or is MAPPA eligible. Practice varies, nonetheless in an ideal situation, by this stage the NPS should begin to prepare the transfer documentation (assessment, reports, CPS documents etc) and begin to explore the allocation of the case to an offender manager in the NPS or CRC so that the requisite liaison arrangements and meetings can commence. Phase 2 (mid-transition) which generally starts around 17yrs and 9months, should ideally be concluded by the offender's 18th birthday and is concerned with finalising arrangements, assessments and ensuring pertinent documentations are exchanged. The final phase - stage 3 (the actual transfer) occurs on or slightly before the offender's 18 birthday. All meetings between staff are supposed to have taken place by this time and the young adult offender should - ideally by this time- have met his/her new offender manager, and the case should be fully transferred.

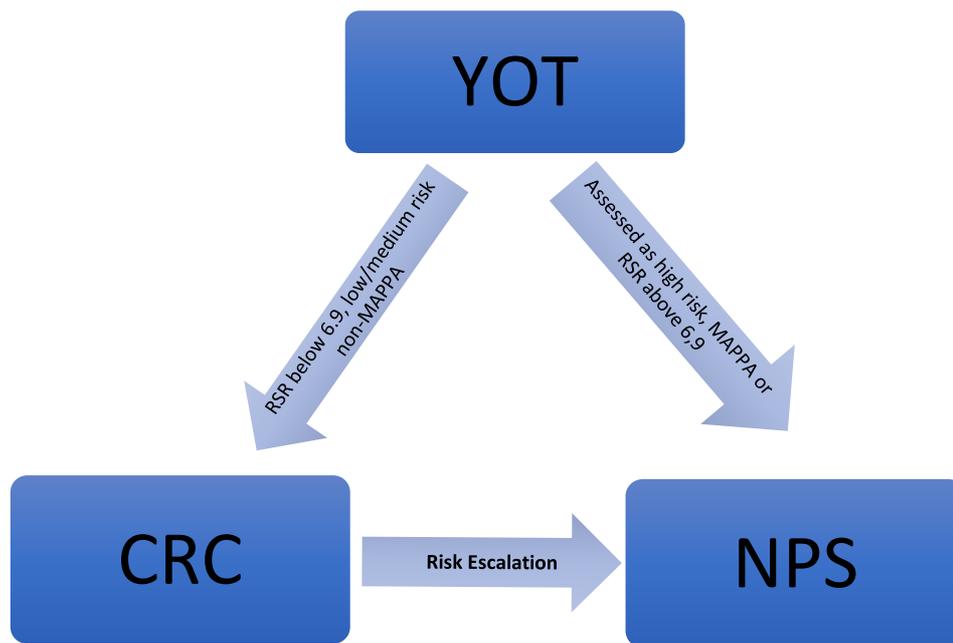


Figure 4.1: Diagram of Transition

Post transfer management of young adult offenders

Being transferred from youth justice is not the only entryway into the adult justice system; as previously noted, those who are sentenced close to, on, or after their 18th birthdays are usually sent directly to the adult system. Regardless of the route travelled, there is a general acknowledgement that the transition to adulthood pathway is laden with a range of developmental and social challenges, which makes this a vulnerable stage for young adults (YJB, 2012b; Delmage, 2013; Transition to Adulthood Alliance, 2013; Osgood, Foster, & Courtney, 2010; Xie, Sen, & Foster, 2014). The YJB recommends that transition via youth justice should be underpinned by child responsive principles, age implications, and modified child-oriented responses (YJB, 2012; MOJ, 2013). Although no detailed characterisation of what modified child-oriented responses looks like in practice, a few inferences can be drawn from wider government narratives. For instance, the MOJ acknowledges the concept of maturity as it relates to 18-24-year olds in the CJS and concedes that developing criminal justice responses in ways which take account of maturity is crucial to improving outcomes for young adults (MOJ, 2017c). The MOJ also points out that operationally, maturity is now considered in several ways:

- The Code of Conduct for Crown Prosecutors now mandates that maturity is considered in assessing culpability.

- Prosecutors are required to consider the age and/or maturity of suspects as a factor in weighing up whether a prosecution is required.
- Age and/or a deficit in maturity is now listed as a mitigating factor in the sentencing guidelines issued by the Independent Sentencing Council.

Probation is now tasked with taking into consideration maturity when completing pre-sentence reports on offenders aged 18–25. This maturity assessment can influence the sentencing proposal and may mean that custody is not considered as a suitable proposal, this is of course dependent upon the type of offence the young adult committed.

It could be argued that once a young adult is transferred or otherwise enters the adult CJS, the child-friendly ethos and services which were previously available to them in youth justice or other organisations, are left behind; with a few exceptions (e.g. young adult care-leavers). Many of the services that were available to them as adolescents, often end suddenly at the point they transition into adulthood and into the adult system; although, it can be said that the need for these services should continue. Moreover, it has been put forward that the adult service, to which they now belong, is ill-equipped to meet the specific needs required by this client group (Osgood, Foster, & Courtney, 2010). Although they are now technically adults, it is questionable that little, if anything, has changed. Neurologically, no significant change/s or shift in cognitive functioning occurs on their 18th birthday. In fact, evidence suggests that many aspects of higher executive functioning (for example, impulse control, forward planning, emotional regulation, reasoning and delayed gratification) continue to develop throughout the mid-20s (Farrington, Loeber & Howell, 2012; Loeber, & Farrington, 2012).). Some commentators believe that this transitional stage in a young adult's life can undoubtedly influence either the development of constructive pro-social adult pathways, or contribute to adverse developmental trajectories, leading to the evolution of criminal careers (Bryan-Hancock, & Casey, 2011; DeCoster & Salekin, 2008; Iselin, DeCoster, & Salekin, 2008; Iselin, DeCoster, & Salekin, 2009).

In response to the aforementioned House of Commons report, the government indicated that it was working with the NPS to review what may work best with this cohort of offenders regarding how they are managed both in the community and whilst in custody. The researcher is aware that prior to the Transformation Revolution (TR) mentioned in chapter 1, the then London Probation Trust (LPT) had started to place greater emphasis on modifying its interventions to address the specific needs of young adult offenders. Also, prior to TR there were young adult teams that operated in the London Probation Trust that would specialise in the management of young adult offenders. Although there was no distinction in national standard for the management of young adults, practitioners were expected to infuse their practice with relevant research,

knowledge and experience relevant to work more effectively with this group. Additionally, initiatives such as the EXIT programme, (an intensive alternative to custody intervention) were developed. EXIT was aimed at assisting young adults whose lifestyles involved frequent offending by enabling them to achieve real behaviour change (Probation Institute, 2015). However, following TR, few if any of these teams remain. It is now more generally the case in London NPS that once transferred or sentenced, young adults are managed in standard offender management units as part of a generic mixed caseload. A possible explanation may lie in the fact that TR caused a significant split in the overall number of cases that were managed by the LPT and it appears the majority of young adults were diverted to the CRC. It was no longer deemed operationally viable to have an entire team working with a now significantly reduced caseload of young adults. Furthermore, prior to TR, LPT was actively implementing the SEEDS model of offender engagement (see chap 1, p15). Whilst – as previously noted – SEEDS was not specific to young adults, it nonetheless represented a coherent approach to offender engagement. However, it appears that in the advent of TR, many of the programmes and initiatives which were ongoing at the time, were interrupted.

Post TR, London CRC, who it appeared had taken the bulk of the young adults, maintained some components of specialism. For instance, they continued to be supportive of the EXIT programme (particularly following positive reviews from some academics) as a means of addressing the needs of young adult offenders (Hillias & Wallaston, 2015). London CRC also implemented a cohort model of working with offenders, principally based on age and gender, which included a cohort working with young men aged 18-25. This enabled staff who elected to work with the young adult cohort to develop specific knowledge and skills. However, recent checks made by the researcher revealed the cohort model which facilitated a dedicated team for young adults is no longer operational.

As it stands today, there are no young adult teams operating in London NPS or CRC, and no specific engagement methodology to manage young adult offenders. Positively, indications are that the realisation that young adults require a considered approach is now broadly accepted.

CHAPTER Five: *Different Treatment for Young Adult Offenders*

“Young adults at every stage of the Criminal Justice System require a different, purposeful and flexible approach” (Williams, 2012).

5.1 Why treat Young Adults Differently?

It has been noted that a non-specific approach to working with young adults in the CJS has, hitherto, been regarded as ineffective (Prison Reform Trust, 2012). Consequently, there is now growing advocacy to consider and explore more purposeful and flexible techniques to engage with this cohort of offenders (HM Chief Inspector of Prison for England and Wales, 2006; Williams, 2012). This ongoing debate is reinforced by evidence suggesting that young adult offenders have unique needs that require particular methods for both crime prevention and rehabilitative intervention (Losel, et al, 2012).

Some advocates of this persuasion insist that young adults ought to be dealt with differently because they are immature and as a consequence, are less adept at making sound judgments. Young adults have poorer impulse control, are more likely to take risks and have a proclivity to offend for the sake of excitement (Farrington, Loeber & Howell, 2012). Others argue that young adults are less capable of self-regulating when confronted with offending opportunities, are typically poor at emotional self-regulation and possess limited skills in reasoning, abstract thinking, and planning (Scott & Steinberg, 2008). Also, reasoning from a legal perspective - particularly in relation to a young person’s culpability and competency - some advocates suggest that, by treating young adults like adults on or close to the chronological age of 18, the criminal justice system disregards the fact that a change in legal treatment may not equate to a change in criminal propensity (Farrington, Loeber & Howell, 2012). Accordingly, it remains debatable whether young offenders are criminals deserving to be punished, or victims of underdevelopment and deprivation, and therefore need saving, care and attention (Butts, 1998; Loeber & Farrington, 2000; Hogan & Roberts, 2004).

5.1.1 *Conventional CJS Arrangements do not Adequately Meet Young Adults Needs.*

In 1996, the Audit Commission put out a report (Misspent Youth) which reviewed the delivery of juvenile justice in the UK, followed two years later by a briefing on their findings (Audit Commission, 1996). The report and concomitant briefing identified a host of issues with the arrangements that were in place for dealing with young offenders: essentially, the system was inept, expensive and ineffective. One of the critical issues identified was the fact that resources were being spent on administering, rather than addressing, offending

behaviour. Typically, only about 30 percent of youth justice workers' time was spent addressing offending behaviour, and one-third of supervision plans failed to address the educational needs of offenders. Of import were judgements that not enough was being done to address offending behaviour; notably, insufficient emphasis was being placed on prevention and early intervention with young people. This is significant, particularly in light of evidence indicating that a notable percentage of young adults begin their criminal careers in their early teens and straddle both the youth justice system and the adult criminal justice system. Ensuing from the report recommendations, the succeeding Labour government established the Youth Justice Board following the passing of the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act. However, in evaluating the efficacy of the current arrangements, some commentators argue that the current system is still failing to adequately address the appropriate issues pertaining to the management of young adults in trouble with the law (Prison Reform Trust, 2012; T2A, 2013; Howard League for Penal Reform, 2015). Indeed, the government's own commissioned report appears to support the allegation that the present system needs to be improved if it is to satisfactorily support young people in the criminal justice system (House of Commons Justice Committee, 2016).

5.1.2 Traditional Methods of Engagement do not Appear to Work with Young Adults

Engagement, according to most contemporary English lexicons, denotes acts of occupying, attracting the interest/attention of, or otherwise involving someone in a conversation, process, event, or activity. Contextually, offender engagement connotes efforts to motivate offenders to participate in criminogenic reducing related activities/interventions. These activities/interventions are routinely devised by practitioners in response to assessed criminogenic needs and form part of a sentence plan aimed at effecting change (Hughes, 2012; Holdsworth, et al., 2014; Tyler, Sherman, Strang, Barnes, & Woods, 2007). Whilst some of these activities may be a direct result of a requirement attached to a court order, others may be affixed to a post-release licence condition. In practice, these endeavours vary from regular personal interaction with a supervising officer to participating in cognitive behavioural programmes. For example, engaging in one-to-one intervention delivered by the responsible officer or specialist practitioners such as a psychologist, or a drug or mental health practitioner. As observed by Hughes (2012) most of these activities fall well within 'business as usual' and therefore should be well within reach of practitioners' competences, therefore should present no significant challenges for professionals. Effective offender engagement, on the other hand, is concerned with efforts to adequately secure the full participation of the offender, nurturing a sense of ownership/partnership in their rehabilitation, goals, and objectives. It is this participatory approach that is considered to be efficacious in helping offenders to desist from crime (Beyond Youth Custody, 2016).

However, as already argued, some commentators maintain that young adult offenders pose certain engagement challenges which require professionals to possess particular engagement competencies (Hughes, 2012). Consequently, advocates have insisted that to effectively engage young adult offenders in the CJS, improve their willingness to comply with coercive and voluntary interventions, reduce their rate of recidivism, and produce better overall outcomes, a different, purposeful and more flexible approach to engagement is required (HM Chief Inspector of Prison for England and Wales, 2006; Williams, 2012).

This method of engagement requires practitioners to possess particular knowledge about young people's development and the skills to develop enabling, trusting and supportive relationships. At the centre of this effective engagement theorising is an expectation that young adults will make long-term changes and eventually desist from crime (Farrington, 1986; Ansbro 2008). Desistance, in this context, is conceptualised as a process that can be accelerated (Maruna, 2001) through effective therapeutic alliances that instil hope and self-efficacy (Farrall and Bowling, 1999; Robinson, 2011). Accordingly, it is assumed that if the appropriate engagement techniques are employed in conjunction with the right interventions, young adults will be empowered to construct a 'vision narrative' (whereby they can visualise themselves as non-offenders) as the first step towards desistance (Opie, 2012).

5.1.3 *Young Adults are Immature and Suffer from a Maturity Gap*

"Men are only boys grown tall, but their ways don't change much after all" (author unknown).

As discussed thus far in this study, perceived deficits in maturity have been put forward as a theory to explain why youth offend disproportionately. In related ways, but from somewhat different points of view, immaturity is again being used as a reason for treating young adults differently, on several grounds. For example, immaturity is steadily being used to advocate for, and promote the rights and welfare of those young people who have offended. For instance, lack of maturity has been used to question the legality of a child's ability to make offending decisions in cases where criminal culpability is to be determined (Caffman and Steinberg, 2000; Iselin, DeCoster and Salekin, 2009). For those who have already indicated guilty pleas or were convicted after trial, a deficit in maturity is being used as a justification for treating them differently (Cruise, et al., 2008). Within this maturity theorising, adolescence and young adulthood are seen as natural but passing phases of a youth's development and, as such, an inevitable pothole on the road to complete adult status. However, youths in the Western world are believed to experience a 'gap' in maturity which consequently delays their transition to adulthood.

This maturity gap is viewed as a disparity or a mismatch between one's biological, social and psychosocial development, and normalised social expectations (Dijkstra, et al., 2015; Hill, Blokland & Van der Geest, 2016). As a concept, maturity gap theorising draws inspiration from observing the strains/difficulties youths (within western industrialised societies) encounter in their conversion to adulthood (Arnett 2000, 2015; Hill, Blokland, & Van der Geest, 2016). In contrast to their counterparts in other regions (who experience a more traditional shift toward adulthood and are supported with adult privileges and responsibilities), youths in Western civilisations experience a delay in this phase of their life (Moffitt, 1993; Agnew, 2003; Dijkstra, et al., 2015;). Arnett (2000; 2005) speculates that due to economic and social shifts in Western societies, young people now finish schooling much later and, consequently, markers of adulthood such as marriage and parenthood are delayed until later on in life. This life phase, according to Arnett (2000; 2005), coincides with numerous biological, social, physical and other changes that fuel the desire for adult privileges and responsibilities, but which are now not within their grasp. Conversely, despite the absence of, or delay in these markers of adulthood, the lives of these youths are still evolving. Furthermore, although they now lack the privileges, roles and responsibilities of adults, their lives are no longer comparable to those of adolescents. This conundrum between the desire for these markers of adulthood and limited legitimate means to achieve them creates strains/tensions for young adults. It is these strains/tensions, which if unmet legitimately, are then converted into antisocial and offending behaviour as a proxy for adulthood (Agnew, 2003; 2007; Bloch & Niederhoffer, 1985).

5.1.4 Young Adults Experience Delays in their Transition to Adulthood

As mentioned, making the transition from childhood to adulthood is considered a desirable and inevitable outcome of human development (Hogan & Roberts, 2004) and accordingly, society (particularly Western democracies) expects that most, if not all young people, will someday successfully make this transition (Chung & Little, 2005). This ideal outcome is epitomised by a variety of markers and status, some of which were mentioned above (Benson, & Furstenberg, 2006; Mortimer & Erickson, 2005; Buhl & Lanz, 2007; Osgood, Foster & Courtney, 2010; Massoglia & Uggen, 2007; Kefalas, Furstenberg, Carr, & Napolitano, 2011; Moreno, 2012; Nahar, Xenos & Abalos, 2013; Schulenberg, Sameroff & Cicchetti, 2004). However, the demographics of adulthood have undergone major changes in recent times, and the transition to adulthood has become more complicated, fragmented and extended. People are now getting married later than before, parenthood is often delayed, and generally young adults now live at home longer and pursue interests such as higher education later in life. This then impacts on the time they start working and, consequently, delays the achievement of other markers (Côté & Bynner, 2008; Shanahan, 2000; Billari, Philipov & Baizán, 2001). It is the totality and meaning of this deferral in transition to adulthood which is

presented as a rationale for treating young adults differently. This awareness necessitates different treatment, if only to ensure that young people are supported and enabled to navigate this crucial life phase with minimum impact, especially in light of the evidence indicating that a significant portion of these young adults (those labelled as 'life course persistent' offenders) go on to develop full criminal careers. However, before advancing this argument further, a considered detour is necessary to set in context the way childhood and adulthood have been constructed (Arnett, 2000; Ruddick, 2003).

5.1.4.1 The Social Construction of Childhood/Adulthood

Within sociology, childhood is understood to be a socially constructed term (Johansson, 2011), articulated as a time of "becoming" and characterised by images of immaturity, lacking in experience and judgement (Jackson & Scott, 1999; James & James, 2004; James & Prout, 1997; Holloway & Valentine, 2005; Prout & James, 1997). Essentially, this conceptualisation assumes that given their many developmental deficiencies and the deficit in life experiences, children are likely to be inept at making balanced judgements (Johansson, 2011). There have been growing debates within the sociology of childhood literature, critiquing this construct of childhood. A major point of contention is that this construct of childhood/adulthood is believed to be grounded in normative theories of western socialisation (King, 2007; Pasura, Jones, Hafner, Maharaj, Nathaniel-DeCaires, & Johnson, 2013). Adulthood, on the other hand, has been constructed as the opposite of childhood, representing 'everything that childhood is not' (Johansson, 2011, p.102) and epitomises notions of maturity of judgement, independence and self-sufficiency (Kins & Beyers, 2010). Presented as a naturally evolving and self-actualising transition expected of most, if not all human beings, the evolution to adulthood is said to be marked by the accrual of certain statuses, things and thinking capabilities (Arnett, 2000, 2004; Kins & Beyers, 2010; Silva, 2012). These established markers are recognised by accomplishments such as getting married, leaving home and having financial independence.

It is theorised that in times past, these traditional markers of adulthood were (1) more readily attainable (Moffitt, 1993; Kins & Beyers, 2010) and (2) adulthood customarily commenced subsequent to a brief adolescent period (Buhl & Lanz, 2007; Fussell, Gauthier & Evans, 2007; Settersten Jr, Furstenberg & Rumbaut, 2008). However, it is now being posited that youth in post-industrial Western societies are experiencing delays in their transition to adulthood, due in part to a number of changes in those societies (Blatterer, 2007). It is suggested that young people are no longer able to grasp all of the associated responsibilities and recognised attributes of adulthood by the time they arrive at the age of 18, and consequently, traditional markers of adulthood such as buying and owning one's home, entering into marriage, and even parenting, have been delayed (Arnett, 2004; Settersten and Ray 2010; Moreno, 2012; Nahar, Xenos & Abalos, 2013; Berzin, Singer & Hokson, 2014). Graham and Kam (2013) submit that the

average age for young women to have their first child has risen to approximately 28, whilst the average age for buying one's first property is now 30. Also, current evidence suggests that young adults in the 21st century live at home for longer in a state of subsidised independence, and rely on parental contributions towards their well-being and lifestyle (Billari, Philipov & Baizán, 2001; Heer, Hodge, & Felson, 1985; Glick & Lin, 1986).

Moreover, changes in employment laws and educational structure in many Western civilisations delay some adolescents from participating in the labour market and cause them to spend protracted time in education (Horan & Hargis, 1991). The level of education required, and the time spent studying to ascertain certain qualifications, ordinarily result in deferments in starting professional careers and consequently assuming adult roles and responsibilities (Gitelson & McDermott, 2006). In the UK, it is mandatory that children stay in school until age 16. Thereafter they have the option of remaining in full-time education or to start a traineeship/apprenticeship until 18. Apart from working in television, modelling and theatre (with performance licences), the youngest age at which a child can take part-time work is age 13, and they can only work full-time once they reach the minimum school leaving age (Gov.uk, 2014).

To return to the seminal point, these indicators of adulthood are primarily concerned with status, things and thinking capabilities, which when attained, enables the individual to convert from deviant behaviours to adult-like conduct (Glueck & Glueck, 1968). Cumulatively, these societal changes have led to young people in Western industrialised societies having to postpone or delay adulthood roles, privileges, and responsibilities until later on in life, which essentially delays their transition to adulthood.

Alternative criteria of adulthood have been postulated elsewhere, and some academics believe that youths in transition have looked to their own markers, instead of the putative traditional markers. Nelson and Barry (2005) conducted research into self-reported markers by American college students and found that young people use more internal and individualistic qualities (such as the ability to take responsibility and making independent decisions) as their criteria for adulthood. Similarly, Arnett (1997) previously looked at self-reports from those making the transition to adulthood and concluded that they did not consider markers such as marriage and other traditional events relevant criteria for adulthood.

Perhaps, as some authors have suggested, a more realistic way to conceptualise young adulthood is to look at the preponderance of evidence suggestive of a distinct stage between adolescence and adulthood: 'emerging adulthood' (Arnett, 2006b; 2014). From the perspective of these authors, during the transition from late teens into the twenties (often between age 18 to 25), childhood is left behind; one is progressing or emerging toward adulthood but has not yet attained the full adulthood status. During this period, adolescents

slowly transition into adulthood by taking hold of opportunities to develop their own identities as they transition towards independence (Arnett, 2000a; 2003; 2004; Berzin, Singer & Hokanson, 2014). It is argued that during this phase of development, youths enjoy virtual independence from normal social roles and expectations. This period of a youth's existence can be perceived as marked by flux and ambiguity, where, according to Parsons (1942) and others (Nightingale, & Wolverton, 1993), they assume 'roleless' roles. This notion of role is integral to this argument because, as has been argued, role transition is characteristic of adulthood and maturity. Although on the one hand, this period is characterised by a wider scope of activities, on the other hand, it places far less constraint and role requirements. Arnett et al (2000) suggest that this is a life-phase where everything is in scope for exploration, yet little, if anything, about life, is certain. So, with childhood dependency now firmly behind them and no major adult responsibilities, this phase of life offers opportunities to explore a range of probable life decisions regarding matters such as relationships and employment (Berzin, Singer & Hokanson, 2014). In sum, it is argued that this phase in life, 'emerging adulthood', may be a more appropriate term to describe the chapter between adolescence and adulthood.

5.1.5 Young Adults are Amenable and the Group Most Likely to Desist

It has been suggested that young adults should be treated differently because, of all the offending groups, this cohort of offenders is, in all probability, the age group most likely to grow out of criminality (Farrington, 1992; T2A, 2013). Accordingly, those involved in the management and correction of offending youths should engage more effectively with young people during this difficult developmental phase (Rutherford, 1986). Besides, there is a convergence of evidence supporting the notion that although offending may increase in late childhood - peaking in late adolescence - it is likely to decrease during early adulthood: the "age-crime curve" phenomenon. A derivative of this theorising is that, during this phase of life, young adults are more susceptible to rehabilitation than adults; this may be because they are treated with better interventions and techniques (Redono, Sanchez & Garido, 1999; Bottoms & Shapland, 2011; T2A, 2015). Nonetheless, it is submitted that by the time most young offenders reach their early 20s, approximately half will continue offending, and most (approximately 85%) will have stopped offending by the age of 28 (Blumstein and Cohen, 1987; Fagan & Western 2005; Farrington, 1986; Moffitt, 1993). Farrall (2002) suggests that in England and Wales, while offending peaks in males between the ages of 17 and 19 (14 –18 for females), there is usually a decline shortly after that. Conversely, it has been noted that this is not the case for all offenders; there is a subset of this group (life course persistent) who will most likely continue to offend well into adulthood (Farrington, 1986; Moffitt, 1993; Moffitt and Harrington, 1996). For this group, desistance is unlikely to occur naturally; however, whether naturally occurring or through coercion, rehabilitation can be enhanced with appropriate support (Bottoms & Shapland, 2011; King, 2013). Farrall

and Calverley (2006) posit that young people remain impressionable between the ages of 18 and 24 and there are significant advantages in supporting the factors that reduce criminal behaviour and encourage desistance during this time (Farrall & Calverley, 2005; Rocque, 2014). It is hypothesised that, with the right intervention, engagement style, and support, the process of desistance can be accelerated. Alternatively, unsuitable intervention or engagement style can retard the change process, thereby extending the period that young adults remain involved in the CJS. Moreover, it has been argued that all too often the response of the Criminal Justice System ends up hindering, as opposed to helping, the process of desistance (McAra and McVie, 2007).

However, Rutherford (1986) noted that this developmental approach sits in contrast with traditional approaches to management and punishment of youth deviancy in the UK. Rutherford contends that embracing a predominantly punitive approach (which often displaces the offender from home and school in favour of an incarcerative establishment) disrupts normal growth and development and undermines the efficacy of rehabilitative efforts.

5.1.6 The Economic Argument

In recent years, attempts have been made to measure the economic and social cost of crime via some cost-of-crime studies. Cost of crime studies allow investigators to tabulate the cost of crime committed by individuals and groups, and measure these crimes in financial terms (Cohen, 1998; Cohen, 1990; Cohen & Piquero, 2009; McCollister, French & Fang, 2010; Meurer, 1979; Ostermann & Matejkowski, 2013; Piquero, Jennings & Farrington, 2013; Welsh & Farrington, 2000).

Cost-of-crime studies also offer insight into how to best allocate criminal justice resources, coordinate responses and interventions, and provide insight into which group of offenders are responsible for the costliest crimes. These studies also highlight more specifically what age within this range requires the most intervention (Cohen, 1990; Ostermann & Matejkowski, 2013; Piquero, Jennings & Farrington, 2013; Welsh, Loeber & Stevens 2008). Available evidence suggests that youths, as a group, because of their high rate of offending and re-offending, and also the nature of the offences they commit, are responsible for a significant amount of the crime cost placed on society (Anderson, 1999; Aos, 1999; Cohen, 1988; Cohen, Piquero & Jennings, 2010; Home Office, 2000). Specifically, these studies look at the costs society incurs when managing and preventing crimes, and tabulates the factors such as the loss of property, pain and suffering to victims and related expenditures. A basic assumption of the cost of crime theorising is that when the monetary costs associated with a life of offending is compared with community rehabilitative and preventative expenditures, the former is more fiscally prudent (Welsh, 2008; Welsh, Loeber, Stevens, Stouthamer-Loeber,

Cohen, & Farrington, 2008). This is both significant and complex and will be deconstructed in the rest of the chapter.

It is suggested that while most youths may involve themselves in acts of criminality, a core (chronic) group within the offending population are responsible for a large portion of crime (Benda, & Tollett, 1999; Hagell, & Newburn, 1994; Moffitt, 1993) and subsequent crime costs (Cohen, 1998; Cohen & Piquero, 2009; Wolfgang, Figlio & Sellin, 1972; Piquero, Jennings, & Farrington, 2013). This most costly group, whose offending is seen as pervasive and consistent, have been identified in several studies, although labelled differently: life course persistent, prolific or chronic offenders (Allard et al, 2014; Cohen & Piquero, 2009; Moffitt, 1993; Piquero, Jennings & Farrington, 2013). Moffitt (1993) postulates that this small group of offenders started behaving antisocially as toddlers before progressing to more serious acts of criminality. Moffitt's work has been widely cited and correlates both life course and cost of crime studies in that they explore behaviour across time to identify patterns and grouping. For instance, Piquero and Jennings (2010) examined the costs of crime across offending pathways and worked out that a group of persistent offenders who commit crimes regularly as youths and advanced to more severe crimes as adults will generate significantly more costs in comparison to those that commit crimes less frequently. Cohen and Piquero (2009) tabulated the costs associated with a life course of crime committed by offenders in their mid-twenties and concluded that a significant amount of money could be saved by enabling desistance amongst this cohort. Cohen et al (2010) proposed that for those persistent offenders, the cost was considerably higher for those aged 18 to 26.

Although it appears that the majority of the cost of crime studies were conducted in the United States, researchers in other countries have started to conduct studies that show similar results. For example, Allard et al (2014) conducted a longitudinal study of 41,377 individuals from Queensland, Australia. They tracked offending trajectories between those aged 10 to 25 and found that offenders who were described as chronic offenders (4.8%) accounted for 41.1% of the total crime cost, with each offender amassing a cost of about \$23 million over the evaluated period. Similarly, Piquero, Jennings, and Farrington (2013 p.54) reviewed the costs of a life course of crime amongst 411 South London males and concluded that a chronic male offender, on average, would impose an annual cost of £18 per UK citizen, or a lifetime cost of approximately £742 per UK citizen.

In 2009, the cost of youth crime in the UK was calculated at roughly £23 million per week, amounting to about £1.2 billion per year (Prince's Trust, 2010). In a value for money study on the youth justice system, the National Audit Office researched a group of 83,000 young offenders who committed their first proven crime

in 2000 (National Audit Office, 2011). They followed the behaviour of the group between 2000 and 2009, using data from the Police National Computer and estimated that the cost of proven offending for each young person (including the costs of police, courts, offender management teams and custody) was approximately £8,000 per year. However, the most expensive 10 percent of offenders costs the community, approximately £29,000 annually. Furthermore, although the cost of crime differs significantly across offending trajectories, it is theorised that those who offend prolifically cost considerably more, based on the assumption that they are committing more serious, person-oriented, crimes (National Audit Office, 2011, p.66).

Additionally, when a cost such as unemployment (which is high amongst 16 to 24-year-olds) is combined with other expenditure such as loss of production and underachievement, the cost is believed to be much higher. It is assumed that targeted intervention with this group will lead to a reduction in crime rates and acquisitive offending (Prince's Trust, 2010). The argument has been made that it makes good sense to invest in the rehabilitation of offenders because the entire community will benefit when they become productive members of society (McNeill, 2006; McNeill et al, 2009; McNeill, 2009; Raynor & Robinson, 2009; Ward, 2010).

On the one hand, if the views of Piquero, et al. (2013) and others are to be accepted, there are real incentives in targeting interventions at those whose offending potentially causes the most harm. For these commentators, supporting desistance amongst this group will yield both rehabilitative and financial payback. A reasonable supposition from this line of reasoning is that, if this group of chronic offenders (who are responsible for most of the crimes and associated cost) can be identified and targeted with the right interventions, this may divert them from crime and simultaneously reduce the associated crime cost (Piquero, Jennings & Farrington, 2013). On the other hand, others have warned of the intrinsic risks in applying cost-benefit analysis to youth crime (Fass & Pi, 2002) or using crime estimates to inform criminal justice responses, particularly given the paucity of research evidence in this area (Gibbons, 1982; 1972). Also, given the agreed age-crime curve, and the expectation that most young people will grow out of crime, it may not be worth investing in a situation that, in all probability, is likely to resolve itself naturally. Goldson (2010, p.160) makes the argument that 'crime amongst youths is comparatively normal and more widespread than official data suggests'. Drawing on a number of published self-reports and other studies, Goldson maintains that since both youth crime and youth crime-trends are relatively normal and stable, minimum effort should be spent on intervention. By the time young offenders reach their mid-to-late twenties, many would have matured and desisted from offending (Loeber & Farrington, 2012).

Moreover, the idea that youth crime is costlier than adult crime is not a universally agreed notion. Some academics believe that although youth crime is more ubiquitous, crimes committed by adolescents are less

severe, and consequently less costly in economic terms, than crimes committed by adults (Cunneen & White, 2007; Scott & Steinberg, 2008). Furthermore, while the call for rehabilitative intervention to prevent crime committed by justice-involved youths has become more urgent, Cohen (1998b) noted that the majority of allocated finance is routinely used on punishment and incarceration rather than intervention.

One could contend that there is no need to treat young adult offenders differently to older offenders. It could be said that young adults know exactly what they are doing given that acts of criminality often require high levels of sophistication and planning, which can be seen as involving mature and advanced thinking. However, having searched extensively amongst the relevant literature, such assertions appear to lack empirical validation or consensus. Instead, there is mounting evidence indicating that the needs and circumstances of young adults (aged 18-25) are different from those of young people (aged 10-17) and dissimilar to those of adults (above 25). This suggests that the need for a different type of engagement is essential (Social Exclusion Unit, 2005; Barrow Cadbury Trust, 2012).

CHAPTER Six: Findings

This is the first of two results chapters presenting the analysis of the findings from the interviews with practitioners and young adult offenders. A central resolve of choosing a qualitative method and conducting interviews was to explore participants' lived experience of engagement within a case management context. Analysis of this segment of the data revealed five master themes, ten main themes and 58 sub-themes (see Appendix 17), some of which were not considered wholly essential to the research question and will not be included in the analysis. This chapter presents key findings from the semi-structured interviews conducted with 15 probation practitioners. Following the analysis of the data, three master themes, eight main themes and associated sub-themes were selected for discussion (see figure 6.1 below).

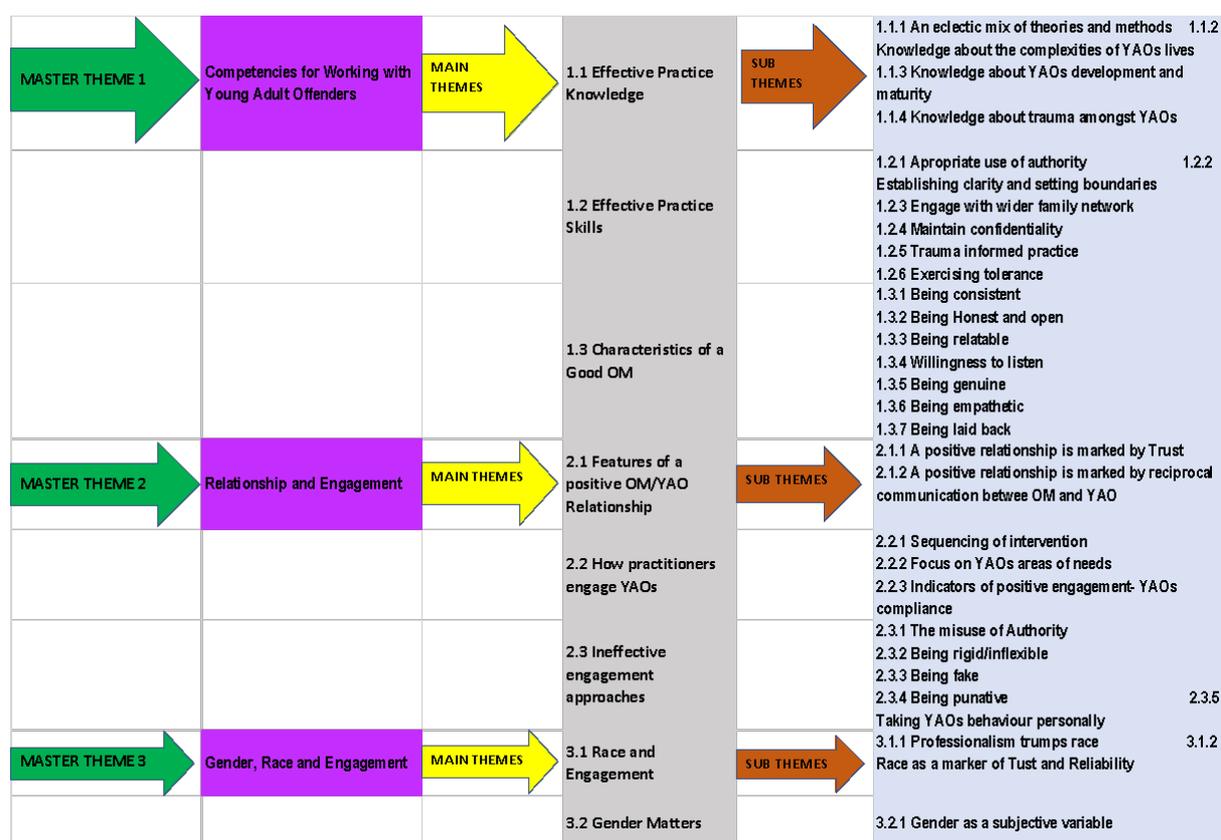


Figure 6.1: Themes constructed from Analysis

Figure 6.1 shows a depiction of the themes that were chosen based on the frequency with which they appeared in the data and their pertinence to answering the research questions. Practitioners are identified by the number ascribed to them in the methodology section (see chapter 3.6) for ease of reference. Each

excerpt is a direct quote from the transcript and is referenced by a bracketed line number (e.g. L. 113-117) referring to the relevant transcript. The full interview transcript can be found in the supplementary book: Volume 1. Key symbols and conventions to support the interpretation of extracts are presented in Table (6.1) below (a full copy of the transcription notation is presented in appendix 3).

Table 6.1: Transcript Notation

Symbol	Name	Use
[text]	Brackets	Indicates the start and end points of overlapping speech.
=	Equal Sign	Indicates the break and subsequent continuation of a single interrupted utterance.
(.2)	Micropause	A brief pause where the number indicates the amount of seconds e.g. 0.2.
↓	Down Arrow	Indicates falling pitch.
↑	Up Arrow	Indicates rising pitch.
ALL CAPS	Capitalized text	Indicates shouted or increased volume speech.
<u>underline</u>	Underlined text	Indicates the speaker is emphasizing or stressing the speech.
:	Colon(s)	Indicates prolongation of an utterance.
hhh	h	Audible exhalation

6.1 Master Theme One, Part 1: Competencies for Working with Young Adult Offenders (Practitioners' Perspectives).

This overarching theme (Braun & Clarke, 2013) captures the central focus of three main themes and 17 related sub-themes. Jointly, they describe a collection of core correctional knowledge, skills and personality characteristics that probation practitioners credited as efficacious in ameliorating engagement within a case management context. Practitioners were asked to identify pertinent theories, models and methods that had influenced their practice, and which they had employed in day-to-day case management work and interactions with young adult offenders.

6.1.1 Main Theme A: Effective Practice Knowledge

The term 'effective practice knowledge' was chosen because the researcher wanted to remain consistent with the language used across the broader effective practice literature, effective probation practice and processes embedded within one-to-one offender case management work and programme intervention.

Effective practice knowledge refers to a consortium of established theories that are employed across offender management. When probed about the knowledge underpinning their practice, the majority of practitioners, regardless of their time on the job or specialist roles, spoke candidly with little or no prompting.

6.1.1.1 Sub-theme A1: An Eclectic mix of Theories and Methods

Although some participants spoke of a single approach that underpinned their practice, most described using an amalgam of established theories and approaches in supervision and daily interactions with young adult offenders. It was unsurprising that most practitioners referenced a variety of theories as opposed to the use of one theory informing their practice and interactions with young adult offenders. This is exemplified in the response participant 2 gave when asked what theories, models or approaches informed her work, and what she personally found useful when working with young adult offenders:

“I use quite a few, the latest theory being identity theory which is very relevant for my young people. I think attachment has a huge amount to do with young people. Not all but there is such a high correlation with the cases I work with and poor attachment, or no attachment or unhealthy attachment in their younger years that it can't be ignored. I think it's really crucial (L.605-610)”.

Likewise, when the same question was posed to participant 6, her comments further supported the analysis that most officers were employing an eclectic mix of theories in daily practice:

“I make use of desistance and what I tend to do with the young people, generally with all my cases, where there is family involvement, I am receptive to it but particularly more so with the young people because I recognise that, you know based on the desistance theory, relationship is also one of those things that can reduce re-offending. So, I would always, and that's why I focus on ok if you have a child, how are you being a parent, how are you functioning as a partner, how are you functioning as a son? So, I do spend a lot of time or give a lot of focus to those aspects of their lives and upon the ETE part of their life. The benefit of ETE is it's very forward looking and CBT as well. It might not necessarily be a structured form of CBT but what we are doing is if you are trying to broaden a certain part of someone's perspective, you are trying to get them to understand the situation from a different perspective, a less counterproductive perspective, CBT is what we are doing. So, it's desistance, CBT and pro social modelling (L.2078-209)”.

It was noted, however, that one particular model of working, The Good Lives Model (GLM), was referenced by a number of practitioners. The analysis showed that five of the 15 practitioners (33%) mentioned having routinely drawn on the GLM to inform their practice. Participant 9 noted:

“I think the Good Lives Model, whether or not we can implement it, it's about looking at different aspects of your life and well-being and trying to come to a reality of where you are at where you would like to be (L. 2740-2742)”.

Participant 10 spoke about how she used the GLM in a focussed way to encourage young adult offenders to move beyond past offending behaviours and to look towards an offence-free future:

“The Good Lives Model, it’s about building them, as with most people, it’s about focusing on the good that they bring, you know, and kind of emphasising like, you know, they have made a mistake, they have screwed up, they are here but how do you move it forward. (L. 3098-3101)”.

Participant 3 provided some insights into the consistency and longevity of applying the GLM to practice, as well as how she used it to focus on the young adult offender instead of his behaviour:

“I suppose to some degree I use the Good Lives Model, and that’s kind of revamped over the years, but it’s still the same thing. I am looking at that person as a whole, so not just the crime or the criminal per se (L.946-949)”.

Nonetheless, it was noted that participants who expressed a predilection for, or who routinely used the GLM, appeared to use it in conjunction with other established approaches as exemplified in the response from participant 8: “It’s the Good Lives Model and the desistance approach (L.2620-2621)”.

6.1.1.2 Sub-Theme A2: Knowledge about the complexities of young adults’ lives

When discussing their case management experiences and supervisory encounters, practitioners were emphatic that, in addition to holding established formal job-related knowledge, they also needed to possess some understanding of contextualised youth behaviour and routine. This contextual understanding involves knowledge of individual young adults, as well as knowing about young adults as a collective. For most practitioners this pool of knowledge seems to revolve around the knowledge of young adult offenders’ lifestyles and associates, including their home life - particularly if, as noted by participant 10, “these kids come from broken homes (L.31001)”. According to participant 1, practitioners “needed to know what type of lifestyle young people live today, what is expected of young people and what is happening with young people in the community (L.70-71)”. This knowledge, referred to as street knowledge or ‘knowledge of the streets’, emerged as a recurring theme that practitioners considered to be an essential prerequisite for working with young adult offenders. Particular emphasis was placed on knowing about street knowledge in the context of serious group offending (SGO) lifestyles, as noted by participant 11:

“It’s difficult if they are making a lot of money from drug dealing, they feel: like they are needed as part of a gang, they got status, they got belonging, they’ve got family from their gang or whatever. Then it’s going to be difficult for them to want to give that up and be legit (L.3324-3327)”.

For participant 13, this knowledge was useful for synthesising subjective experiences and practice realities in order to understand why some young adults may be involved in gangs:

“I think some of the individuals that I have supervised, especially if they are in serious gang offending, they don't talk to their peers about things that they would speak to me about, so give them an opportunity, almost like giving them a platform sometimes because I am trying to understand why they are in gangs and so for them, they explain to me and so we bring like both views together and stuff (L. 3995-3999).”

Furthermore, practitioners repeatedly mentioned that learning from young adult offenders was a routine way of building or enhancing their practice knowledge. For instance, participant 1 described how she continued to develop her knowledge for working with young adult offenders: “I develop my knowledge and skills through them, the young people- they educate me (L. 197-198)”. This notion of learning from young adult offenders was further reinforced by Participant 13, who admits supplementing her learning about dealing with young adults, by learning from her adolescent daughter “I do a lot of self-assessment and I do talk to my daughter, not the ins and outs but about my approach (L.4120-4121).

6.1.1.3 Sub-theme A3: Knowledge about YAOs Development and Maturity

Young adults' psychological/neurobiological development was discussed with practitioners. The crux of this discussion was captured in the views of Practitioner 3, who noted that young adult offenders “behave according to their maturity”, (L.812-813). As a theme, the pervasiveness of maldevelopment and immaturity amongst young adults was noted across responses to a variety of questions. For instance, participant 10 felt that the main problems practitioners faced when working with young adult offenders was “their own immaturity because they are still developing (L.3192-3193)”. In relation to engagement, participant 6 noted that “with their maturity level being different from adults the whole engagement process takes a lot longer to build up a relationship (L. 1609-1610)”. The notion that having some knowledge of psychological/neurobiological development impacts the therapeutic relationship was further noted by Participant 7:

“It's definitely about recognising that this person is in a state of transition, young adults, they are still developing. They need to be told more than once. They need to be allowed to make mistakes hh and they need to be supported through these mistakes. Hh you can't be too heavy handed or too critical because they are filled with youthful exuberance, if you come down too hard, that's not to say you shouldn't be accountable, but if you come down too hard, they can become quite indignant (L.1916-1922)”.

In the same way, when I asked Participant 7 what relevant training she had undertaken to help in her work with young adult offenders, she declared:

“Actually, I did do a training, it wasn’t an in-house training, I can’t remember what it was called but it was about understanding young people and their psychological development and how that affects their decision making and identity and things like that. I think that was quite helpful actually, in helping me to kind of understand that actually, they need to be worked with, given a little space, recognise their difficulties and that they are still in a state of transition and you know, it just allowed me to work a little better (L.2000-2006)”.

6.1.1.4 Sub-Theme A4: Knowledge about Trauma Amongst YAOs

Recurrantly mentioned by practitioners, was the notion that working with young adult offenders requires an awareness of trauma and its impact. When asked about the most important competencies required to engage young adult offenders, Participant 10 stated:

“Being able to talk to them, on a level, like on their level, being actually able to engage them, on their level and kind of, NOT BE DISMISSIVE of their experiences and I think that is where you got to kinda start. To acknowledge that, you know what? They got trauma in their lives (L. 2915-2919)”.

Participant 10 reinforced her point that a knowledge of trauma was a fundamental resource in the offender management tool kit when she stated:

“I think what would be useful in general is doing some training in trauma informed practice. I think especially when you discuss trauma, especially when they are younger, (h) its very important, trauma is very important in the way they carry themselves. Especially if they're carrying knives or if they are in gangs and things like that. They are traumatised as victims but they are also traumatising as perpetrators. So, I think probation officers should get trauma informed care training done (L.3011-3016)”.

As indicated by Participant 11, officers viewed trauma amongst young adults from two perspectives: as a consequence of being a victim, and as a result of being a perpetrator of serious crimes:

“if they’ve experienced trauma, or they’ve committed a crime, themselves, the trauma from that as well, which normally gets ignored” (L.3350-3352)”.

6.1.2 Main-Theme B: Effective Engagement Skills

Effective engagement skills refer to those techniques that officers use in daily case management and routine engagement with young adult offenders. Practitioners spoke frankly about the many challenges they encounter when supervising young adult offenders. The analysis of their narratives revealed a cluster of interrelated operative skills and techniques believed to be effective within the supervision process. A selection of these skills is discussed below.

6.1.2.1 Sub-theme B1: *Appropriate use of Authority*

Using authority appropriately was repeatedly mentioned by practitioners. Some expressed that being too authoritarian was an impediment to practice as noted by participant 7:

“I think these are young people who are head strong, who are trying to define themselves as men or adults and that’s female included as well if you know, by virtue of the role I’m in a position of power and authority, they are at that stage whereby in defining themselves as men, part of that process is the challenge to authority. And if you come in too heavy handed and try to stamp your authority on it, then that’s where it could go wrong (L. 1982-1987)”.

It was construed from participant 7’s statement that she felt that “stamping her authority” in a heavy-handed way would be a barrier to engagement and ultimately to the supervision objectives, and process. Yet, participant 4 for example, noted that displaying the right level of authority or towing that fine line was essential to maintain boundaries within the supervision process.

“I think I’ve been very reflective on my own age being 23 and how they perceive me, as well so, I view that as very important (.) so as not to perceive me as being a friend. Because obviously hh being of a similar age, that can happen with having the boundaries there and also just being human with them as well. Not having that too much authority on things, knowing their boundaries. It’s a fine line, it’s a difficult line with young people. I’ve always enjoyed working with young people. But found the fine line harder to keep than with adults (L.1336-1343)”.

Participant’s 4 reflection on age and experience of service and how, it impacted her use of authority and the relationship was noteworthy: she was the youngest and most recently qualified of all the practitioners.

Participant 6, on the other hand, saw the appropriate use of authority as an obligatory response to the expectation of the young adult offenders themselves, who she felt anticipated a balanced and appropriate use of authority from their supervising officer:

“Because some of them I guess some of them like that authority and the boundaries”.

However, she did acknowledge that some officers “might deviate slightly from the use of authority just to “kind of get them on board” (L.3984-3986)”.

What was deciphered from this statement was that officers may (where necessary) hold back on using their authority where the circumstances permit in order to augment the relationship. This may involve balancing the risk, the relationship and the use of authority.

6.1.2.2 *Sub-theme B2: Establishing Clarity and Setting Boundaries*

Practitioners indicated that the ability to establish and maintain clarity about one's role, clarity about the purposes of supervision and to set appropriate boundaries are fundamental to engaging effectively with young adult offenders. As noted by participant 1, it is imperative that "young people need to understand what is expected of them (L.74-75)". It appears that this ability was considered so important; some officers were willing to employ unconventional approaches to ensure clarity, as indicated by participant 13:

"You definitely need to communicate and be clear, and sometimes, it's going to sound a bit unprofessional and it is going to sound a bit rude but you almost have to come down to their level so they understand what you are saying (L.3982-3989)".

For some practitioners, clarity and boundary setting was not just essential, it was pivotal amongst the skills that practitioners needed to cultivate in order to engage young adult offenders as participant 10 said:

"I think, (.2), the biggest, the most important thing when trying to engage young people is having a very, very clear boundary (L 3219-3227)".

This may be, as noted by participant 13, that some officers perceive that having clarity could facilitate and inspire trust with young adult offenders:

"Definitely being clear, that's something I find they appreciate, like being transparent. If you do this, this will happen, if you do this, then, this will happen, so there is no shock, they don't feel like their trust is broken because, I did tell you (L.4002-4004)".

6.1.2.3 *Sub-theme B3: Engage with Wider Family Network*

Practitioners talked about the ability to work collaboratively, although most focussed on the need to transcend beyond just engaging with other agencies, and to engage with significant friends and family members.

However, as noted by participant 2, these collaborations are often used in challenging situations to support the officer's legitimacy:

"If I get the feeling that someone is going off the rails, I will try to get them in more or tell them I'm coming to see you more, or speak to their mom and things like that, I think there's a real benefit in family work (L.561-564)".

There are however, caveats to engaging with family members, as participant 2 explained:

"I think more family work is really good, it's vital. And that if you are in the family environment you are singing from the same page. There are other cases where you find the dads and the moms saying, 'why are the Police victimising my son'? So, it's quite difficult then for the young person to change. So, it's good to get family involved, if they are supportive (L. 528-529)".

Also, participant 7 noted that the offender's consent to involve the family is vital:

“And if you got that buy in and they don’t mind and they give you the permission to have that contact with the family, you know the family let you know what’s going on or what’s not going on (L.2137-2139)”.

6.1.2.4 Sub-theme B4: Maintain Confidentiality

Although participants had varying views of how confidentiality is operationalised within the therapeutic relationship, most maintained that the ability to preserve confidentiality was essential to the relationship. For some practitioners, confidentiality may require making a judgement not to act on certain infringements in order to build a closer working alliance in the longer-term as participant 12 said:

“You kind of have to give that space to be able to feel like they can speak to you. So, there are certain things that you will have to kind of report but sometimes you have to kind of give them a little bit, let them know, → there is confidentiality and are also building their confidence in you. But it is not everything that is mentioned that is going to be reported or cause significant concern, and what have you, so, you build a little, a little bit of confidence by the way you kind of like engage with them but at the same time allowing them some space and confidentiality, I think that little bit helps. (L. 3682-3688)”.

However, for other practitioners, confidentiality enables the building of a trusting relationship without collusion, as noted by participant 2:

“My cases (offenders) in particular know that I work with the police, however it’s very clear when I say to them what we talk about on a day-to-day basis the police don’t know. But if you tell me someone chased you down the road last night, I would have to tell the police. And it’s very clear and they trust me enough to now disclose stuff to me that I can pass to the Police. They may not talk to the police themselves, that takes time so they will need to be aware that they can confide in you but you also can’t collude (L.483-488)”.

Nonetheless, not all practitioners viewed confidentiality in the same way, others (participant 10 for example) viewed confidentiality as less about balancing trust or enforcement; for her confidentiality was about providing young adult offenders with a conducive space to talk without reservation:

“I say, everything you say here is confidential, it’s between you and me, this is the place where you can actually talk, you know, you don’t need to be emotionally unavailable here, this is where you can express yourself and somebody will listen (L.2906-2909)”.

6.1.2.5 Sub-theme B5: Trauma Informed Practice

Given the frequency with which trauma was mentioned, it was anticipated that practitioners would identify the ability to address trauma as critical. As noted by participant 2, “staff... should be more aware of trauma when working with young people (L.744-745)”. Although, the general view was that this skill set does not form part of standard probation training, it should. Participant 2 was of the opinion that the absence of trauma-informed training may have been an organisational oversight:

“I think that’s something that has just been overlooked so much is the mental health and the emotional wellbeing, particularly of young men, particularly if they smoke cannabis, particularly the amount of violence that they have been exposed to or inflicted on others, you know in addition to all their childhood experiences and rejection at school, I just think we need to be more aware. (L.713-717)”.

However, participant 10 believed that this training should be standardised, given the prevalence of trauma amongst young adult offenders:

“I think what would be useful in general is doing some training in trauma informed practice...especially if like carrying knives or if they are in gangs and things like that. They are traumatised as victims but they are also traumatising as perpetrators. So, I think probation officers should get trauma informed care training done (L.3011-3016)”.

Participants believed that being competent in dealing with trauma is partly driven by the prevalence of trauma that staff encountered in their work with young adult offenders. Participant 11 said:

“For me it always come back to trauma, it’s probably the cases that take up most of my time because (.) it’s so enmeshed in everything they do, hh in their reactions, in their behaviour, in their lifestyle, in their relationships, until you build up those internal skills (L.3454-3457)”.

6.1.2.6 Sub-theme B6: Exercising Tolerance

Twelve out of the fifteen practitioners expressed the belief that, because it takes time to get to know young adult offenders, it is obligatory that those working with this cohort develop patience and spend time to get to know the young adult, as noted by participant 15: “I think the main quality particularly when working with young adults, is around patience (L. 4603-4604).” However, the issue of time and patience resonated throughout most interviews with some practitioners suggesting that it takes more time to work with young adult offenders in contrast to adult offenders, as expressed by participant 1:

“I take my time to build a rapport and I have a little bit of compassion and understanding. If someone comes in upset with me, I would say let’s talk about it and we break it all down, we break the problem down. That’s why my supervision normally takes longer, because if a person comes in with issues and they can’t explain or express what the issue is because they never were allowed to express what it is then that’s what takes time. That’s what builds the relationship and that is what builds the trust, because you’re willing to spend some quality time with that person. They say 15 minutes but in that 15 minutes you don’t get time to build because young people say you don’t have a vested interest in them (L.144-154)”.

Participant 1 went on to say: “My main tension is about time, we don’t get the time and I get frustrated (L.205).” Like participant 1, participant 4 also expressed her frustration in not having enough time to work with young adult offenders:

“Yea, it’s the resources you know and the time we have to spend with them. I think they are seen like three times a week at the YOT and some of them love that when they come here, they are dropped, yeah, the resources definitely we don’t have, they need a lot of time and patience and we don’t have that (L.1378-1381)”.

Time was understood to refer to face-to-face time with young adult offenders, as noted by participant 1 and participant 4; but according to participant 4, that resource was not available in probation. Ultimately, when asked if she had the time and resources to change anything in probation, her resounding answer was “I would say time, that’s probably the big thing (L.1499)”. In addition, participant 6 was most unequivocal in driving home the importance of time in supervising young adult offenders:

“Time, time, time, it definitely takes more time with young people. I definitely feel like a lot of the time I have gone beyond the time that I would spend in supervision for young people which then has a knock on impact on my workload when I get back and especially in terms of the partnership agency working, especially like a three way meeting if they come into the office or if we go to meet up with a partnership agency, that in itself takes a longer time especially with their non-engagement, they might have to be in that room for a good 3 weeks, before you can let that partnership agency be in the room with the service user on their own so that they can get a rapport going. That is time in itself as well, so definitely more time consuming (L.1717-1725)”.

Participant 10 provided a practical breakdown of how time may impact relationships with young adult offenders:

“Time is difficult, like, last week I saw 15 people in one week, on top of that I had two ((ISP)) due and I had to do Delius entries, so time is a massive thing. If you’re lucky you’ll get 15 minutes in the room with them some week, other weeks it is not as bad, but time is an issue (L.3060-3063)”.

6.1.3 Main Themes C: Characteristics of a Good Offender Manager

Practitioners described seven all-encompassing characteristics that they believed professionals working with young adults should possess. Characteristics refer to those interpersonal qualities identified within the effective practice literature as essential when working particularly with non-voluntary clients (Durnescu, 2012; Prior & Mason, 2010; Trotter, 2015).

6.1.3.1 Sub-theme C1: Being Consistent

Maintaining stability and consistency arose as a significant theme amongst practitioners, most of whom expressed that consistency is still required, even if the offender does something that is disappointing as noted by participant 12:

“And also, being consistent, so, even if they do something really bad, that you disapprove of or disappointed with, still being there, being supportive (L.3369-3370)”.

For participant 12, consistency was viewed as a fundamental need of young adult offenders; “I think a lot of the cases that I have come across, they need just somebody that is consistent (L.3784-3785)”. Given the proportion of care leavers amongst the young adult cohort (Fitzpatrick, 2014) and the link between secure attachment and desistance (Ansbro, 2017), it seems reasonable that officers felt the ability to be a stable force in offenders’ lives was vital. This is captured succinctly in the comment made by participant 14 who ensures that she is “consistent with them (L.4291)”.

6.1.3.2 Sub-theme C2: Being Honest and Open

When practitioners spoke of being honest and open, it appeared (at times) that they were using the terms interchangeably. For instance, when participant 3 was asked to reflect on any personality traits that were necessary to cultivate in order to work effectively with young adults, he said, “as an offender manager, you can’t know everything, so sometimes it’s about being that honest by asking them (L.828-829)”. His response about being honest connotes the idea of openness: being introspective about a knowledge gap and making himself vulnerable by looking to the young adult as the expert on the subject matter. However, when asked a few minutes later about building trust with young adults, his use of the word honest suggests that he was now speaking about truthfulness as opposed to openness:

“In terms of engagement you have to build that level of trust. You gain that trust by being honest and also, if you say you’re going to do something, do it (L.868-870)”.

Participant 3’s response suggests another layer of professional honesty that seems to transcend just the trait of truthfulness. This notion of ‘being’ and ‘doing’ honesty and openness was a recurring theme during most of the interviews as participants 8 and 15 said:

“So, you need to build that relationship with them; and its again about honesty, be open from the get go about what your role is, again, how are you going to work with them so there isn’t any kind of, you know, nasty surprises so they don’t turn around and say, well, you didn’t tell me all that what’s going to happen (L.2301-2305)”.

Participant 15 said:

“It’s also about following up on your word. Don’t ever make promises that you can’t keep (L4693-4694)”.

6.1.3.3 Sub-theme C3: Being Reliable

Although officers spoke of the ability to relate to young adult offenders as essential, some officers spoke about relatability to external factors such as socio-economic circumstances, as mentioned by participant 9:

“I didn’t grow up that different from them, I grew up in an inner city, went to school with 23% GCSE pass and had friends in and out of prison I’ve had (.2) = and I think the fact that I I’m not that far from their age, between 18 to 25 I am between that age, you know what I mean, I think that makes it easier for me to relate but I also think that, I think I’m quite chilled, like, I’m not like, you know, if you don’t do it just keep me informed. If you can’t make an appointment, talk to me about it, we will rearrange it. Being flexible, and being open to their needs, I think that’s why I can relate to them because of that (L.2940-2947)”.

Cultural and ethnic factors were also accredited to officers’ relatability, as revealed by comments made by participant 15 when asked if being of the same ethnicity made it easier to relate:

“Most definitely, that’s what I see because I think the automatic assumption is you’re not from where I’m from. you can’t relate to me. Hh whereas, and it could be something so subtle as a word, like a phrase. A phrase that they’ve heard from their young days, a phrase that you know, your aunt or uncle may say. As a white officer, if you’re not part of that world, to engage in that conversation, doesn’t necessarily mean that you can’t work with that young person (L.4970-4975)”.

Participant 13 indicated that she sometimes “comes down to their (the young adult offenders) level in order to engage them”. When asked to clarify what coming down to their level means she stated:

“Well basically, talking in their terms, like, yea, at the end of the day, using certain words that they understand, that they can relate to, not speaking to them at a certain level where they kind of see you up there, therefore they feel they cannot connect with you” (L.3991-3993)”.

6.1.3.4 *Sub-theme C4: Willingness to Listen*

Practitioners conveyed the idea that the offender manager/offender relationship is one that is beleaguered by the absence of a willingness to listen on both sides: young adults tend to ignore the voice of authority figures and practitioners are not generally willing to listen to young adult offenders. According to participant 13 this may be “because some of them have like, issues with authority and might see you as a figure of authority so therefore they are not listening to you (L.3984-3986)”. As explained by participant 14, this is problematic and creates needless tension within the therapeutic relationship that sometimes leads to unnecessary enforcement:

“If someone is disruptive and not willing to listen then that’s a barrier in itself. In that you’re not able to get across what you want them to hear, that’s going to be a main barrier because they’re not listening are they? So, I think that not being listened to, and not being able to, I mean when they’re being disruptive they are not telling you the main kind of problems that they’re experiencing, they just, it’s a lot of noise and what have you. You’re not going to be able to get whatever it is that is important across to them. And then that in itself can lead to problems because if you’re not able to explain, well this is why you need to meet with me, once a week or what have you, then that may

mean that next week they are not coming in. So, you may have to go down the enforcement route (L.3910-3919)".

It seems predictable then that most practitioners viewed listening in the same fashion as practitioner 14: as a practical and functional necessity. As participant 14 said:

"I think definitely, I do more of the listening, I let them have that opportunity so that I can get to know them (L.3811-3813)".

6.1.3.5 Sub-theme C5: Being Genuine

Only 3 of the 15 practitioners spoke of being genuine or real. Participant 1's opinion that "being open and being genuine about who you are (L.55-56) resonated with, and seemed in congruence with the views expressed by participant 3 who said, "so that you can understand that person better (L.832-833)". When discussing what is most effective when engaging with young adults, Participant 5 said: "I think like I just said, being human, so being real with them (L.1346)".

However, it appears that being genuine or real also serves another function, as participant 3 observed:

"They can see right through you if you are not genuine or congruent, they will see right through you because they have learnt a pattern of behaviour and expect it from people (L.164-166)".

This statement suggests that young adults are experts at sensing when an officer is being genuine or not and are therefore likely to respond accordingly.

6.1.3.6 Sub-theme C6: Being Empathetic

Throughout the interviews a number of participants repeatedly described how their ability to understand, and to show empathy for the feelings and concerns of young adult offenders, was natural. Participant 4 said:

"I guess empathy and a bit of understanding of what it's like for some young people who have been exposed to particular lives, especially on the streets so to speak (L.1616-1617)".

Practitioners were unequivocal about the fact that they needed to be in tune and respond sensitively to the complex personal circumstances of young adult offenders. According to participant 14, "at times, being empathetic was as simple as making it clear to the young person that I don't know your world view, I can't see the world through the same perspective and being mindful of previous experience, especially for young people who have had self-reported negative experiences in care, just making sure that I am not modelling

what they have a negative view of before (L.4279-4283)”. Participant 1 also shared this outlook seeing it as a professional responsibility: “...with young people you have to have compassion and understanding (L.381)”.

6.1.3.7 Sub-theme C7: Being Laid back

This notion of being laid back was only mentioned by one participant. However, as a single abstraction it seemed, initially, an intriguing counter intuitive argument. This was the 10th practitioner to be interviewed, and until this point, practitioners had described the supervision sphere as one marked by chaos and complexities that often required them to be in a state of anxious alertness. Practitioners had mentioned that young adults can be resentful towards supervision, demonstrate immature behaviours, be rude and unmotivated. It was therefore interesting that participant 10 saw the environment as one in which being laid back was a necessary countermeasure. This participant, a recently qualified officer and a young adult herself, explained that being chilled helps with the relationship building and made her more relatable to her young adult cohort:

“I am quite chilled, like, I’m not like, you know, if you don’t do it just keep me informed. If You can’t make an appointment to talk to me about it, we will rearrange it. Being flexible, and being open to their needs, I think that’s why I can relate to them because of that (L.2944-2947)”.

6.2 Master Theme 2: Relationship and Engagement: Building Positive Therapeutic Alliances with YAOs

This master theme encapsulates the behaviours participants disclose as essential to build and sustain positive working relationships between criminal justice practitioners and young adult offenders. It also captures those things that participants deemed to be unhelpful or ineffective as well as factors by which effective engagement is measured.

6.2.1 Main Theme 2A: Features of a Positive OM/YAO Relationship

This main theme captures those characteristics that participants felt epitomised a positive relationship between young adult offenders and practitioners. Participants were asked to describe how they measured or evaluated the quality of their relationship with YOAs and how they knew if a young adult was willingly engaged.

6.2.1.1 Sub-theme 2A.1: A Positive Relationship is Marked by Trust

All 15 practitioners suggested that whilst mutual trust was important to build a relationship with offenders, trust from young adult offenders was vital to the very existence of the relationship. Most shared the views expressed by participant 15, that there was an observable culture of mistrust amongst young adult offenders in “the system,” which is extended to those practitioners that they see as representing the system:

“A lot of the young people don’t have any trust in the system, much less in you as an individual (L. 4691-4692)”.

According to participant 14, it is therefore incumbent on practitioners to be extra vigilant in preserving trust with young adults by going beyond what would normally be required:

“Yea, very, very important with the young adults, and I would argue quite difficult to get. I think staying consistent with them, I think being very transparent, almost to the point where go beyond what you would consider being necessary in the room, just giving them that little bit more about what you know, and about how you would deal with anything. If they told you something and you had to disclose it to someone else, make sure they know exactly the reasons why and exactly what they have done or what they have said that would have that impact on that kind of thing. Because, once you lose the trust of that young person, it is impossible (L.4290-4297)”.

According to participant 7, not only do practitioners have to go the extra distance to build trust with this cohort of offenders; they also have to be prepared to spend extra time to secure their trust: “I think it takes double the amount of time than it does with an adult offender to build that trust (L.1332-1333)”. Participant 1 felt so passionate about the importance of trust that she said:

“Sorry to cut you but I feel very passionately about that, building trust, building a relationship, is paramount for a young person because if they don’t trust you, they are not letting you in. And even though you do your work and you tell them that you have to do your work, bla bla bla, you still need to build that trust and know how to build a rapport with a young person. Cause, once you say you are not going to do something or you might tell them you are going to do something, do it, because they will hold you accountable to that and if you don’t do it that trust will be gone (L135-142)”.

However, it was practitioner 11 who may have best captured the essence of her colleagues’ views when asked how she evaluated the efficacy of her relationships, she used the example of a recent relationship with a young adult to demonstrate her point:

“In the beginning he was very distrusting, but we built up a very good relationship (.), we would spend over an hour in supervision, and talking about things, doing very well, practising mindfulness, so I would say that’s a good relationship (L.3485-3487)”.

Practitioners disclosed that when trust is present the relationship is manifestly enhanced. For instance, young adult offenders are more willing to disclose information and are more willing to ask for help (participant 2).

Others indicate that when trust is present young adults are more open (participant 14) and willing to confide in their officer (participant 12).

6.2.1.2 Sub-theme 2A.2: A Positive Relationship is marked by Reciprocal Communication Between OMs and YAOs

National Standards for the Management of Offenders (2015) mandates that the supervisory relationship should be collaborative. The framework expects that offenders should be engaged as active participants in the preparation and execution of their sentence plan. It seemed clear from the analysis that some practitioners saw young adults as partners, rather than objects to be worked on, as indicated by participant 1, "It's about you being able to be flexible with that young person and work with them, how they work and not how I work and how they understand (L.107-108)". For practitioner 9, one way of achieving collaborative working was to have "an open flow of communication (L.2546-2547)" between the two parties. Given the nature of the relationship, it is expected that officers will routinely need to convey instructions, deliver interventions and explore offenders' personal circumstances. What officers acknowledge, however, was the significance of the offender-to-officer flow of information:

"It goes back to what I said before, getting that relationship where they can actually talk to you, you know, you can respond to them and vice versa (participant 5, L.1657-1658)".

Given that offenders typically do not willingly talk to officers, reciprocal verbal dialogue was judged to be a marker of a positive alliance with engaged offenders; in the same way that perfunctory verbal exchanges were deemed to be suggestive of a fragile alliance and an unengaged offender.

6.2.2 Main Theme 2B: How Practitioners Engage Young Adult Offenders

Practitioners were asked to comment on how they motivate young adult offenders and the analysis of their response drew out seven key factors, which will be discussed below.

Sub-theme 20: Offenders are motivated when you demonstrate care and concern

Officers repeatedly indicated that a definite approach to stimulate the interest and motivation of young adult offenders is to demonstrate genuine care for them. Showing care for the overall well-being and wider social affairs of the young adult offenders under their supervision was viewed as a means of -not only grabbing their attention- but demonstrating that they were concerned about the whole person and not just about their offending. Someone, according to participant 14 who is:

"A consistent figure, someone they can trust, someone they think actually cares for them and is interested in seeing them do well (4409-4410)".

According to participant 4, young adult offenders seem to intuitively know if an officer genuinely cares about them or they are just doing their job in a perfunctory manner: “they think ok, this person actually does care, to a degree, and I am not just another number on their caseload” (L.1364-1365). Participant 7 also reaffirmed this when she suggested that when staff demonstrate care, offenders, without a doubt, will pick up on it.

“What I would say about most of the training is that the training teaches you techniques, which are helpful but sometimes it’s more than a technique because if you care or are interested, you don’t have to be taught how to care or to be interested; we can all show care and be interested but people will pick up on it and understand it (L.1992-1994)”.

It was however noted that some officers found it difficult to balance their care and concern with professional and personal obligations, which in some cases appeared to create moral dilemmas and infringe on their work life balance. For instance, participant 4 reported that at one point her concern for young adults was so intense that “I take that home with me (L.1446). Likewise, she expressed the dilemma she encountered when having to decide between caring for young adult offenders and managing their risk:

“But I try to take a holistic view of them. I’m quite like that myself so that’s why I’m probably (.) and that’s what I was saying earlier, in terms of the dilemma I have between risk management and the social work aspect of things. Of maybe being diverted from risk management sometimes because I am so focussed on their wellbeing. Probation officers are really different, aren’t they? You find some that are just risk focussed and when I speak to officers like that, I worry that I don’t do it sometimes, but. So, everything obviously with young people, their families, relationships, what they do in their spare time. Cause I find often they don’t have any, anything, sometimes” (L. 1536-1544)’.

6.2.2.1 Sub-theme 2B.1: To Engage YAOs Sequence your Intervention

All practitioners acknowledged that in one form or another that the lives of young adult offenders are marked by a number of developmental, social and other multi-layered complexities. Issues such as mental ill health, substance misuse or involvement in serious group offending, are often competing with criminogenic needs such as poor thinking skills, poor anger management or risk-taking behaviour. The analysis suggests that offenders’ lives are not compartmentalised and some of these life complexities present themselves within case management, as engagement challenges. Consequently, deciding what to prioritise within the offender sentence plan and to sequence these interventions can be a challenge. However, practitioners claim that this challenge requires more skill and attention when it comes to managing young adult offenders, and could take extra time as noted by participant 11:

“If they’ve got serious trauma symptoms, dealing with that and the causes of it, hh some of them have serious disabilities because of what they have experienced, building up self-esteem, confidence, it takes years (L.3330-3332)”.

What was understood by this, which became even more clear in the observation made by practitioner 15, is that the ability to understand the offender's 'point of readiness' and to sequence intervention in accordance with the offenders needs and point of readiness is invaluable in encouraging not just engagement- but the efficacy of that intervention:

"For example, if you've got someone who has several sentence plan objectives and this person is unable to form appropriate positive relationships, it's very difficult for me to then, not difficult, but it would be silly for me to start looking at hh drug and alcohol or you know relationship building with females for example when actually, the core crux of what's wrong with you, not what's wrong with you but what we need be looking at is your lifestyle and associates. So (5) what you implement in terms of the order will always be dependent upon that person you are working with and you need to be responsive to that person's needs. You can't look at, if someone is presenting something to you, regardless of your session plan you may have ready and lovely, presented and ready to go downstairs and talk to them about, they may come to you with a crisis, the session plan goes through the window and it's about being responsive and I think for me that is what the sequencing potential is about (L.4616-4627)".

Participant 15 also said:

"I think part of that is again being able to pick up on those subtle personal presentations and being able to implement the right type of things to respond to that presentation at that time. Hh that within itself does require a skill, but I think it works, particularly with young adults because they are at a point of a different level of maturation, finding themselves and the lessons and the rest of it. Hh and being able to not necessarily be on their level but to have a common ground with them to some extent empowers them and enables them to, to realise that they are the centre and it's about fostering that meaningful relationship to continue with that positive work moving forward (4629-4642)".

Participant 5 indicated that she felt national standard deadlines were at times at odds with, and may actually be counterproductive to sequencing intervention for young adults, if enthusiastic participation and engagement is expected as an end goal.

"If they are a young person and they've been in the system for a long time there's probably quite a lot of history there and to get all of that from a young person within 10 days, and a risk management plan, they might have an asset and stuff which is helpful. That's right across the board but more so with the young people. You can't get a good quality piece of work meeting them that amount of times and I suppose they are not going to open up to you even more so being young within 10 days. Yea and the enforcement as well I think like I said before it's not really, it doesn't really achieve anything (1431-1438)".

The 10 days relates to the length of time practitioners are given by national standards to complete an OASys assessment which encompasses the offender's supervision and sentence plan. However, the views expressed suggest that this timeline is insufficient, because young adult offenders were deemed unlikely to open up sufficiently and engage in such a short period of time. Accordingly, organisational skills take on

more importance when working with young adults due in part to their chaotic nature as indicated by participant 14:

“I find with young adults sometimes you are working one week at a time. They can't see forward into next week's plan, and then its understanding and responding, I guess more appropriately (L4210-4213)”.

6.2.2.2 Sub-theme 2B.2: To engage young adult offenders, focus on their area of interest

Finding out what a young person is interested in, and focussing on that area of interest was presented by some practitioners as one way of keeping young adult offenders motivated and engaged as indicated by participant 6:

“Intvr: How do you motivate YAOs to engage?”

Resp: Hm I think, you find something that maybe they are interested in, as sometimes you have to deviate from the offense focussed work and why they are there just to get them engaging with you, so that may be whether their music, social media, their social activities, just having a conversation heart to heart about what's actually going on for them in the world as opposed to them being on probation. What they are like- you say to young people, tell me what do you like? (L.1635-1644)”.

This was further reinforced by participant 10 when I asked about building rapport with young adult offenders:

“Intvr: What about rapport; how do you build rapport with them?”

Resp: Just a conversation about something that they are interested in, like, what's going on for you? What do you like to do? I don't spend all my sessions talking about risk. One of my guys is into music so we talk about rap music and stuff like that and things that he wants to do, like life goals, what is it they want to do in 10 years' time? Okay, how are you going to get there? let's talk about the steps and kind of go back and forth with those discussions is (L.3324-3329)”.

Likewise, a similar response was given when participant 12 talked about the most useful approach employed in motivating young adult offenders:

“Intvr: OK, so in terms of motivating young adults, what approach do you find most useful in motivating a young adult offender to engage well with you or change in a positive way?”

Resp: I think listening to what they like to do, showing them the positive things that can be achieved in their lives, and try to actually get them engaged and something. So that's the way I sort of like if somebody shows an interest in a particular hobby, subject whatever, you try to get them engaged in that show them that there is something else that they can be doing. So, once you have kind of, try to get them into a particular course, into work, into something, they can say ((ahh)), this is actually happened, I think that opens up the door for you (L.3640-3642)”.

This suggests that once an area of interest is determined, it was utilised as a means of stimulating the young adult offenders' interest, which it appeared then created a conducive platform for engaging in offence focused work.

6.2.2.3 *Sub-theme 2.B.3: Indicators of an engaged YAO: Compliant with Licence/Order*

It appeared officers generally interpreted a young adult's compliance with the wider requirements of his court order or post release licence as an indicator that an offender is engaged. As indicated by participant 3, a young adult is deemed to be compliant if he is attending supervision sessions regularly and on time:

"I know when it's working because it's reciprocal, cause any relationship is two ways. Hh I particularly know when they come in on time, they actually sometimes even look forward to our sessions and they are engaging (L.952-954)".

Participant 3 also indicated that an unwillingness to attend and engage could suggest that the offender may not be fully motivated. As such, habitual lateness with an unreasonable excuse or pushing boundaries may perhaps be indicative of a general lack of interest in supervision:

"I know when it's not working when they are sometimes late, and not late because of any particular reason, because those people, I kinda already pick up quick on any pattern. So, if I can do anything to help, to say you've listen got an appointment at this time, you've got an hour, I'm giving you an hour and you're still late, I kinda know you're still pushing boundaries, so I kinda know when it's not working, essentially because they are pushing the boundaries still (L.956-961)".

However, not all practitioners shared this view that regular and timely attendance can be viewed as evidence of being engaged or that the relationship is a positive one. Practitioner 7, for example, was keen to point out that simply turning up for supervision, in and of itself, was not always a reliable indicator of being engaged or a sign of a positive alliance: "first of all they are turning up, which doesn't necessarily mean they are compliant (L2314-2315)".

Perhaps an alternate way of appraising signs of engagement is to look for signs of progress as suggested by participant 9:

"Correct me if I am wrong, in terms but those general offender surveys they do not speak of the individual relationship or engagement with the offender manager, unless they break them down on an individual basis. I think you have to keep looking for evidence of progress because that can indicate that your work is having an effect (L.2752-2758)".

6.2.3 *Main Theme 2C: Ineffective Engagement Approaches*

This main theme outlines a number of practice approaches and personality traits that practitioners indicated they had found unhelpful in their practice and which they felt may impede rather than enhance efforts to effectively engage with young adult offenders (see diagram below).

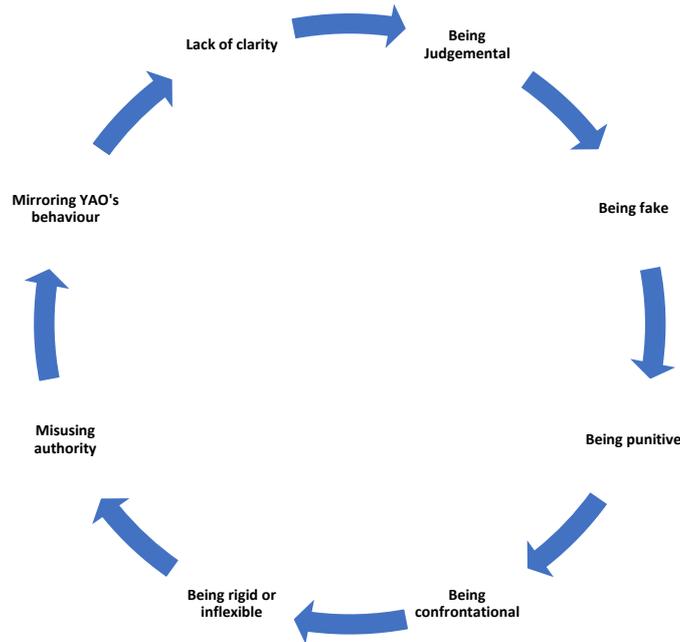


Figure 6.2 Diagram of ineffective approaches mentioned by practitioners

6.2.3.1 Sub-them 2C.1: The Misuse of Authority

Most practitioners felt that the misuse of authority was a significant barrier to engagement, this was disclosed by participant 11 when she warned about the danger of being authoritarian:

” Not to be too authoritative or assertive. Not to come across as that person, that prison officer or that police officer to ((sorta)) talk to them on a sort of level, not to be a mom or a father (L.3260-3262)”.

Her warning was made clear shortly when she further noted that “if you’re being too authoritarian, like a parent or a teacher, you are unlikely to engage effectively with young adult offenders:

“If you’re a parent or a teacher then you’re not going to get anywhere (L.3725-3726)”.

The notion of “not getting anywhere with young adult offenders if you behave in an authoritarian manner” arose as a significant theme across the data set as evidenced by the remarks of participant 3:

“So, if you’ve got a young person that’s experienced an authoritarian mother and then you come in already knowing the power balance that you have hh you’re not gonna develop the best kind of relationship with them because it’s the last thing that they may need (L.1074-1076)”.

This may be, as suggested by participant 4, because young adults have a general “dislike for authority (L.1244)” and probation practitioners are seen as representing authority.

6.2.3.2 *Sub-theme 2C.2: Being Rigid/Inflexible*

Practitioners divulged that young adult offenders often do not respond positively to officers who display a rigid and/or inflexible working style. The notion of 'rolling with resistance' (Miller & Rollnick, 2002), a component of motivational interviewing, was repeatedly inferred to, and at times, directly cited as a 'must do' technique when working with young adult offenders, as noted by participant 9:

"We feel that the sessions are too short, the answers aren't expansive, the person is resistant so clearly you have to roll with that resistance but when you come back up to the office you'd have to try and figure out some new methods and approaches (L.2649-2652)".

What the researcher extrapolated from this statement ("figure out new methods and approaches") was that practitioners needed to maintain a flexible thinking style and be ready to adopt an appropriate method that works with each young adult as participant 9 continued to explain:

"I think that (.2) they have to have an ability to (.) think about what they're doing and do have another adaptable approach and not to really sit down with one particular formula which they are going to stick to rigidly (L.2523-2525)".

6.2.3.3 *Sub-theme 2C.3: Being Fake-Not being yourself or genuine*

Being false or not being genuine was considered by practitioners as essential when engaging with young adult offenders as noted by participant 1: "being open and being genuine about who you are" (L.72-73)". Although this theme was only mentioned by one participant, it was of particular salience, especially given it was not expected that "falseness" would be considered significant within a coercive therapeutic space. Offenders are amongst a select group of service users who are considered as involuntary clients (Trotters, 2016) and as such, it was noteworthy that 'realness' would have been perceived as important.

6.2.3.4 *Sub-theme 2C.4: Being Overly Punitive or Judgemental*

Practitioners also warned that being overly punitive or being judgemental is unlikely to work effectively when engaging with young adult offenders (participant 1, L424-423; participant 12, 3979-3982). According to participant 12, being too quick to judge may get in the way of the practitioner/probationer relationship:

"With young adults, definitely, not to (.) become, yeah, not to become alarm I think by some of the things that they talk about. Not to kind of instantly think, well, this is what is going to happen, you said this, you've done this, you're going to [not to be] too judgemental. I think sometimes you have to listen and then try to engage them in another way just so that you need to get them to talk because you don't want them to shut down (L. 3635-3639)".

Quickness to judge, or being judgemental was discussed in a similar way to making assumptions about young adult offenders as indicated by participant 9:

“You can’t really(h) make assumptions about that particular person or situation. Young people have, you got a variety of experiences, at school, at home and the variety of personal development problems, there may be good points, there may be bad points. It’s important not to see all young people as the same (L.2610-2613)

6.2.3.5 *Sub-theme 2.C.5: Taking Young Adults Behaviour Personally*

Whatever happens, officers were warned about being confrontational and or taking young adult offenders’ behaviour personally:

“I find that sometimes people can be quite sometimes resentful to being subjected to an order. So, I think if you have a young person in front of you, shuts down, doesn’t want to say much other times can be quiet (.) Sort of like rude is, they may be saying I don’t want to talk to you, you are ((what have you)). You can then mirror that or get upset or take that personally but we are all human, so I think that that is something that is very unhelpful [you can’t Mirror] no matter if it takes you five or six sessions, if that person comes in and is rude, doesn’t give you eye contact, mutters under their breath and even swears on the way out you can’t take that personal [that would be very unhelpful for you to get your back up, even though you are human and things may frustrate you, you shouldn’t show that]. You can say, it’s difficult, we’re not talking, and I won’t ask you to talk but I don’t think you should then mirror that behaviour (3692-3703)”.

Practitioners repeatedly indicated that young adult offenders are prone to having issues with authority figures and as such probation practitioners are likely to encounter hostility and mistrust, as stated by participant 1:

“Because some of them have like, issues with authority and might see you as a figure of authority so therefore they are not listening to you (L. 3984-3985)”.

It is therefore not unusual that officers are susceptible to taking rebuff personally and may respond as noted in my conversation with participant 4:

Intvr: What are some of the problems staff encountered when working with disruptive young people?
Resp: I think it’s easy for staff to just end up disliking Hum (h) the young person as awful as that sounds because it requires so much patience and tolerance and as well you know sometimes they can be really rude to you. And It’s hard not to take that personally, like > I remember as with the guy with the hood, I came out and was really angry, how can you have your hood up the whole time but I guess it’s pulling yourself back into your role a bit and not thinking its personal <. That’s the hard thing, cause I’ve had people being quite rude to you and then to build hh (.). You know we’re all professionals but we’re all human but it’s hard to have that resilience I think (L.1560-1578)”.

As noted by participant 4, staff would have to consciously work on building that resilience not to take things personally and remain professional.

6.3 Master Theme 3: Gender, Race and Engagement

This master theme analyses practitioners' view of the role that race and gender play within the therapeutic relationship.

6.3.1 Main Theme 3A: Race and Engagement

Practitioners were, in the main, conflicted in their views about the role race plays within the relationship. Some practitioners felt that race had no significant impact on the practitioner/young adult offender relationship. For this group, although race was acknowledged as having the potential to cause real strains in the relationship, the professionalism of the practitioner was seen as formidable enough to overcome potential challenges. As such, their views were analysed under the sub-theme: professionalism trumps race. For others, racial differences created an opportunity for officers to encourage trust and demonstrate their ability to relate with all races. Accordingly, their views were analysed under the sub-theme: Race as a marker of trust and relatability.

6.3.1.1 Sub-Theme 3A.1: Professionalism Trumps Race

For about half of the practitioners, race would only matter if the officer lacks professionalism. Thus, race was constructed as secondary to the experience of the practitioner and as such professionalism was seen to trump race. For instance, it was argued that if an officer understood how to relate to others on an individual level, this understanding may be all that is necessary to engage young adults of all races and as such race – that of the officers or the young adult offender- does not matter:

“It depends on the individual and their understanding, I think it doesn't really matter in some sense as long as you understand the individual as they are. However, I would say it doesn't really matter as I know some officers are really good with young people (L.2552-2553)”.

This statement made by participant 1 accentuated the views of others, that being an understanding person is more important than race. An understanding person as explained by participant 3 embodies knowledge and experience in dealing with diversity and if those are missing then it may be a matter of upskilling:

“If you have a good officer, there should be no problem. (hh) but then again it comes down to everything else, you know like I said, you know, experience, knowledge in dealing with diversity, if you haven't got that then I don't think it's necessarily your race, I just think it's your experience and knowledge which needs to be brought up to speed and even your interactive skills (L.1061-1067)”.

Participant 11 also supported the notion that it is the personality of the officer that matters most:

“it’s probably personality more than race (L.3584).

In fact, it was suggested by participant 5 that even if in some cases race matters initially at the start of the relationship, the skilled officer should still be able to resolve/overcome this challenge in time:

“I think initially until they get to know you (L1078-1079)”.

6.3.1.2 Sub-theme 3A.2: Race as a Marker of Trust and Relatability

Conversely there were those officers who felt that race was a significant symbol of trust and relatability and as such it was vital to a positive therapeutic alliance. For this group of practitioners, race was closely associated with trust: essentially a black or white male offender would instinctively trust an officer of the same ethnic background. This may be, as suggested by participant 3, because of how young adult offenders could perceive an officer from another race:

“I think, how other officers from other races could be perceived could be a barrier sometimes to supervision (L.1061-1063)”.

Participant 7 provided some insights into what an offender's perception of an officer from another ethnic group may be like in reality: “sometimes they need to be able, sometimes they want to feel like they can relate to you (L.2374)”. The notion of being able to relate to an officer based on the fact that they are the same race was later expounded on by a number of participants. For instance, there was an inclination amongst some practitioners to believe that being of the same ethnicity equates to a better cultural understanding, which makes it easier to relate to YAOs as indicated by participant 8:

“It does have a big impact I believe, if I’m honest, especially in a place like Hackney where a lot of the young people are from black background. I think sometimes, it’s hard to explain but I think they can identify more with someone who is of the same ethnic background as them and who can understand some of the challenges they face rather than possibly someone from a white middle-class background who may not have grown-up in the local area or who doesn’t kind of understand some of the stereotypes that they are faced with or some of the views that communities have about black people, particularly young black men (L.2479-2486).

This point was explained in more detail by participant 2:

“I think for a lot of young black males who feel marginalised, it can do, not in all cases, as some engage really, really well with people who are not black (L.760-762)”.

6.3.2 Main Theme 3B: Gender Matters

This main theme encapsulates practitioners’ view of the role of gender within the therapeutic relationship. The analysis indicated that some officers felt that gender matters more than race. It also emerged that gender

matters more to some offenders than others. For example, male offenders may have a preference for female workers. Also, gender may matter more with some offences such as domestic violence.

6.3.2.1 Sub-theme 3B.1: Gender: As a Subjective Variable

In a similar way to race, some officers viewed gender as being important but only relative to the experience, knowledge and skills of the officer, as indicated by participant 3:

“Again, it can do because obviously, again experience and knowledge, just kinda being mindful of what this individual may have experienced. Just as with race. If you are mindful of that, it shouldn’t be an issue because you’re kind of an officer on the top of their game. If you’re not, you know, make it an issue. So, if you’ve got a young person that’s experienced an authoritarian mother and then you come in already knowing the power balance that you have, you’re not gonna develop the best kind of relationship with them because it’s the last thing that they may need. So, yes, it can (1070-1076).

Participant 1, also appeared to be in agreement and expressed similar views when asked if she felt gender mattered to the relationship:

“Yes and no to me it doesn’t matter because I can work with the young men and young women. However, I have worked with a young girl in the past who displayed domestic abuse, she has been harassed as a young person, she has been exploited in some sense by men, she had no faith in men. The case was taken over by a man even though it explicitly said not to work with them. The person said she was doing really well, but when I’m on the phone with her, it’s something completely different. So, she’s not able to openly express exactly how she felt (L.391-402)”.

Participant 15 also gave an almost identical response:

“Yes and no to me it doesn’t matter because I can work with the young men and young women (L.391-392)”.

However, participant 1’s submission that gender may or may not matter (“yes and no”) in her case, seemed to stem from her belief that she considered herself competent to work with both young adult men and young adult women offenders. Yet, her response also emphasised another phenomenon: it also suggests that gender mattered contingent to the experience and circumstances of the offender. In the case example cited, the young adult had experienced domestic violence and consequently a female officer was considered to be most appropriate. Thus, gender may be seen as serving an applied case management function: addressing matters such as an offender’s vulnerability. From a different outlook, practitioner 2 further strengthened this notion that gender serves a practical case management purpose. She argues that some male offenders may find other male practitioners more threatening and as such, an officer of the opposite gender may serve to mitigate certain tensions within the relationship:

“I think gender quite often is more important than race. A lot of young people may have this moral code where they won’t say this to a woman or say some things to a female, some not all but quite a few, so if I say to a young person ‘no you are late again’, come on you got to fix up. They will say sorry, I will do

better next time. But if that was a male, sometimes they would see it straight away as a challenge just because the way they are out there, they can't be spoken to by a man, 'who do they think they are, he is disrespecting me', so I think gender can have a lot to play with it (L.764-771)".

Her argument implies that some young adult male offenders may therefore have, and express, a preference for working with female practitioners, a point captured in my discussion with participant 8:

Intvr: To what degree if any do you believe the gender of the service user or that of the supervising officer impact the relationship?

Resp: What I have noticed from some of the cases that I have worked with is that they want to work more with females.

Intvr: Why is that?

Resp: I don't know if it's that thing where they feel that a male worker maybe, kind of, a bit firm and kind of very authoritative and they may feel like a female worker may be nicer, or I don't know maybe sometimes young people look at you in that female, caring, nurturing role. And sometimes that's what they're looking for rather than that firm hand, so yeah (L.2487-2475)".

Additionally, some practitioners also indicated that depending on the offence that some young adult males commit, it may not be appropriate for them to work with a female officer as suggested by participant 12.

"I think gender is, because, unfortunately there are some individuals who depend on the offence that they have committed, relationships they had, be it with mom, partners what have you, if they're sitting in front of me, a female officer, they are going to find it difficult to engage. Or, they're going to have certain prejudices that are not going to allow them to engage as openly as they would with a male. So unfortunately, there are some individuals with whom it does matter (L.3932-397)".

This notion that some young adults may carry personal prejudices that could potentially impede how they engage with their officer based on gender was mentioned several times during interviews. However, what appeared less clear or consistent was the reasons underpinning such prejudice, which in some cases seemed to be brought to notice by the young offender's expressed wish (not to work with male officers). For instance, practitioner 14 indicated that she noted a pervasiveness in requests from young adult males amongst her own cases to work with female officers only:

"You know what, I do, I often wonder about this but we only have one male officer in our team and I do wonder this because I have had a fair few YAs, I would say probably at least 10 that have said I don't want to work with a man, and that I find interesting. These are male service users who say I don't want to work with a man, so maybe I have gone on Annual Leave and they say I don't want to work with a male (4542-4546)".

Whilst this statement wasn't surprising, it does beg the question in light of the revelation made by participant 2:

"It is quite difficult, because female offenders have a choice of who they want to work with, female or male but young people don't have a choice because it's not seen as quite relevant but I think it is

really relevant because I have quite a few who don't work well with males, they work better with females (L.779-774)".

This observation reflects a practice reality: female offenders are more likely to have a choice in the gender of their officer as opposed to males. However, given the observation by participant 14, this may or may not matter significantly for young adult males because the probation service generally has more female than male offender managers.

This chapter explored the factors that emerged from the narratives of probation practitioners regarding their understanding as to how effective engagement is realised with young adult offenders on probation. The chapter discussed the competencies these practitioners identified to be effective when engaging with young adult offenders. The analysis revealed that rather than sticking to one particular theory or approach, practitioners draw on a range of theories to inform their practice. The analysis also showed that practitioners believed that to be effective, they need to combine formal knowledge with an informal understanding of young adult lives. Correspondingly this practice knowledge needs to be tempered with essential techniques such as knowing when and how to use authority and building trust and rapport with young adult offenders. Also, the chapter explored how practitioners motivate young adult offenders, expand on what a good practitioner/probationer relationship looks like, as well as the roles race and gender play within the therapeutic relationship. This next chapter will explore the views and experiences of the young adult offenders as they reflect on the engagement process.

This chapter discusses the findings from the semi-structured interviews that were conducted with 15 young adult offenders. Following the analysis of the transcripts, several master themes, main themes and sub-themes were developed (See appendix 16). Whilst all the themes developed conveyed something interesting about effective engagement when working with young adult offenders, not all are discussed within this chapter. The master themes, main themes and sub-themes that were chosen to be reported on below were chosen based on their pertinence to the research questions and prevalence within the data.

I have ascribed the same pseudonyms to the young adult offenders (YAOs) as in the methodology section of this paper (see chapter 3). Each excerpt is a direct quote from the transcript and is referenced by a bracketed line number linked to the full transcript found in the supplementary book volume 1.

7.1 Master Theme One, Part 2: Competencies for Working with YAOs (YAOs perspective)

This master theme explores what factors the YAOs considered to be effective in enhancing engagement. YAOs were asked to discuss approaches, attributes and skills they had observed being used within their supervisory relationships that they considered to be effective and captured their interest, encouraging willing participation and compliance. Additionally, they were asked to describe any features of supervision which they felt acted as a useful stimulus in encouraging positive engagement with their officer.

7.1.1 Main Theme 1: Effective Practice Knowledge

Effective practice knowledge is related to the level of awareness that young adults believe practitioners need to acquire in order to effectively engage them in supervision. Some YAOs emphasised the need for practitioners to have a level of knowledge and understanding, which they referred to as 'street knowledge' or 'knowledge of the roads' as part of their professional role, as noted by Charles:

"Every time I see her, she is always, like today she is always bright face, even though I am down, she is always, is LIKE SHE IS STREET HERSELF BUT she is trying to like, she is trying to show you like am here to help you (L.144-1446)".

Charles explained that in her attempts to motivate, help and support him during a difficult period, his probation officer presented as if she was "street herself". Charles also said:

“Because she has an understanding, she is not one a dem posh one that just come in Ho, paperwork, dis, dis and don’t know about us, is like she, she must have people in her family and dat that are youngsters like us, like myself who are out on the road ↑ know what it’s like, know what it’s like, know how hard it was growing up all them years ago, you know what a mean, she must know, she understands us so when she comes to talk to us we can get on with her. As if they brought someone who is posh, who doesn’t know nothing about the roads, brought up on the gold spoon suit and tie, they gonna sit down, they are not going to last five minutes with us (L. 1459-1464)”.

Charles suggested that his supervisor was not just “coming in with paperwork” (indicative of formal knowledge and or practice), but that she had an understanding that may have come from her having people in her family like himself who were also on the ‘road’. Charles explained what he meant by ‘on the road’ by elaborating on how hard it was for him growing up. He indicated that when his officer ‘comes to talk to us’ (YAOs), it is this knowledge that gives her credibility and the ability to ‘get on with us’. Finally, he indicated that, someone who ‘knows nothing about the roads... is ‘not going to last five minutes with us’.

This notion of the ‘street’ or the ‘roads’ was used to refer to YAOs’ actual experiences of living day-to-day, which they referred to as living in the ‘the real world’. Throughout their interviews, YAOs alluded to the activities they engaged in, the lifestyle they lead and friends they associate with as unique to this world, which they termed as life on the street or the road. An understanding of the streets was seen as an integral part of an officer’s knowledge toolkit if they are to have a true understanding of young adult offenders. It appeared the ability to be empathetic, was to some degree based on an understanding of the realities of young adult offenders’ lives. This was made clear by Anthony when asked about the skills and/or knowledge he felt practitioners needed to have to effectively engage him:

“Patience, I guess empathy and a bit of understanding of what it is for some young people who have been exposed to particular lives, especially on the streets so to speak (1616-1617)”.

This reference to being exposed to a particular life on the street captured the essence of a subculture experienced by young adults that may be dissimilar to that experienced by other groups in society. Charles described the streets as a place where he was educated, a place where he learned to make money and became a man:

“I had no father, I learned from the roads, learnt the codes and learnt the smarter ways to hustle (1694)”.

For Charles, the street was also a place where he learned to manage trauma:

“My best friend was 35 when he died, left four kids, Jamaican Nan died of cancer, everyone just dies, everyone just died or fucking prison, you know what I mean. Friends to prison, but most of it is death.

Intvr: So, have those experiences had any impact on you?

Resp: Yeah, it does man because growing up in the hood, all I had was my mom, and the shitty streets (1730-1735)".

To acquire this knowledge and understanding of the street, Junior suggested that practitioners needed to pay keen attention to YAOs:

"Some people may be born into a good house they can still end up on the streets. I think you just have to be open. So, if you understand that everyone is different, you won't even judge someone, in probation they judge other people, why do you do this? Why do you do that? If you are open you understand that everyone is different, from a different environment so if you listen, you will understand where we come from and why we make the choices we have made (L2636-2643)".

This was taken to mean that the street was a place that one could (1) end up but also (2) a choice that a young person could make and that to understand, officers needed to listen. According to Junior, officers needed to be open, non-judgemental, and willing to listen in order to understand where young people come from and why they make the choices they make.

7.1.1.1 Sub-theme 1.1: Knowledge about YAOs

Some YAOs mentioned that only having knowledge about YAOs' lives as a group is insufficient; officers should also have an understanding of individual young adult offenders. Winston said how he felt it was important for officers to get to know YAOs personally; not to know them just from what was written in their records:

"It's just the fact that someone out there thinks you can do more, or sees more to you than just what's written on a piece of paper, you know, someone judges you based on who you are, not just what the court says about you, yeah (L.246-248)".

Sam explained how knowing him, and where he came from, was one of the most important things that an officer could do:

"They don't have to do certain things but like, know a bit about me and know where certain people come from (L.19)".

Sean explained that he failed to engage/comply with an intervention because he felt his officer did not understand him as an individual:

"Everyone is expected to talk about their life stories, but I can't do that with people I don't know, I can't open up to you like that and she did not understand that I can't do it at the time, so I ended up getting breached. Breached because she thought I was not willing to engage but I did go, I went a few times, but I was not willing to talk, I would just go and sit down, I found it difficult to speak to people I don't know (L.2434-2440)".

This lack of sensitivity to the difficulties he was experiencing in opening up to his officer made Sean feel

unable to engage with the intervention that was being offered and he believed that this caused him to be breached. Whereas Gregory, who had a good experience with his officer, explained how a caring officer encouraged him to do the right thing:

“Yeah, obviously you would want to listen to her more knowing that she, she is a person who is nice to you and good to you, obviously you would want to treat her the same way and obviously she is telling you something you gonna listen to her knowing that you like her and you wouldn’t want to disappoint her, you get me. So that encourages you to want to do the right thing knowing that I would upset her if I don’t (L.2128-2132)”.

7.1.2 Main Theme 2: Effective Practice Techniques/Approaches

Practice techniques and approaches refer to skills practitioners employ when engaging with YAOs.

7.1.2.1 Sub-theme 31: Being Helpful

All but one of the YAOs spoke about the various kinds of practical help that they had received from their officers. Mark described the various ways in which he had found his officer helpful:

“Yeah, she is helpful, even the other day she is trying to help with my driving lessons, she booked me a meeting but then I broke my hand (L.1230-12321)”.

Sean described how he liked the practical support and encouragement he had received from his officer:

“I like the support that I get, the practical support and encouragement. The practical things that are helping me, yeah. It is positive, the relationship is definitely positive, obviously they can help you connect to other agencies, the things that you can’t really connect to, you get me, education, training, accommodation (2364-2368)”.

Some YAOs talked about how officers would go above and beyond what their job required, in order to be helpful, as indicated by Charles:

“Like T who is actually here to help you change as well as she gets paid and does her job, they also feel like they are giving back to the community because they have helped someone, you know wat a mean? (L.1448-1450)”.

Charles also went on to say how not all officers do care: “Some don’t CARE SOME DO, SOME HELP, SOME DON’T (L. 1228)”.

Derek felt that his officer would always be available to help him:

“If I need something I can always call and ask her, if I need something she is there (13-50-1353)”.

7.1.2.2 Sub-theme 2.1: Establishing a Bond with YAOs

Sam highlighted one of the potential benefits of officers building a good bond with their YAOs as a way of helping the YAO to avoid getting into trouble:

“Intvr: Have you experienced any barriers in expressing your needs or views to your officer?

Resp: No, because from the beginning the bond was already there, there was not much of a task to tell her certain things but some people may not have a chance, for from what I can hear, some people may not like their probation officer so they might not feel comfortable in telling them certain things because they know they can get into trouble and things like that (L.36-40)”.

Gregory said that officers who are able to establish a friendly relationship are more likely to achieve reciprocal engagement:

“Intvr: Thinking about your current relationship with your PO and or any others that you have had, what are the things you would say work really well?

Resp: They build more of a friendship bond than I am your probation officer, init, so they build that trust by, by creating a friendship bond. I think that’s it.

Intvr: And by friendship bond you mean?

Resp: To, to express more your feelings and what you think, and that, rather than [imagine you wouldn’t express yourself to a police officer but probation] and if that probation officer has that, if you don’t have that relationship with them you not going to express yourself either, so you have that relationship, I am able to talk because they create that bond, init (L.2090-2091)”.

Marlon highlighted the importance of good communication when building a positive relationship with his officer:

“Me personally, it’s like the communication, like kinda building a bond with them, so it’s like you don’t feel like you are talking to a worker, you feel like you are talking to someone who care, you are building that kind of bond, that separate kind of bond so you don’t only talk about the work, you talk about other kind of things (L.626-629)”.

Other participants suggested that a good bond with their officer enabled them to overcome potential engagement issues. For instance, Trevon argued that having a bond helped him move beyond his gender bias (L.263-2640). Gregory reported that having a bond enabled him to break down communication barriers (L.2268-2269), whilst Sean suggested that having a bond helped him to mitigate some of the potential negative impact of his immaturity on their relationship (L.2624).

7.1.2.3 Sub-theme 2.2: The Ability to Communicate Effectively

Many of the YAOs commented that their probation officers should be able to communicate in ways that they would understand. Sam discussed positive experiences with his current officer compared to a previous officer with poor communication skills:

“Intvr: If the relationship between you and your PO could be exactly as you like it to be what would that look like?”

Resp: hh (2) ↓ I don’t know but, this is my first time so I can only judge by her, how it is now, I wouldn’t say there is any need for improvement. But I had a probation officer before when I was in North West for a bit, but with him, what me and him lack, is that his communication skills were bad (1849-1851)”.

David described how his officer’s poor communication skills meant the sessions with him were unhelpful and boring:

“I mean there is NO COMMUNICATION basically, like we would have the session and it would just be boring, it’s just not helping me. One of my offence is for carrying a knife and if I am going to probation and this fellow is just talking about YEAH, DON’T CARRY KNIVES ↓ this, this that, ↑I know not to carry knives, I have been told by the Judge not to carry knives, I am in here basically to move on. I mean, at the time I can honestly say I was more engaged to the Rose (Context: The Rose is a known gang) than the actual, you know, but it’s just lack of communication, lack of engagement (L.464-473)”.

The officers’ ability to communicate effectively was viewed to be central to a good working relationship. Gregory described how unhelpful poor communication was for him, listing it second to being deprived of his liberty:

“Being recalled to prison and poor communication (L.2092-2099)”.

Floyd described the benefits of clear communication and the importance of being listened to:

“The way they communicate with people, it’s like they understand where you are coming from sometimes so they try breaking it down and explain so you can understand what they are trying to say to you and if you got something to say they kind of listen to you (L.2705-2718)”.

Junior explained how being allowed to say what he wanted, and to be heard, was very important:

“Resp: For me personally I think it’s the communication, can I say her name?”

Intvr: Yes, when I type up, I just won’t use names

Resp: Me and T, she makes me talk, say my piece, even if I am wrong, she won’t be like that’s wrong, she would let me have my say as well so there is a willingness to listen and to hear (L.2621-2841)”.

7.1.2.4 Sub-theme 2.3: Showing Interest in and Getting to know YAOs

Most of the YAOs described, in various ways, the importance of having an officer who showed a genuine interest in getting to know them as a whole person and not just as an offender. This, in turn, meant that YAOs would then feel more willing to listen to their officers. Sam explained how he was impressed by the fact that his officer knew that he was a musician before first meeting him, which, for him, was “a big deal (L71-72)”:

“When I first met her, she was telling me that she heard some of my songs through other people and stuff like that. I was kind of shocked because people say yea, you are kind of well known. When I heard from her, a Probation Officer knowing about my music, I am like, boy”.

“Intvr: So, is that because she took time to go and research your music?”

Resp: I don’t know if she researched it or she knew already, but she knew about it, so it was a big deal (L.60-63)”.

In contrast, Sam also described how a previous officer had not engaged with him well because he did not get to know him:

“The guy before he was like, he was not trying to understand me, he was trying to tell you how you are (L.56-57)”.

Winston said how an officer who showed a genuine interest came across as someone who can be trusted

“When you’re speaking to a down to earth person, someone who shows an interest, show they care you know, they want to see you genuinely do good. (L.309-312)”.

YAOs highlighted how important it was for officers to show an interest in their lives and not just their offending behaviour. Charles said:

“She said not just offending ways, just change your life in general. I said yeah, I know but one of them is starting without the offending (1513-1514)”.

7.1.3 Main Theme 3: Characteristics of a Good Officer

This main theme explored how participants identified certain traits in their probation officers as effective and desirable.

7.1.3.1 Sub-theme 3.1: Being a motivator

When asked what they considered to be the qualities of a good probation officer, most of the participants mentioned the ability to motivate and encourage. Charles said how his officer encouraged him to stop offending, and how this had helped him:

“Intvr: What do you consider to be the qualities of a good probation officer?”

Resp: Someone who like motivates you, pushes you to do your thing, I come out a jail, T had a brief background of me, I come out a jail, I met her, we got on well, I opened up to her, told her a few bits and pieces cause like I notice now it’s time to change, am 24 now man, been in the system since I was 13, it’s time to change. Enough is enough and she seems like, every time I met her she is like, ahh you are smelling like this or you are looking down or you scruffy, like she always pushes you and motivates you and always let you know that there is always hope, that’s what I like about T, she is good like that (1538-1450)”

David highlighted that receiving encouragement from his officer was - with the exception of practical support - the most significantly helpful thing for him:

“I like the support that I get, the practical support and encouragement (23)”.

Floyd poignantly described how his probation officer had given him his first and only experience of someone encouraging him to do positive things rather than criticising him:

“It motivates me to stay out of trouble and do what I need to do...Basically, my whole life I have been told, yeah you can't do this and that but when I come here I am being told, yeah, you can do this or that, (2527-2530)”.

When asked if his relationship with his officer could be exactly as he would like it to be, what would that look like, Winston said:

“To be honest, the same thing as it is now. Like I said, I just need someone who actually cares about what I am gonna do, you know, someone who is gonna motivate me to like stay on track (219-221)”.

For YAOs such as Sean, positivity and motivation worked hand-in-hand:

“Yeah like, (3) give me motivation init, like motivate me and be positive (L.2246)”.

Similarly, when Anthony spoke about his officer's good qualities, he emphasised the fact that she was always positive and motivating:

“Just like always being positive, like yeah, always being motivating, always being motivating no matter what the situation, always being that person that telling you like, RAH, you can do it, that kind of thing, someone who is kind of uplifting (L.644-646)”.

7.1.3.2 Sub-Theme 3.2: Being Understanding/Sympathetic

Seven YAOs said that being an understanding person was something that they had experienced with their supervising officer, and which they had grown to appreciate as a marker of a good practitioner. Sean said:

Intvr: Thinking about the qualities you would like a PO to have, what would you say are the most important?

Resp: Most important →qualities? UNDERSTANDING, because I am going to be explaining myself a lot to you and if you don't understand me then it's going to be a problem, init.

Intvr: And by understanding do you mean in a cognitive sense, like you get it or you don't get it?

Resp: A deeper understanding of me as a person, you have to understand where I am coming from (2373-2375)”.

David explained that one of the things that struck him about his officer was her ability to be understanding:

“When I first met her, she was showing great understanding (L.411)”.

When asked to clarify what he meant, he explained that his officer had demonstrated this by being sympathetic to his personal circumstances, which he had never experienced before within the criminal justice

system: "I never got that at YOS, I never got that type of service (L449)". David then described an officer who was sympathetic to his needs and personal circumstances by the service she provided:

"Intvr: And by service you mean?"

Resp: Like understanding like, she would call to check up and she would call, say for instance when I was going for my job, the one I am doing now, like she would get someone to come with me, she would come with me, she would get someone to accompany me, that's like, for young people going into crime, they don't really have things like that, that is why they go into crime, that's the main thing, that's the fundamental, so from my point of view, that's how I see it. Like she was showing great understanding and (.2)

Intvr: And by understanding you mean?"

Resp: Yeah, my personal circumstances (415-421)".

It later became clear during the interview process that David was deeply involved in serious group offending and so needed more one-to-one support to accompany him to some appointments.

Similar views were expressed by Brad when asked what he considered the most important qualities of an officer:

"Resp: ↑Understanding, they need to be able to compromise, just not, not take [I know they are probation officers but] not take things too seriously, yeah man, just try and have a bit of compassion, yeah that's the main thing for me, compassion and understanding.

Intvr: Anything else you want to add?"

Resp: Yeah, that's it

Intvr: And when you say understanding, what do you mean?"

Resp: Just like to understand the situation, like the situation I am in, my personal situation (843-845)".

For Brad, an understanding officer should be able to compromise, not take things too seriously and show compassion. This was interesting given that the probation officer/offender relationship is generally considered a coercive one with clear boundaries. Brad used the word compassion to define an understanding officer, whilst Derek suggested that his officer was understanding because she did not pressure him:

"She is understanding, like she don't put a lot of pressure on you, she asks, even with this interview, she asked me, if you want to do it it's up to you, no pressure (L.1221-1222)".

For others, an understanding officer was one they can converse with easily, as David revealed:

"Well, I can talk to her (the Officer) about anything, even personal things, I can talk to her about (L.584-585)".

Derek supported this idea:

"Intvr: What do you consider to be the most important qualities of a supervising officer?"

Resp: The way they come across, like they are easy to talk to, not like the aggression on that

Intvr: So, no aggression, easy to talk to?"

Resp: Yeah, that, you need that thing where you can just kinda talk, it's not a thing where you ask me a question and I am just blank, in no way if you don't feel comfortable with someone then you can't talk to them.

Intvr: What is it about them that makes you feel comfortable around them?

Resp: X is easy, she is kind of laid back, she has that kind of an Auntie feel that you can just talk, like that.

Intvr: Auntie feel, you say?

Resp: Yeah, yeah, like a family member, there is no pressure you can talk to her and so it's alright (L.1248-1255)".

7.1.3.3 Sub-Theme 3.3: Being Honest

Young adult offenders also indicated that they wanted their officers to be honest in their dealings with them, even if being honest could have a negative impact, as suggested by Brad:

"They need to be straight up with me like, not hide anything from me, like just be straight up.

"Intvr: [Regardless of what it is, even if it might mean]

Resp: Yeah, even if it's something that I might not want to hear, or whatever, be honest with me, yeah (872-873)".

However, most of the participants implied that they would be selective with how honest they were willing to be with their officer. In speaking about his relationship with his officer in the context of trust, Charles stated:

"She understands me and who I am and what I have been through and I understand her, you got to first find the trust, you find the trust you can open up to them, DON'T TELL THEM TOO MUCH, cause too much can sort of backfire (L.141-1418)".

Likewise, Anthony said that he had to make a conscious decision as to what to say, and how much, to his officer in order to avoid the potential that she may react in a way that disadvantages him:

"So, you have to kind of make a measurement as to what you are going to say (L.660-663)".

However, for some YAOs, honesty was amongst the top attributes that they looked for in an officer. For instance, Sam states that honesty was key:

"I think to be honest, honesty is key as well'.

"Intvr: And by honesty you mean?

Resp: Just kind of telling you the truth, not saying, yeah, just honest things, I can't give an example → but HONESTY IS A BIG ONE (32-33)".

Similarly, Marlon directly states:

"Resp: HONESTY, respectful, respectful, someone with a good work ethic, like a professional, know what they are doing. I can't think of anything else.

Intvr: Ok, and what does respect look like for you, when you say respectful, what does that look like?

Resp: (3) Ahhhh, not really come in, say hi, you know, no courtesy.

Intvr: And honesty, what's that about?

Resp: Telling me the truth, yeah (L.1928-1943)".

7.2 Master Theme Two: Relationship and Engagement

Research suggests that the relationship between a probationer and a probation officer is a powerful vehicle for change (Ansbro, 2008) although the process itself appears to lack evidence (Aday & Krabill, 2012; Burnett & Mcneil, 2005; Farrall, 2013). This master theme explored aspects of the probation practitioner/probationer relationship.

7.2.1 Main Theme 1: Positive Relationships and engagement

This main theme explores factors that YAOs identified as being effective indicators of a positive relationship between a probation practitioner and a young adult offender.

7.2.1.1 Sub-Theme 1.1: Trust as an indicator of Positive Relationships

For a number of YAOs, a positive relationship with their offender manager was marked by some degree of trust, and a lack of trust was seen as a barrier to engagement. Brad noted that he found it challenging to express his views because he does not trust the probation service or its officers:

Intvr: Ok, have you ever experienced any barriers to expressing your views or needs to your current or former officer?

Resp: < > [Yeah]

Intvr: Ok, what are they?

Intvr: TRUST, I really don't trust probation.

Intvr: And, and you don't trust probation as in the institution or the individual? Is it the individual you don't trust or the service in general?

Resp: BOTH.

Intvr: And that has created a barrier?

Intvr: Yeah (L.919-928)".

Brad indicated that whilst his relationship with his officer was better than it was previously, it was still not altogether positive:

"It's better than how it was, yeah. It's not, not 100%, but it's better than it was, yeah (L.1042-1055)".

As Charles said: "You got to first find the trust, you find the trust you can open up to them (L.1509-1511)"

Charles unsurprisingly admitted to not telling his officer everything. It suggests that when YAOs speak of trust, they may not be referring to absolute trust but rather a functional trust, necessary for the purpose of engaging in supervision. Sean said:

“Well obviously whilst I am working full time [I was just speaking to her about this] I don’t need to see her every week, you know what i’m saying, at least once every two weeks and we start from there and then once you see am doing well, and there is nothing bad coming from me, it’s about trust, I would like somebody who can and will trust me. I/we build the trust, then you don’t have to worry about me too much, I can just get on with my thing. ↑Licence done, ↓probation done init (L.2435-2440)”.

Having discussed this with his officer, Sean spoke about his difficulties with the frequency of reporting and his desire to have it reduced. For him it seemed to negatively affect the accomplishment of his licence and time on probation (“licence done, probation done”), and rested on the presence of a trusting relationship (“I want somebody who will trust me”). Correspondingly, when Travon was asked the same question about what an ideal relationship would be like, he too envisaged a relationship in which trust played a central role:

“... of course, like, the trust within probation though, init. Trust is an important thing for me.

Intvr: What do you mean by trust, probation has an element of information sharing etc?

Resp: Like, with my attendance and stuff like that, let’s say I phone and say I am sick, I want her to believe me. I am aware of the legal stuff, Yeah, I know certain things have to be done.

Travon’s response suggested that he understood that there are certain requirements his officer had to fulfil: (“I know certain things have to be done”) and so absolute trust might not be realistic; nonetheless, for him, trust was important. Similarly, Junior’s interview supported this interpretation:

“Intvr: Alright, so if the relationship between you and her could be exactly as you would like it to be, what would that look like for you?

Resp: (2) hh if it wasn’t like it was now, then probably we would have to talk more and probably we would have to trust each other, so trust is important and open communication (L.2649-2651)”.

A noteworthy point that emerged from Junior’s comment is that some YAOs used their current relationship as a prototype of what future trusting relationships should be like. Also noted was the idea that trust could be mutually cultivated.

In fact, when YAOs spoke of trust, the term “build” was often inferred, as exemplified by Gregory: “so they build that trust by, by creating a friendship bond (L.2090-2091)”. Gregory’s comments (so they build) highlighted an expectation that was commonly shared amongst the YAOs: that officers should have the capacity to build trust.

7.2.1.2 Sub-theme 1.2: Positive Relationships Inspires Hope and self-Belief

When YAOs spoke about their lives, they mainly described a sub-culture marked by violence, experiences of trauma, and many expressed feeling misunderstood and judged by mainstream society. Moreover, their

case files and personal presentation evinced deficits in requisite social capital, among other things, necessary for them to overcome their situation and make good. It therefore came as no surprise that YAOs spoke highly of, and were appreciative of those officers who offered them hope, and who they felt inspired them to make good, as exemplified in the interview with Winston:

“It’s the fact that, the fact that she shows to me that she expects me to do good, you know, she doesn’t expect me to fail bad you know, once you are in the system, right, and your name is in the system right, everyone seems to think your life is over, you are a criminal, you are never going to get nowhere in life (L.238-243)”.

Whilst Winston’s points (above) epitomised the hopelessness shared by many of the YAOs, his subsequent statement also conveyed the optimism of many:

“But once somebody shows you that hope that you are, listen you are, you made, MADE A BAD CHOICE but that does not make you a bad person, you can actually do good, YEAH (L.242-243)”.

Charles, too, spoke about the encouraging nature of his officer: “she always pushes you and motivates you and always let you know that there is always hope (L.1442-1443)”. His emphasis on the word ‘always’ (used 3 times within the statement) may be of significance: it conjures the idea of consistency and, as such, may be perceived as an enduring characteristic.

However, whilst the views of Charles and others draw attention to active encouragement and/or motivation from their officers, a less conspicuous (but nonetheless noteworthy emergence) was that officers, by virtue of their characteristics, appeared to have inadvertently encouraged and motivated YAOs.

Take Travon’s comment as an example; when asked if the relationship with his officer motivated him to stop offending or otherwise ‘make good’, he stated that he tries to do the right thing because she believes in him:

“The fact that she believes in me, she wants me to do well so I don’t want to let her down”.
(L.2405-2406)”.

It also appeared that being motivated to do the ‘right thing’ was not just about offending or not offending, YAOs cited being motivated to pursue education, training and employment, as well as improve the quality of personal relationships. There was, however, one anomaly amongst the 15 YAOs interviewed - Mark. Mark believed that it is his experience of being in custody that motivates him to stop offending and improve the quality of his life, not his officer: “Well, Jail did, it made me stronger (L.1064)”.

7.2.2. *Main Theme 2: Negative relationships as a barrier to engagement*

The young adult offenders listed a number of factors that they felt were impediments to the engagement process. This master theme discusses three of those factors: the inability to talk, lack of trust and the fear of sanction.

7.2.2.1 *Sub Theme 2.1: Indicators of negative relationships*

1) *Inability to talk with or confide in an officer*

For some YAOs, not being able to express themselves freely to their officer was a major conundrum and a barrier to the quality of their engagement. This was regardless of whether or not they had built up a positive and trusting alliance with their supervising officer, and despite them finding the officer to be approachable and easy to talk with. This theme appeared to have stemmed from a previously cited point where the majority of YAOs divulged that they were often selective with what they chose to talk about or disclose to their supervising officers. This selective reticence existed despite the acknowledgement by some YAOs that they recognised both their officers' and the organisation's tolerance regarding confidentiality. On one hand, YAOs were united in their views that the ability to talk freely to their officer was a non-negotiable aspect of supervision. Yet, many shared the same dilemma as Mohammed around the anxiety he felt about disclosing certain information to his officer. When asked if he had experienced any barriers in talking to his probation officer, Mohammed said no, indicating that generally he could talk to his officer about anything if he wanted to:

“No, I have never experienced any barrier, I can talk to her freely (L.1937)”.

Yet, when asked if there was anything in particular that he would find difficult to discuss with his officer he was quick to point out that there were some things he would not talk about:

“Some things you have to keep to yourself (L.2044)”.

Most YAOs alluded to those 'some things' as things that may have a potential negative impact on them, such as noted by Charles:

“Intvr: Is there anything you find difficult to talk to your PO about? I know earlier on you said you would be selective about what you tell her about?”

Resp: I reckon I could tell her anything but is what you chose to tell her because you could really wanna be telling her something but then it could have bad consequences so you better not to tell her (L.1654-1658)”.

In a similar way, David explained his dilemma about not being able to talk to his officer about things that may be important:

“Intvr: Have you ever experienced any barriers in expressing your views or needs to your supervising officer, and what are they, if you have?”

Resp: Yeah, I feel like, cause like, to say certain things to them, its gonna make them think certain things, if you know what i'm saying, say like, if I say like I don't want to stay in my area no more because I don't feel safe or something, she, they might start thinking its other things like, so it's like, you, they listen to what you're saying but sometimes they look past it, so it's like AHH YEAH, I don't want to be in my area so probably I have been up to bad stuff so it's like, she is ((gonna)) write it down like, RAW, he is in fear of his life, or he is in danger da, da, da, so it goes back, so it's like you can't really talk on certain things without certain things being said afterwards, if you know what I am saying.

Intvr: I am trying to get it, so those are the kind of things that may get you into trouble?

Resp: YEA, like, so you kinda have to be on egg shell on what you are saying, you can't really express it that much because they are your probation officer, there is implication, Yeah, like I couldn't over say that I am feeling stress but at the same time, I could say am stressed a little. But if I say am feeling MAD STRESS, like they're gonna take it like a red flag, like i'm gonna do something, so you have to kind of make a measurement as to what you going to say, that's the only kind of barrier, seen, proper expressing myself.

Intvr: And what is the fear behind that thought, is that they might do something about it?

Resp: YEAH, I might put something into place, like say if I am mad stressed out, I don't know what comes after that, I might recall you for your own safety kind a thing, Yeah (L.647-666)”.

7.2.2.2 The Fear of Sanction

David's comments (above), taken in accord with others, concurred with other submissions made by a number of YAOs: that the fear of sanction may cause them to intentionally withhold crucial information from their officer. Of particular concern is the fear that their disclosure could result in negative consequences such as being recalled to prison.

“And what is the fear behind that thought, is that they might do something about it?”

Resp: YEAH, I might put something into place, like say if I am mad stressed out, I don't know what comes after that, I might recall you for your own safety kinda thing, Yeah (L.664-666).

Anthony's point that, if he was feeling stressed, he would need to be reticent about the level of stress he was experiencing, is interesting, given that full disclosure may arguably have resulted in a solution, not a sanction. However, the fear of being sanctioned was presented as a major barrier to full disclosure and presents as a dilemma with YAOs. On one hand, they spoke of being aware of how important it is to be able to talk to their officer but on the other, they appear to struggle with the fact that too much information could be potentially catastrophic. As Anthony states: “Without that barrier, kind of, I could literally tell her everything that I wanna tell her without it coming back kinda thing (L.669-670)”. The balance between disclosing enough to be helped and disclosing too much may cause a negative reaction, as per the suggestion made by Charles:

“DON'T TELL THEM TOO MUCH, cause too much can sort of backfire but you tell them enough in order for them to for them to help you but you ↓only tell them if you want them to help you, cause if you don't tell them, they are not going to know what's wrong and not gonna be able to help you (L

1409-1413)".

However, the fear of sanction was not the only reason for YAOs not being entirely candid with their officers. There were a few YAOs who believed that the nature of their relationship with their probation officers remained professional and, as such, there should be a limit to what you discuss. Mohammed stated:

"I just view POs as someone different really, I don't see them as someone I can speak to about everything" (L.2054-2055)".

7.3 Master theme 3: Gender Race and Engagement

This master theme surveys the intersectionality between race, gender and engagement with young adult offenders.

7.3.1 Main Theme 1: Race and Engagement

This main theme explores participants' views about the role of race within the engagement process. Two sub-themes emerged from the analysis presenting a dichotomy of views amongst the YAOs. The term race was used throughout the interviews because it was felt that some YAOs were not familiar with the word ethnicity. Although race is used interchangeably with ethnicity throughout this section, it is acknowledged that race is a contested term, often conflated with ethnicity and sometimes culture (Betancourt & Lopez, 1993; Helms, 1997; Phinney, 1996).

7.3.1.1 Sub-theme 1.1: Race as a Representation of in-group Bias

The label '*in-group bias*' was chosen for this sub-theme because the researcher felt the analysis of the narratives expressed during the interviews were in accord with established theories around intergroup bias (Turner, 1975; Turner & Renolds, 2010). The young adult offenders were divided in their views about the significance of their ethnicity and that of their officer within the relationship. Whilst most agreed that race was important, there was a dichotomy of views about its precise role within a probation engagement environment. About half the group expressed opinions similar to that of Anthony: they advocated that race created a conducive platform for them to be favoured or to be better understood if their officer was of a similar ethnic origin.

"Obviously the majority of black people kind of want a black person to do well, the same for a white person, they want to see white people do well, so it's kinda like, where if the person is black I feel more comfortable to express certain things because they probably gone through the same situation that I have gone through, so it's like they can relate with me".

Intvr: So, you believe that someone of similar ethnicity is more aware of your circumstances?

Resp: Of course, yes of course

Intvr: So, do you think they treat you better or worse because of your similarity?

Resp: I think they treat man better, I would say, probably better, like in a sense like they understand where I'm coming from, like someone who lives in a good house and that, wouldn't understand where man coming from.

Intvr: OK, so do you believe that your race matters in the relationship, does it matter that you are a black male?

Resp: (3) hmmm, if, if I was, if, if my probation officer was white I would say YEAH but now it doesn't matter because she is kinda black, yeah (L.724-733)".

Brad provided a similar answer when asked to comment about the role of race within his supervisory relationship:

"Obviously, not just because your probation officer may be white or whatever, it doesn't mean that they are racist, but I feel like someone that is your own, comes from your own culture UNDERSTANDS you a bit more better, a bit better and can RELATE to certain things in your life so that might affect certain decision that you make or, it exactly, it might not affect certain decisions that you make, whether it be good or bad, it does kinda impact".

"Intvr: So, do you feel probably somebody's race may have an impact on how they interpret your culture and understand you?

Resp: Yeah, and that in turn could lead to a better or worse relationship

Intvr: And do you feel that is true of your relationship personally or is it just hypothetically?

Resp: Yeah, a little yeah (L.918-927)".

Both Anthony and Brad expressed that they felt that an officer from the same ethnic background would result in better engagement, better treatment and understanding of their personal circumstances. Their view was also supported by Mark. However, Mark also indicated that not only would he be treated better by an officer of the same ethnicity; he felt that he would be judged more harshly by an officer of a different ethnic group:

"Intvr: To what degree do you believe the race of your officer impact on the quality of your relationship? So, in this case she is a black female, does it make a difference?

Resp: Yeah, yeah, yeah, it makes a difference.

Intvr: Ok, in what ways?

Resp: Cause she is my race and I can say my opinions on, in like, you know what I mean?

Intvr: Tell me

Resp: I can say my opinion about what I think if someone is judging me and stuff like that, but then I have that sort of relationship with my drug worker as well (L.1095-1103)".

Mark went on to reinforce his point at the end of the interview when asked if there was anything else that the researcher missed but which he believed was important, he stated:

"More blacks, like, it should be race for race like, it may be better to be managed or supported by your own race (L.1211-1212)".

It also appeared that this perception of better treatment or being able to relate better based on shared ethnic background was at times assumed, rather than realised, as indicated by Mohammed:

“Resp: Maybe she can relate to me, and where I come from, you know what I mean, from one black person to another (L.1984-1985)”.

It is also of note that despite this feeling, Mohammed reported that his ethnicity had no material impact on how he was treated in reality:

“Intvr: Do you believe your ethnicity impacts the way you are treated or the quality of engagement/relationship with your supervising officer?”

Resp: No, no not really (L.1987-1989)”.

It was noted that most of the YAOs were from Black Afro-Caribbean backgrounds and most had Black female officers. However, Gregory, an 18-years-old who identified as White Other, proved an exception.

Gregory stated that he got on better with officer from a black ethnic background:

“Intvr: To what degree do you feel the ethnicity/race of your supervising officer has to do with the quality of your relationship?”

Resp: (3), I think, I get on with female better because there is no personality clash

Intvr: I will get to that but in relation to her race, does it matter to you?

Resp: No, not really no. I grew up around black people, so I find it easier to get on with them (L.2154-2159)”.

7.3.1.2 Sub-theme 1.1: Race as a Representation of Inclusivity and Professionalism

In contrast to the aforementioned sub-theme, some YAOs on the other side of the dichotomy posited that their race, and that of their supervising officer, is secondary to the personality or professionalism of the officer. As such, race serves as a marker of the officer’s professionalism and how inclusive they, and by extension the probation service, were. In that regard, race does not matter, as noted by Sean, a 20-year-old black male.

“No, it doesn’t matter whether she is black or white but I never had a white officer before so I can only speculate, I don’t think they would have treated me any differently (L.2299-2301)”.

Although, when pressed for clarity, it emerged that Sean did feel that race mattered; what he meant was that it pales in comparison with personality: “Yes, I think it does matter but then your personality too (L.2303)”.

Winston was even more profound in addressing the subject:

“Now that I have actually grown up and matured a bit, I see that it doesn’t matter, race, gender it doesn’t matter as long as you are a good person (L.277-279).”

Charles, a young adult male who identified as white, was also categorical in his response:

“No, race doesn’t matter, it’s all down to personality and whether they got the time for you or not”.

“Intvr: Ok, you believe your race matters to the relationship?”

Resp: No, no, no, it’s all down to the personality and the person regardless of race, if you got someone who is ah, am not gonna help him because he is black or am not gonna help him because

he is white then you are a bastard then init, that's another crook in the system, you know what a mean, as well as the actual criminals, you know what I'm saying. So, regardless of race, colour or nationality if you are willing to help someone, you will help someone just like X does. She doesn't care what colour I am, she is willing, she will treat me the same way as she would a black man, and Asian man, a white man or a Blue man, she would treat us all the same because she is human. She got personality and that's it (L.1543-1552)".

Junior's comment underpinned Charles' remarks that officers are accustomed to dealing with people of all ethnicities:

"I don't think so because probably she got (3) Hh, probably she has to deal with people from different class, races and different shape (L.2672-2673)".

7.4 Summary

This chapter explored the views of 15 young adult offenders regarding their experiences of engagement whilst exposed to probation supervision. It catalogues a collection of variables these young men cited as operative in ameliorating the engagement process, considers their perspectives of a coercive therapeutic alliance and documents their experiences and expectations of supervision. Whilst many of the expressed points of view conform to existing research and practice, a diversity of lenses emerged that confront some prevailing assumptions of offender engagement and case management.

The data revealed that, in the main, there were three clusters of competencies that the young adult offenders felt were fundamental to promote engagement: officers' knowledge of their job and of young people and their circumstances, officers' skills and techniques of engagement, and officers' characteristics/personality traits. The young adults also drew attention to issues they assumed were likely to negatively impact their engagement with officers. For example, how their engagement can be mediated by factors such as race and gender. The analysis also brought to the fore things that the YAOs considered to be ineffective in supervision and could be seen as barriers to engagement. For instance, YAOs indicated that their inability to confide in their officer for fear of being sanctioned was a significant impediment to the engagement process. The evaluation revealed parallels as well as paradoxes with the analysis of practitioners' data in chapter six. However, the next chapter draws together the views and realities of both groups of participants and presents a comparative evaluation in order to sketch an overall picture of the entire data set.

CHAPTER Eight: Discussion and Conclusions

8.1 Introduction

The main aim in conducting this research project was to explore how criminal justice practitioners engage young adult offenders effectively. Both groups of participants were selected by virtue of their lived experiences and the insight they could provide. Accordingly, questions were framed to enhance understanding of what - and who - works better when engaging young adult male offenders subject to probation supervision in order to re-orient them away from a life of crime. Therefore, those areas of the findings that could make a unique contribution to knowledge and could be translated into practice will be discussed.

In this chapter the findings from both groups of participants (young adult offenders and probation practitioners) are summarised in order to contextualise the findings as a whole. Selected elements of the findings, their implications to practice, and how they could be translated into case management work with young adult offenders in implementable ways will be considered. The limitations of the study, and suggestions for the direction of future research will also be discussed. Three selected master themes and related sub-themes will be focussed on in light of existing research and pertinent effective practice literature. The questions asked in the methodology (Chapter 3) are reiterated for ease of reference below.

1. Are there fundamental engagement techniques/competencies that practitioners and probationers credit as effective in ameliorating engagement?
2. How do practitioners attract and sustain offenders' interest and foster their willing and active participation in the supervisory relationship and processes?
3. Is there a style of therapeutic alliance that best supports engagement?

The combined data from chapters 6 and 7 are summarised below.

8.2 Summary of the findings

This section amalgamates the findings from the two sets of interviews with participants in response to the central aim of the research. These corresponding themes from both groups of participants were combined, labelled and discussed as a whole in response to the three central questions that the research sought to answer.

Question 1: Are there fundamental engagement techniques/competencies that practitioners and probationers credit as effective in ameliorating engagement?

The analysis of the data from both groups of participants converged in the construction of the first master theme: competencies for working with young adult offenders. However, whilst there were similarities between the main themes, the catalogue of knowledge, skills and personality characteristics participants identified and described as essential to effectively engage YAOs varied between the two groups. The main theme 'effective practice knowledge' came up across both data sets, but the underpinning sub-themes varied between practitioners and probationers. For practitioners, the adoption of a mixture of theories to inform their work, as opposed to the application of a singular theory, developed as a strong theme by virtue of the frequency with which it was mentioned and elaborated. This 'eclectic mix of knowledge' described by practitioners pointed towards the importance, for them, of established theories and methods acquired either via formal teaching, self-directed learning or sporadic on-the-job training/briefings. Young adult offenders, like the practitioners, suggested that in addition to having a sound knowledge of their role, it was essential that officers possess some supplementary understanding about young adults, individually and collectively. However, the YAOs placed greater emphasis on informal knowledge acquired from the 'streets'. Yet, despite the fact that YAOs placed more weight on officers having 'street knowledge' over formal learning, both groups acknowledged that the young adult offenders themselves should help to shape such learning. Similarly, whilst an understanding of maturity and its impact was presented as important for practitioners, maturity did not appear to be a major issue for the young adults. For practitioners, maturity played a central role in YAOs' decision-making capacity and shaped their response to supervision. Those deemed as more mature were viewed as faring better and ultimately easier to engage. Interestingly, whilst officers saw young adulthood as marked by immaturity, the YAOs did not subscribe to this: all the YAOs viewed themselves as being, at least, moderately mature. Both groups reported that knowing about the complexities of young adult lives, as well as learning about their childhood and adulthood development, were essential when engaging with this cohort. Additionally, both groups felt that understanding the fundamental needs of young adults enhanced the engagement process.

Although using different terminology, both groups of participants agreed that practitioners needed to cultivate certain key skills in order to be effective in engagement. Young adult offenders believed that officers should be adept at helping, they should be able to build effective bonds with YAOs, know how to show interest in YAOs, know how to communicate effectively with them and should be tolerant and understanding. For officers, it was vital that they learn how to use their authority and to maintain confidentiality and consistency with YAOs. Officers also expressed that it was crucial to exercise tolerance and set clear and firm boundaries for YAOs.

Participants suggested that professionals who work with YAOs should be of a certain disposition and possess certain qualities. Young adult offenders said they wanted their officers to be good motivators, easy to relate to, to be able to use authority appropriately and to be respectful and honest. Practitioners agreed with YAOs about the importance of most of these qualities. For instance, they concurred that being honest and open is crucial when engaging with YAOs, as well as officers needing to be easy to relate to. Practitioners also felt it was important that they should be genuine, empathetic and 'laid back'.

Overall, the findings suggested that both practitioners and young adult offenders believed there were particular competencies - i.e. knowledge, skills and personality characteristics - that officers needed to possess in order to effectively engage this group in supervision and to retain their interest and motivation. The findings also suggested that whilst similar views were expressed at times between the two groups, albeit in different words, there was no agreement between YAOs and practitioners about which competence was the most important.

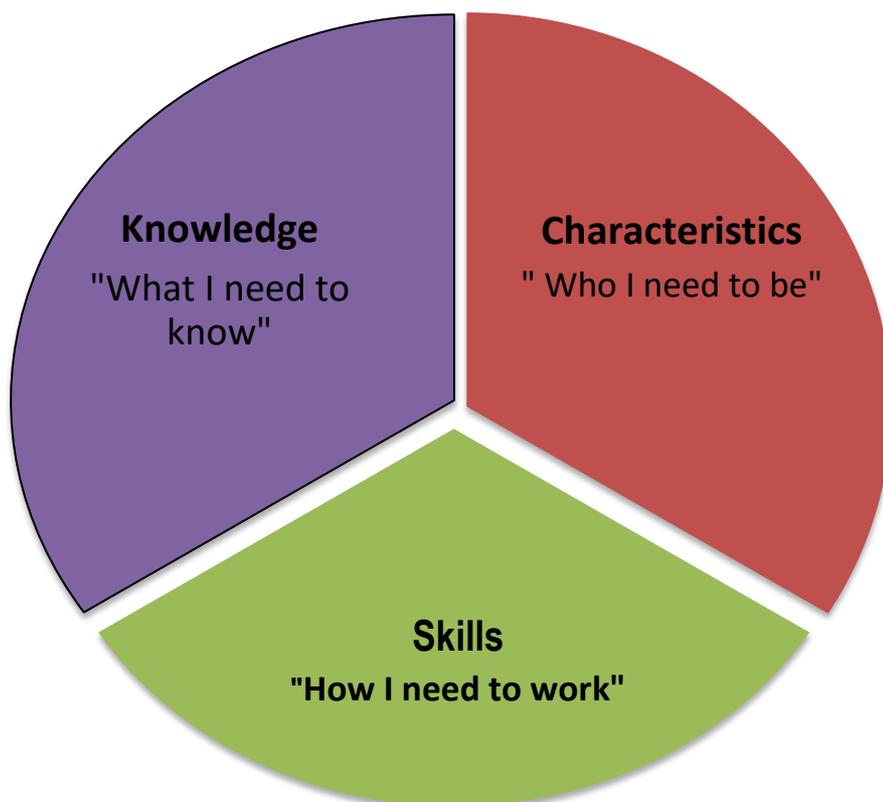


Figure 8.1: Competencies for engaging young adults

Question 2: How do practitioners attract and sustain offenders' interest and foster their active participation in the supervisory relationship and processes?

A broad variety of engagement techniques were acknowledged by both groups of participants as being effective when trying to engage YAOs, such as being honest, using authority appropriately and being able to communicate effectively. Participants were in accord that, during supervision and intervention, there are ways to secure YAOs attention (e.g. demonstrate empathy) and secure their willing participation (e.g. showing genuine interest in the things that concern them). Both groups reported that in forming these relationships and setting the boundaries between the negotiable and the non-negotiable aspects of supervision, it was obligatory for officers to move beyond a perfunctory approach to routine job roles and tasks, and to exhibit a genuine interest and concern for young adult offenders.

Truth and trust were cited as essential foundational blocks on which good therapeutic alliances are built. Trust, in particular, emerged as especially meaningful, although there were fundamental differences in how it was constructed and what each group's expectations were in regard to trust. Practitioners, like YAOs, believed that building a trusting relationship (one in which honesty and truthfulness are indispensable features) was critical. Yet, for YAOs, the issues of truth and honesty as fundamental tenets of trust were potentially problematic. The majority of YAOs explained that it is likely that being honest about routine activities could result in punitive sanctions. One YAO explained that probation officers, by the very nature of their role, should not be trusted with certain information.

Question 3: Is there a style of therapeutic alliance that best supports engagement?

It was clear from the analysis that both groups of participants felt that a constructive and supportive relationship was a key component in the engagement and desistance paradigm. Officers commented that to establish good relationships with YAOs it was crucial to be regarded as being on the same level as them, demonstrate a genuine interest in the things that matter to them and to be available for them when necessary. Officers also noted that it was a prerequisite to determine firm boundaries and use authority appropriately, whilst at the same time being compassionate and empathetic. It was noteworthy that one officer (Participant 4) reflected that her age, experience of service and youthful appearance made it more challenging for her, and more necessary to establish clear lines of authority in her work with young adults.

Practitioners were unanimous in their views that it was essential to get to know YAOs as individuals. A positive alliance was believed to be conducive for listening and learning from YAOs, being able to influence them, to understand YAOs' needs and to work with them collaboratively. Some YAOs saw their officer in a similar way to a member of their own family: helper, confidant and supporter. Indeed, one officer was said to be the only person to have offered a particular YAO encouragement rather than criticism. Such relationships were built by being consistent and reliable, requiring patience and time.

Both groups divulged a number of 'don'ts' which they regarded as important for establishing a good relationship. For example, don't be dishonest, don't misuse your authority, don't pretend to know it all or make assumptions. Participants also mentioned that building effective therapeutic alliances requires being clear and unambiguous about expectations and maintaining confidentiality. Both groups of participants acknowledged that, given the coercive nature of the relationship, enforcement is, at times, necessary to maintain the integrity of an order or licence. However, the YAOs were keen to stress the need for officers to be empathetic and show compassion. Officers, on the other hand, were more concerned about making defensible decisions that would stand up to scrutiny should their work be called into question. There was also general agreement that the lives of YAOs are complex and that these complexities can, at times, necessitate extra leniency in order to achieve progress in the long-term. Practitioners, however, expressed tensions around National Standards expectations particularly, and how these guidelines can influence individual professional discretion.

8.3 Discussion

As discussed above a number of identical themes emerged across both samples of participants' data (see appendix 16 and 17). These were not the only themes that were developed. However, it was not feasible within the parameters of this thesis to fully expand and discuss all of the themes that were developed from the data analysis. The three major themes below were selected for discussion as I felt they best answered the research questions.

8.4 Master Theme 1: Competencies for Working with Young Adult Offenders (OMs and YAOs perspectives)

This overarching theme appears to be in accordance with existing research, as well as the effective practice literature on offender management and engagement. In the main, this body of evidence advocates that it requires a particular set of competencies to engage involuntary clients, such as those subject to probation

supervision (Bourgon, Gutierrez, & Ashton, 2012a & 2012b; McNeill, Raynor, & Trotter, 2010; Trotter, 2006; 2015). The evidence indicates that staff with certain personality characteristics, who possess certain knowledge and can demonstrate specific skills, were more effective in securing offenders' interest and motivation (Bourgon, Gutierrez, & Ashton, 2012b; Chadwick, Dewolf, & Serin, 2015; Robinson, Lowenkamp, Holsinger, VanBenschoten, Alexander, & Oleson, 2012; Raynor, Ugwu-dike, & Vanstone, 2014). Therefore, these staff were found to be better able to retain offenders' active participation in the desistance promoting interventions that were most likely to reduce recidivism in the long term (Durnescu, 2012; Hass & Spence 2017; Livingstone, Amad & Clark, 2015; Raynor; Ugwu-dike & Vanstone, 2013; McNeil, 2009; McNeill, 2010; Trotter, 2015). Ultimately, when these offenders were followed up, it was shown that they were less likely to be recidivists (Austin, Williams & Kilgour, 2011; Grant & McNeill, 2014; Raynor, Ugwu-dike & Vanstone, 2014; Trotter, 2013).

Some of this research is predicated on the premise that, despite uniformity amongst some offending cohorts (Singer, 1981), offenders are not typically one homogeneous group (Allam, Middleton & Browne, 1997; Maycraft & Wendy, 2004; Nagin, & Land, 1993; Oliver, Stockdale, & Wormith, 2011; Sapouna, Bisset, Conlong & Matthews, 2015). The premise that offenders' heterogeneity necessitates customised treatment (Cameron, & Telfer, 2004; Farrington, Lober & Howell, 2012; McNeil, 2006; Rich, 2009; Prior & Mason, 2010) was formed alongside claims that the challenges and complexities of young adulthood made it operationally prudent to treat YAOs as a unique group (Bottoms & Farrington, 2012; Dunkel & Pruin, 2012; 2015; House of Commons, 2016, T2A, undated).

This master theme also appears to be in line with an emerging body of effective practice studies about what may work, or work better, in engaging young adult offenders (Clinks, 2015; Judd & Lewis, 2015). The derivatives of this master theme: effective practice knowledge, effective practice skills and staff characteristics will be discussed below within the context of this evidence.

8.4.1 Effective practice knowledge

In exploring effective engagement with involuntary clients, Trotter (1999; 2006; 2015) drew attention to a range of criminological, psychological and sociological theories, effective practice models and related research studies. He also drew from his own personal experience of working with this group. The results from this study are commensurate with many of the studies cited and undertaken by Trotter (2006) and others (e.g. May & Vass, 1996), showing that work with offenders is informed by a wide selection of established, and some less commonly accepted, theories, models of working and other factors such as life

experiences. The findings from this study also infer that both probation practitioners and young adult offenders felt it was essential that officers moved beyond what they classified as 'book knowledge' or knowledge of the job and developed a portfolio of informal learning that integrates an understanding of young adults - individually and collectively. This knowledge accrual should encompass a functional understanding of the many complexities and realities of YAOs' daily lives, taking into consideration their perspectives. Labelled 'street knowledge,' or 'knowledge of the roads', participants proffered that this knowledge is normally acquired through self-directed learning, and forged through relationships with YAOs, as opposed to being taught formally.

The concept of 'the street' is broadly associated with depictions of the lives of inner-city youth delinquency (originally in an American context) but which overtime appears to have grown to become synonymous with a deviant youth subculture more globally (Wright & Decker, 1997). The streets came to represent a symbolic place that young people could end up or chose to end up, based on life circumstances. This is a place inhabited - in the main - by youths from disadvantaged, mainly black urban communities operating in a culture of violence, gangs and guns (Pearson, 1983; Newburn, 1996). In this space, young people actively construct identities and negotiate relationships with peers and the wider community (Traynor, 2016; Young, Fitzgibbon, & Silverstone, 2014; O'Brien, Daffern, Chu, & Thomas, 2013). The street also captures notions of a 'feral' underclass (Pearson, 1983; Newburn, 1996), groups of wayward and deviant youths who live their lives by the 'code of the street' (Brookman et al., 2011: 18). Halesworth and Silverstone (2009) observed two dominant street-based gun cultures operating within this world: a professional criminals group occupied by men who undertake crime as a job, for whom the use of violence is rare and is used strictly for business purposes. The second, identified by respondents as being 'on road', constitutes a far more violent subculture populated mainly by volatile young men living in vicious street situations and striving to earn a living in the least lucrative but most violent part of the criminal economy.

There are some noticeable comparisons between Halesworth and Silverstone's (2009) 'on the road' group and those identified within this study as being 'from the street'. For both groups, 'on the streets/road' convey an elected way of life or a place where they ended up resulting from inaccessible appropriate support or feelings of being excluded by mainstream society. Both groups spoke of having lived on the 'street/road' alongside or on the opposite of others with similar experience. Similarly, parallels were observed between the two groups where the street/road constituted a place where they could find genuine freedom of expression and control to transcend the limits of society and its rules. This is a world marked equally by poor economic, social and cultural capital and where survival requires mastery of wits and a preparedness to use violence. In both groups, lives appear to be marked by trauma, complex family backgrounds and where life on the

street/road' encouraged a hyper-aggressive form of masculinity and being tough as a valuable capital. (Campbell,1993; Harding, 2014). Both convey the existence of a street culture as a possible explanation for criminal behaviour, but more so as a valid lived experience.

There were also ways in which the two groups were dissimilar. Although there was a predominance of violence, mainly against other young men, there were some non-group related offences amongst this study and not all the young adults belonged to gangs. Also, violent offences within this study were not acquisitive in nature and so were not linked to the acquisition of economic capital. Rather, it appeared they were for the most part expressions of youthful exuberance motivated by group identity in which the weapon of choice was knives, not guns.

Similarities and differences aside, how these young people understand and respond to life on the street and how this understanding (street knowledge) shapes the world around them, including case management practice, is of significance. As noted, the concepts of 'street life' are well documented in literature, for example, as life on the street or on the road. Street knowledge is constructed as the cumulative experience of how young people understand and respond to life on the street and how this understanding shapes their engagement with others, including criminal justice professionals. This amalgam of knowledge can be considered as valuable street capital that, as Harding (2014) noted, can be used as tradable within this social field. The findings present this understanding as an essential source of knowledge (capital) for building relationships that can effectively engage young adults.

Practitioners appeared to have recognised the importance of street knowledge and seemed to have actively been trying to accrue and actualise it in daily practice by forging learning alliances with offenders. Arguably, there may be commonalities amongst young people that could be captured in a coherent whole to shape engagement. However, there did not appear to be any structured approach to this knowledge construction; how young adults experience was accrued, analysed and employed in practice as a theory or method of engagement, seemed to require a more structured approach. Eidelson (2013) implied that this unstructured approach to capture and use offenders' voices in knowledge construction, policy and practice, may be because there exists a certain proclivity amongst professionals to generalise about offenders, or perhaps because offenders' voices are not ordinarily looked upon as a legitimate source of information within criminal justice policy and practice theorising. Indeed, Groombridge (2011) remarked that learning from offenders has generally not been looked at in most of the existing research, and where this occurs, the emphasis appears to be on learning about the offender's offending rather than about the offender. However, it has been suggested that if young people are given a voice and provided with the opportunity to influence how a service is developed and implemented, they are more likely to participate and be rehabilitated (Case, 2006;

Scruton & Hayden, 2002; 2006:276). In fact, some observers believe that only young people can help adults understand what will or will not work for them (NACRO, 2008). However, it has been noted that not much emphasis is placed on securing young people's involvement in decision-making and service development (Hart & Thompson, 2009). Although, it is noted that more involvement is required (Munro, 2011). Moreover, the term "participation", when used with young people, refers to joining in with activities rather than actively contributing to decisions (User Voice (2011). This, it is suggested, may ultimately lead to disengagement, further exclusion, anti-social behaviour and even criminality (Hendry, 2007; Hart & Thompson, 2009).

Although currently in a state of fluidity, the probation service has established methods of listening and responding to the voices of its service users via (1) Service Users Engagement forums and (2) the annual Service Users Survey. Moreover, it could also be asserted - on closer analysis - that certain underpinning tenets of learning from service users are embedded within existing principles of case management. For instance, one could contend that collaborative approaches to case management, such as those promoted within the SEEDS model and advanced within the effective practice literature, accept as a norm that practitioners should seek to get to know offenders and their personal circumstances (Rex & Hosking, 2013). Furthermore, it can be argued that certain case management practices embedded within National Standards for Effective Probation Practice (2015), such as home visits, enable probation practitioners to acknowledge an offender's personal circumstances. This is useful in informing their risk and needs assessment, sentence planning and shaping their engagement with offenders. Interestingly, some third sector organisation (e.g. CLINK and Catch 22) have made much progressing in listening to and responding to the voice of young offenders and has drawn on available research to shape engagement. Although these therapeutic alliances may not be coercive in nature, there may be some learning from their engagement approach that may be beneficial in a probation context.

It has also been noted that the desistance literature also contains evidence of this awareness (Cullen, 2011). For instance, in an evaluation of the desistance literature conducted on behalf of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), McNeil and Weaver (2010) premised that to promote desistance, practitioners should take advantage of getting to know about offenders' identities and their social networks. Although, Cullen (2011) made an important observation that it is Adolescence Limited Criminology - not Desistance Criminology - that dominates policy decisions and practice responses. Cullen also noted that the best models for effective interventions lies in the desistance literature. Barry (2005) also noted that policy responses to justice-involved youths do not focus on desistance 'but rather on containment and behaviour modification strategies, which no longer deliver justice but instead anticipate and modify so-called 'rational' decision-making amongst young people (Barry, 2005)'. Yet, as the evidence is increasingly demonstrating, the

criminologies (i.e. desistance criminology) that help offenders stop offending are the ones that capture and incorporate offenders' narratives (Barry, 2005; 2009; Case, 2010; Cullen, 2011; Kemhall, 2010; Mohony, 2009). Using the Adolescence Limited Criminology (ALC) explanation of crime as an example, Cullen (2011) submits that this early theorising was not designed to inform policy to help offenders stop offending. Cullen noted that ALC was established, in the main, from self-report studies of high school students instead of on prisoners who would have been more equipped to talk about why and how they offend. Desistance oriented theorising, on the other hand, that includes concepts such as "redemptive scripts" and "human agency" (Maruna, 2001; Sampson & Laub, 2003) is informed by offenders narratives. Accordingly, Cullen (2011) advised that if criminologists want to influence policy and practice to help offenders desist, they should speak with offenders.

Likewise, in her rational choice and responsibilities thesis, Barry (2005) argues that a rational choice approach, which focuses on crime prevention and influences policy formation, is at variance with the evidence from both academia and young offenders. This evidence suggests, for example, that a focus on rational choice and responsibilities of youths ignores the socioeconomic situations that makes crime an attractive option for some marginalised youths, and ultimately results in ill-advised and ineffective policy strategies when it comes to reducing offending amongst young people.

In a similar way to knowledge of youth development, the impact of trauma experienced by young adults also surfaced as significant issues for participants during the analysis. Although, the importance of the issues of trauma appeared to have resonated more with practitioners: they presented as more perceptive, seemed better able to recognise symptoms of trauma, and were able to associate the impact trauma on their engagement with YAOs. Remarkably, most practitioners wanted to draw attention to what they felt was limited knowledge amongst practitioners and the absence of specific trauma informed training. Officers suggest that, given that trauma was pervasive across the young adult cohort, not having the relevant training to support YAOs was a missed opportunity. This conclusion is in line with other research evidence and indicates a pervasiveness of trauma amongst youth, including young adult males (Cesarani, & Peterson-Badali, 2010; Hawley, Ward, Long, Owen, & Magnay, 2003; Huw, Williams, Cordan, Mewse, Tonks, & Burgess, 2010; McKinlay, Grace, McLellan, Roger, Clarbour, & MacFarlane, 2014; Poereous, 2016; Poereous, Alder & Davidson, 2016).

Whilst prior research discusses at length other aspects of engagement, conversely, the concept of street knowledge as a legitimate source of information for engagement appears to be absent from the literature. This may be, as implied by Eidelson (2013), that there exists a certain proclivity amongst professionals to generalise about offenders, or perhaps because offenders' voices are not ordinarily looked upon as a

legitimate source of information within a case management context. Indeed Groombridge (2011) remarked that learning from offenders has generally not been looked at in most of the existing research, and where this occurs, the emphasis appears to be on learning about offenders' offending rather than about the offender.

However, whilst the concept of 'street knowledge' as a legitimate and possibly necessary source of insight for effective engagement appears to be absent from the effective practice literature; it could be asserted on closer analysis that certain underpinning tenets are embedded within existing principles of case management. For instance, one could contend that collaborative approaches to case management, such as those promoted within the SEEDS model and advanced within the effective practice literature, accept as a norm that practitioners should seek to get to know offenders and their personal circumstances (Rex & Hosking, 2013). Likewise, it could further be said that the desistance literature also contains implicit evidence of this awareness. In an evaluation of the desistance literature conducted on behalf of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS), McNeil and Weaver (2010), premised that to promote desistance, practitioners should take advantage of getting to know about offenders identities and their social networks. Furthermore, it can be argued that certain case management practices embedded within National Standards for Effective Probation Practice (2015), such as home visits, enable probation practitioners to acknowledge an offender's personal circumstances. This is useful in informing their risk and needs assessment, sentence planning and shaping their engagement with offenders.

The findings from this study suggest that, despite the absence of explicit references to the value of having 'street knowledge' within the research and practice literature, this awareness was deemed essential by both groups of participants and may be a credible source of knowledge when engaging with young adult offenders. In a similar way, knowledge of youth development and the impact of trauma experienced by young adults also surfaced as significant issues for participants. Although, the importance of the issues of trauma appeared to have resonated more with practitioners: they presented as more perceptive, seemed better able to recognise symptoms of trauma, and were able to associate the impact trauma on their engagement with YAOs. Remarkably, most practitioners wanted to draw attention to what they felt was limited knowledge amongst practitioners and the absence of specific trauma informed training. Officers suggest that, given that trauma was pervasive across the young adult cohort, not having the relevant training to support YAOs was a missed opportunity. This conclusion comports with research evidence indicating a pervasiveness of trauma amongst youth, including young adult males (Cesaroni, & Peterson-Badali, 2010; Hawley, Ward, Long, Owen, & Magnay, 2003; Huw Williams, Cordan, Mewse, Tonks, & Burgess, 2010; McKinlay, Grace, McLellan, Roger, Clarbour, & MacFarlane, 2014; Poereous, 2016; Porteous, Alder & Davidson, 2016).

8.4.2 *Practice implications*

The importance of street knowledge and the absence of trauma informed knowledge and training may hold significant practice and policy implications for engagement with young adults.

Street knowledge

Although practitioners made it clear that it was important to know about the lived realities of the young people, the offenders' views regarding street knowledge was unequivocal. This lived experience term 'street knowledge', presented in the offender's voice, was put forward as a crucial piece of knowledge that is necessary to engage young adult offenders. This, in my view, should be ratified in policy and operationalised in practice. This may be one way of exploring, capturing and reflecting the views of an often overlooked marginalised group in criminological knowledge construction and policy formation. Moreira and Diversi (2010) noted, marginalised people are normally relegated to a subordinate position of research subject in the process of knowledge production. If the outcome of policy and practice intervention is to help offenders change; and if, as some evidence shows, offenders can play a pivotal role in the design of intervention by informing what may or may not work; and if such design is more likely to keep them engaged, then the likelihood of them desisting is improved.

The evidence from this study also suggests that trauma is prevalent amongst young male offenders (Williams, Mewse, Tonks, Mills, Burgess, & Cordan, 2010), and that this can potentially create management issues as well as increase the propensity to reoffend (Shiroma, Ferguson, & Pickelsimer, 2010). Practitioners were united in shared experiences of encountering trauma whilst supervising young adult offenders. They voiced common concerns about the absence of trauma-informed knowledge and training and acknowledged common feelings of inadequacy in managing its manifestations. As argued throughout this study, the ultimate purpose of offender modification intervention is to reduce further likelihood of reoffending and harm. If, as the evidence suggests, those who are effectively engaged in appropriate intervention stand the best chance of being rehabilitated, addressing trauma is likely to increase this outcome. The probation service should therefore pay careful attention to providing trauma-informed training for practitioners who engage with those groups of offenders who report, or are assessed, as having high exposure to trauma. Also, if offenders' voices are not routinely considered in the construction of intervention programmes and services, this may represent a blind spot. Incorporating the voices of offenders may prove useful in ameliorating engagement and potentially reduce reoffending in the long-term.

8.4.3 *Proposal for future research*

Although the evidence suggests that trauma is prevalent amongst youths, related issues, such as traumatic brain injury and its impact on engaging YAOs, seem to have been broadly overlooked in practice (Huw Williams, W., Cordan, G., Mewse, A. J., Tonks, J., & Burgess, 2010). The specific ramifications of trauma on engagement with young adult offenders do not appear to have been a focus of any existing study. A focussed study into this area may generate meaningful insights that may prove beneficial to working more productively with young adult offenders. In the same way, although efforts to listen to offenders' voices are in place in the NPS (for instance, the annual offender engagement survey) the probation service could concentrate more attention on gathering young adults' perspectives on the specific issues of engagement and ensure these lenses are used to inform the design and delivery of interventions.

8.4.4 *Effective Practice Skills: What Works in Engaging YAOs*

The principal aim of this study was to explore what works in effectively engaging young adult offenders. A logical derivative of this exploration is to understand what skills practitioners used in formulating positive working alliances with YAOs, and to understand how they employ these skills in navigating traditional problematic engagement issues such as setting the boundaries between the negotiable and non-negotiable aspects of supervision. This main theme draws together some key skills that participants identified as effective when engaging with YAOs. Staff skills, in a probation context, can be understood as a complex group of behaviours directed towards a specific supervision goal or sentence plan (Datar, Bawikar, Rao, & Masdekar, 2010). These skills, widely referred to as Core Correctional Practice (Andrews & Kiessling, 1980; Dowden & Andrews, 2004) are regarded as explicit behaviours that practitioners can learn and improve over time (Durnescu, 2012), and are supposed to be effective in engaging with and supporting desistance amongst offenders.

Responsible for advancing the principles of justice, the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) advocates that the fundamental purposes for working with offenders is to ensure that sentences passed by the courts are served, and that offenders are supported and given the opportunities to become law-abiding citizens (MOJ, 2019). Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS), the agency chiefly responsible for the management of offenders in custody and the community, has made it clear in its 2018/2019 business plan that the rehabilitation of offenders is one of its key priorities. While it can deliver this rehabilitative work via group work programmes, a notable proportion of this work occurs via one-to-one case management work during supervision between practitioners and offenders. Yet, most of the research exploring the efficacy of

curative interventions appears to focus on structured programmes and cognitive behavioural initiatives, with little attention being paid to what happens in daily supervision with offenders (Trotter & Evans, 2012).

This knowledge deficit, referred to as the 'black box' of community supervision (Bonta, Rugge, Scott, Bourgon, & Yessine, 2008) has been strengthened by emerging research bringing attention to skills that practitioners need to engage offenders in the change process (Dowden & Andrews 2004). Studies which have examined the relationship between desistance and core correctional skills have demonstrated that criminal justice practitioners who were able to effectively demonstrate certain core correctional skills (e.g. the appropriate use of authority) were more successful in helping offenders desist from offending. (e.g., Bonta et al, 2004; Dowden & Andrews, 2004; Raynor, Ugwu-dike, & Vanstone, 2014; Robinson, VanBenschoten, Alexander, & Lowenkamp, 2011; Trotter & Evans, 2012). Andrews and Kiessling (1980) identified five Core Correctional Practice (CCP) skills that they believed (if officers applied correctly) were more likely to reduce recidivism. Via a meta-analysis, Dowden and Andrews (2004) also examined the role that core correctional skills played in reducing reoffending and approved five key skills associated with its significant decline: effective use of authority, anti-criminal modelling and reinforcement, problem solving, use of community resources and the quality of interpersonal relationships between staff and clients. Similarly, Trotter (2006) in exploring the significance of officers' characteristics with involuntary clients, outlined a framework for practice based on the evidence existing at the time. Trotter (2006) advised that effective work with offenders should be characterised by role clarification, reinforcing and modelling pro-social values, and collaborative problem-solving. Moreover, drawing on the work of Gallaway (2005), Trotter (2006) further advised that the worker-client relationship should encompass seven essential elements:

1. Concern for the client
2. Commitment to and acceptance of obligations towards the client
3. Acceptance of the client as a person (distinct from their actions)
4. Expectation or belief that people can change
5. Empathy or understanding of the client's feeling and point of view
6. Genuineness and congruence (or openness and consistency) and
7. Appropriate use of authority.

Raynor and Vanstone (2016), also conducted a study in which they videotaped interviews between probation practitioners and their probationers. Their analysis showed that those offenders who were supervised by staff practising certain skills were less likely to re-offend over a two-year follow-up. Furthermore, when it comes to engagement with offenders, the use of these skills and techniques has also been shown to result in enhanced practitioner-offender engagement (Dowden & Andrews, 2004).

The catalogue of skills that emerged from both groups of participants were in line with the body of cited case management research and practice evidence to date. For instance, participants expressed that it was essential that officers know how to use their authority well, including setting clear boundaries and establishing clarity around supervision, adherence to the conditions of supervision (licence and court orders) and consequences of breaching an order. Participants also spoke about the need for tolerance regarding compliance, the need for leniency and the use of discretion when and where appropriate. Clear expectations from both groups of participants were put forward as fundamental underpinning structures. The ability to motivate young adults, to encourage autonomy and agency, also emerged as essential skills. This involved the capacity to encourage self-efficacy, self-belief and to offer hope to young men who often lack support and life structure. Young adult offenders were keen to note that officers should go beyond perfunctory execution of their duties and demonstrate genuine interest and concern for young adults. According to young adults, officers who are able to present as genuine in their interactions, flexible and willing to help, were perceived as having the right skills to engage them.

Consistency in character and conduct emerged as an unexpected feature from the data. Both groups of participants disclosed that within the engagement relationship, having stability was a key engagement variable. Practitioners spoke of constantly having to remind, reiterate, enforce and reinforce the boundaries of supervision with YAOs in ways that they would not regularly have to do with their adult offender cohort. Correspondingly, officers talked about having to maintain a level of trustworthiness in how they conducted themselves, maintaining coherence in character and behaviour with YAOs and having to ensure coherence in how they apply core correctional skills. For the young adults, consistency was presented as a way of validating that an officer was caring, committed and genuine.

8.4.5 Staff characteristics

Staff characteristics according to Dernesu (2012. p194) are 'moral qualities or personality features that can be considered as inner traits of the practitioner' (e.g. being reliable, respectful, trustworthy). Given the history of probation and its connection to the clergy (Goodman, 2013; Jarvis, 1972; Mair, 1997; McWilliams, 1983; Vanstone, 2004), it seems understandable that practitioners' moral virtues are still considered important when working with offenders. History records that the probation service had its genesis in the work of men of the cloth endeavouring to save the souls of sinners (Bochel, 1976; Jarvis, 1972; Mair & Burke, 2012; McWilliams, 1985; 1999; Raynor, Vanstone, 2017; Raynor and Robinson, 2009; Vanstone, 2004; Whitehead, 2010). Therefore, probation practitioners had to be men of God with fitting moral attributes; energised by a desire to

save souls (Bottoms & McWilliams, 1979). Probation as a discipline was also largely influenced by social work values (Fitzgibbon, 2011; Goodman, 2000; 2013, Vanstone, & Priestley, 2016; Smith, 2005).

The shifting nature of the modern penal system, pessimism about what works with offenders, political expediency and factors such as a focus on risk management has meant that the service has had to readjust its ways of working (Garland, 2001; Fitzgibbon, 2007; 2012; Fitzgibbon, & Lea, 2014; Kaufmann, 1998; Vanstone, 2004). While the rehabilitation of offenders remains a central purpose of contemporary probation practice and may still be the principle that identifies with, and expresses, the original mission of the service (Smith, 2005), the gradual move from the religious towards secularism and professionalisation has been acknowledged (McWilliams, 1985; Vanstone, 2004). However, the study by Raynor and Vanstone (2016, p1147) revealed that some techniques used by practitioners were 'clearly part of the repertoire traditionally valued and taught in social work'. Moreover, a cursory glance at current recruitment literature aimed at case management staff suggests that positive staff characteristics are still considered essential.

This study suggests that YAOs may not be dissimilar to the general offender population in being influenced by officers' positive personality traits. However, this study goes beyond previous studies regarding staff characteristics and provides insights into how these staff attributes may serve to augment engagement with young adult offenders and potentially improve intervention outcomes. Young adult offenders in this study expressed that they were more willing to listen to, respect and respond favourably to officers who they felt demonstrated empathy, showed compassion or who they thought were understanding. Moreover, YAOs appeared to view these officers in similar ways to a family member who believed in them, and who they felt cared for them holistically, who, in turn, they did not wish to disappoint. Similarly, officers were keen to point out that being perceived as genuine and caring by YAOs seemed to improve their credibility, legitimacy and enhanced their relationships. The literature suggests that young people are generally not adept in perspective-taking and have a proclivity to make poor decisions and act for self-gratification (Scott, Reppucci & Woolard, 1995; Cauffman & Steinburg, 1995). Yet, the findings in this study also seem to highlight the importance of positive attachments (Ansbro, 2008) as a mitigating force for impulsive actions and possible desistance. Young adult offenders suggest that they were more likely to follow the rules if they believe their officers were fair, caring and respectful in their decision making (Skeem, Loudon, Polaschek, & Camp, 2007; Kennealy, Skeem, Manchak, & Eno Loudon, 2012; Tyler & Huo, 2002). The young adults also indicated that they were likely not to comply if officers were perceived as too authoritarian (Klockar, 1972).

8.4.6 Implications for practice

The skills and characteristics that emerged from the analysis of the data as necessary to engage YAOs are not unique, they are consistent with the effective practice literature on offender case management, particularly what is known about core correctional skills (Dowden & Andrews, 2004). The analysis suggests that the efficacy of these techniques when working with YAOs may be in the way these skills are administered and the personal characteristics of the practitioner applying them. It suggests that if the catalogue of established skills is consistently applied by officers who are able to demonstrate certain characteristic traits, these officers are more likely to attract and retain the interest and willing participation of YAOs. The call for unique approaches when working with YAOs is now well established (Barrow Cadbury Trust, McNeil 7 Bachelor, 2004). However, there is no established engagement approach currently being applied with young adults in the NPS. Furthermore, the specific staff characteristics and skills that emerged from this study or other studies that focus on core correctional practice, are not currently the subject of any structured training or recruitment campaign. This study provides strong preliminary evidence to support further exploration into these areas: staff skills and characteristics. The NPS would do well to consider how the findings could influence the current search for a bespoke approach to working with YAOs and to help officers develop the requisite skills and characteristics.

The question: “whether effective officers are born or made” has been raised elsewhere (Ackerman & Hilsenroth, 2003; Kennealy, Skeem, Manchak, & Loudon, 2012), and may hold significant practice implications for probation. From a practice perspective, this may be important as to which set of competencies are focused on during staff recruitment campaigns and how, particularly new staff, are supported in their development. This may be of particular significance for younger or inexperienced staff. It was noteworthy that one officer, in her reflection on the use of authority- (an essential skill identified by all practitioner) noted that her age, experience of service and youthful appearance made it more challenging for her, and more necessary to establish clear lines of authority in her work with young adults. How to use authority may well require further focused attention. Furthermore, if, as this study suggests, staff personal characteristics are important for engagement with YAOs, the NPS may need to consider the potential implications for the allocation of cases, or how staff who hold a young adult case load may be supported.

8.4.7 Suggestion for future Research

The importance of staff characteristics and skills as essential competencies for engaging offenders generally has been validated empirically (Andrews & Kiessling, 1980; Dowden & Andrews, 2003). However, much of this research appears to have been established on observations of adult cohorts of offenders. Given the

paucity of research on young adult offenders within the CJS, future young adult focused research is recommended.

8.5 Master Theme 2: Relationship and Engagement (OM and YAOs perspectives)

A meaningful relationship between the probationer and the practitioner is constructed within existing practice literature as a crucial vehicle for change (Ansbro, 2008; Skeem, Loudon, Polaschek, & Camp, 2007; Ross, Polaschek, & Ward, 2008). A further objective of this research was to understand the nature of the alliance between practitioners and probationers and its impact on engagement. More specifically, it sought to understand if there was a style of therapeutic alliances that best supports engagement with young adult offenders. The importance of interpersonal relationships to engagement emerged as a strong finding. The majority of participants felt that the quality of the probationer/practitioner relationship was vital to any purposeful engagement as well as compliance.

8.5.1 *The Quality of YAOs/Practitioner Relationships*

Whilst there appears to be an absence of empirical studies that look specifically at probationer/practitioner relationships and their impact on engagement with young adult offenders, the importance of a positive relationship between offenders and criminal justice practitioners has been amply addressed (Burnett, & McNeill, 2005; Lewis, 2014a; Lewis 2014b; McCulloch, 2005). Lewis (2014a) for instance, discovered that a positive probationer/practitioner relationship was one in which practitioners demonstrated genuine care/concern for probationers, showed acceptance and empathy and listened to their probationers. Also, Clark (2005) found that a positive alliance was marked by a genuine belief in the offender and their capacity to change, as well as having a respectful and non-judgmental attitude towards them.

There is a notable presumption within the desistance literature, however, that a relational approach is also applicable when working with young adult offenders (Burnett & McNeil, 2005; Coll, Thobro & Hass, 2004; Judd & Lewis, 2015). Judd and Lewis (2005) scrutinised the desistance literature and its application with regard to working with young adult offenders. They proposed that relational work in general, and the quality of a positive practitioner/offender relationship in particular, are fundamental to working with young adult offenders in a probation context. Burnett and McNeil (2005) in delineating the reasons behind the disappearance and reappearance of the importance of the relationship within effective practice, also argue that a relational approach is as applicable to young people who offend in the same way as adults.

The findings from this study are consistent with the cited research. Both practitioners and YAOs believed that a close working alliance was essential and should be marked by variables such as trust, empathy, honesty and the appropriate use of authority. Practitioners stressed the importance of maintaining confidentiality within these relationships, which should be tempered by effective communication and trust. Young adult offenders believed that practitioners should be helpful, trustworthy and available. Likewise, YAOs expressed that practitioners should demonstrate discretion, show interest in them as individuals, use humour in engagement and inspire hope. The YAOs also emphasised that they wanted their officers, above all things, to be genuine, helpful, motivating and consistent. The most repeated findings amongst the practitioners' analysis in this study suggested that practitioners believed that showing genuine interest in YAOs, and being flexible and relatable, were the most important factors. However, whilst the findings agreed with the relational skills identified in previous research, the issue of trust within the relationship emerged as particularly significant for YAOs. Young adult offenders talked about a functional trust in which they would withhold pertinent information from their officer in order to avoid the potential unpleasant impact of full disclosure.

8.5.2 Relationship and desistance

Within the plethora of desistance research there is a convergence of opinions that, whilst desistance may occur naturally without intervention, desistance can also be assisted (Maruna, 2000; 2001; Burnett & Maruna, 2006; Maruna & Farrall, 2004; McNeil, 2014). The role of the probation officer as an enabler is now a core feature of assisted desistance theorising (Burnett & Mcneil, 2005). The evidence to date suggests that an offender's relationship with their probation officer has a manifest influence on recidivism outcomes (Morash, Kashy, Smith & Cobbina, 2015), leaving little doubt that the role of the officer is a crucial factor in the desistance paradigm (Ansbro, 2008; Barry, 2007; King, S2013). The well-known Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) approach to rehabilitation places emphasis on the importance of the quality of the offender manager/offender relationship. The current research evidence suggests that officers should have relationships with their clients that exemplify optimism about an offender's capacity to make good, involving empathy, openness, warmth, humour and enthusiasm (Dowden & Andrews, 2004; Bonta et al., 2008; Bourgeon et al., 2010; Gendreau, 1996; Trotter, 2006).

Klockars (1972) found that probation practitioners who earned the trust of their probationers, and who were caring and respectful, using authority appropriately, saw improved behaviour amongst those they supervised. Similarly, Papanozzi and Gendreau (2005) measured the supervision style of 12 officers who supervised 240 offenders on parole and found that those with the most positive qualities had offenders under their supervision who had fared better and were less likely to be recalled.

A relational approach has been known to be effective across a wide range of offender types. Morash, Kashy, Smith and Cobbina, (2015) investigated the effectiveness of two relationship styles (supportiveness and punitiveness) used by practitioners with 330 female offenders. They found that a supportive staff style resulted in lower anxiety, improved self-efficacy and a higher crime-avoidance. In a similar way, the quality of officer/offender relationship has proven to reduce recidivism in offenders suffering from mental ill-health (Skeem, Eno Loudon, Polaschek, & Camp, 2007; Kennealy; Skeem, Manchak, Eno Loudon, & Jennifer 2012).

Although empirical desistance research relating to young people is limited (HMIP, 2016), the relationship between youth offending staff and the young people they supervise has been explored. In 2016, HM Inspectorate of Probation released a report based on interviews conducted across six youth offending teams (HMIP, 2016). The report looked at effective practice across eight domains considered significant by the research literature. Building a professional relationship was the most important factor. Young people reported that they found a balance between a trusting, consistent working relationship with at least one worker to be significant in helping them to stop offending. Moreover, Lewis (2014) argues that such relationships, whether negative or positive, were proven to have a lasting impact, even after the relationship had ended. This research is in support of existing research concerning the importance of the practitioner/probationer relationship which is characterised by the officer's enthusiasm, openness, warmth, empathy and respect for the offender (Andrews, 2011; Andrews & Bonta, 2010; Skeem, Eno Loudon, Polaschek, & Camp, 2007).

8.5.2.1 Barriers to engagement: ineffective relationships with YAOs

The results of this study also contribute to an understanding of what participants believed constitute negative or ineffective alliances. When young adults were asked to comment on what they felt created negative or ineffective relationships, they were unequivocal that they wanted officers who were gifted at creating a conversational space where they could express themselves; they also wanted officers who were non-judgmental, keen to listen and who were effective communicators. Most YAOs commented that the inability to express themselves was a significant barrier to engagement. YAOs also expressed that officers who were overly punitive and misused their authority were not perceived as legitimate or credible. Similarly, practitioners made known that a positive relationship with YAOs should be marked by flexibility (instead of rigidity) and genuineness (as opposed to being fake). Furthermore, practitioners explained that they found confrontational and punitive approaches were, in the main, unhelpful to the working alliance. Dargis and Koenigs (2018) conducted a model-based cluster analysis (MBCA) aimed at determining a range of personality traits within a group of over 2000 offenders. They identified subgroups with distinct psychological

characteristics to determine treatment variables. Of the six groups identified, one was characterised by low executive functioning. This is contextually relevant, given that low executive functioning (see chapter 2) is cited as a significant issue for young adults - particularly because they are considered to be still developing neurobiologically (Ogilvie, Stewart, Chan, & Shum, 2011; Loomis-Gustafan, 2017). This suggests that, within a treatment context, certain types of behaviour may be more conducive to particular types of personalities. For instance, Dargis and Koenigs (2018) suggested that a mindfulness-based approach would be most likely to work in counteracting executive functioning and regulating emotion and cognitive control. As noted by Barrett (2015; 2017) mindfulness, which involves the cultivation of compassion in a non-judgement environment, has proven to have a positive effect with young adult offenders and troubled youths. Teper and Inzlicht (2013) explain that mindfulness improves emotion regulation by improving executive control.

8.5.2.2 Punitive actions and a judgmental attitude

Both sets of participants expressed that being overly punitive or judgmental could negatively impact their relationships. One officer mentioned a case example where following an increase in alarming behaviours (involving association with negative peers and risk taking) a decision was taken to recall a YAO to custody. However, she later found it particularly difficult to re-engage the young adult after the event. Most of the practitioners felt that having clarity around boundaries made it easier to take enforcement actions - especially if the young adult felt their decision was fair. There was, however, no agreement between the groups regarding what constitutes fairness, although there was some concession about what they perceived as non-negotiable enforcement actions. For instance, both groups held that the commission of further serious offence was deserving of enforcement, including a recall to custody. Likewise, there was some broad understanding – but not agreement – about the behaviours likely to attract the use of discretion (such as minor breaches of a licence condition).

8.5.2.3 The fear of sanction

The fear of sanction emerged as a foremost barrier for YAOs who explained they often felt unable, and as a result, were unwilling to share pertinent information about routine activities and what was going on in their lives generally, with their supervising officer. According to YAOs, sharing certain information about their daily lives could cause adverse consequences for them which are likely to negatively impact their relationship with officers. As one YAO noted, just expressing that he feels stressed out could cause his officer to be concerned, which could trigger greater scrutiny and even restrictions on his freedom. One officer also recalled how having taken enforcement action and recalled a YAO, the YAO later refused to speak with her

on his release because he felt that her actions betrayed their relationship and, therefore, he could no longer trust her.

8.5.2.4 Lack of trust

This lack of trust in officers emerged as a significant issue for YAOs, most of whom saw it as a potential barrier to effective, and full, engagement. Officers also reported that trust, from and in offenders, was essential for the relationship to be seen as effective. This trust was understood and constructed within the analysis as functional rather than absolute. The analysis indicates that young adult offenders appeared to compartmentalise the trust they extended to officers along three primary themes. First, it appears they distinguished between trust in the individual officer as a person and trust in the officer as an agent of the state. Second, it appears YAOs made distinctions regarding the quality of trust (how much or to what degree). Finally, both young adults and probation officers appeared to have established a type of functional trust that allowed them to work collaboratively to realise the objective of supervision but not enough trust that would result in disappointment, should the officer's action (as an agent of the state) result in a negative event such as a recall to custody. For instance, young adult offenders indicated that they would not disclose anything they felt the agent of the state (the criminal justice system) would need to act on that could impact them negatively such as a safeguarding referral or enforcement of a breach of order or licence. They gave the impression that this was not about the officer as an individual, as they may still be considered trustworthy as a person but as an agent of the system, they could not be fully trusted due the obligations of the role. Practitioners also mentioned having to demonstrate some level of trustworthiness in order to secure, at least a surface level of confidence from YAOs, to gain the level of legitimacy necessary to execute their duties. This was understood to mean that trust was being observed between the two parties as a functional practicality rather than an absolute social reality (Lewis & Weigert, 1985).

This is noteworthy, given that the coercive nature of the officer/offender relationship is likely to influence how practitioners assess and use information gathered on offenders; a point most of the practitioners acknowledged. Equally, most offenders expressed being aware that the information they share is used to form assessments and actions, some of which may not be in their best personal interest. It seems this mutually shared understanding helped to shape the rules of engagement and the quality of trust within these involuntary relationships.

Conceptualising trust in this way seems consistent with a wider body of literature that explores how trust works in interpersonal relationships more generally (Lewis & Weigert, 1985; Rutter 2001; Rutter 2001;

Stroman, 1980). Lewis and Weigert (1985) suggest that there are three dimensions of trust: the cognitive, the emotional and behavioural. According to this, people decide (cognitively) whom and when to trust, and under what circumstances, whilst being aware of the emotional investment and risk involved, should trust be broken. This affective element of trust, situated within an emotional bond between parties in a relationship, creates a condition in which emotional investments can be made. Lewis and Weigert (1985) further suggest this might explain why betrayal of trust can engender outrage in the betrayed person: it strikes a blow at the heart of the relationship itself, not just at the content of the betrayal. The behavioural component of trust is established on a level of certainty that the trusted individual will act in the interest of the trusting person, despite some intrinsic uncertainty (Weber, Weber & Carter, 2003). From this viewpoint, to trust, is to act as if the uncertain future actions of the trusted person are certain. This is risky, but, as asserted by Luhmann (1979) and others (e.g. Ben-Ner, Putterman, 2001) trust is somewhat like a gamble; an inherently risky investment. Nonetheless, trust, according to Lewis and Weigert (1985) is an essential functional precondition for the possibility of society, in that, the only alternatives are "chaos and paralysing fear" (p. 968).

The sociology of trust (particularly the importance of interpersonal trust between workers and clients) has been explored in disciplines such as health and social care (Gilson, Palmer, & Schneider, 2005; Groenewegen, 2006) and within the business community more generally (Sako, 2006; Rutter, 2001). Trust has also been explored within criminology and is regarded within the discipline as a fundamental feature of the officer and offender relationship (Night, 2014; Rowe, & Soppitt, 2014; Knight, 2014; Killick 2006; Sharp 2001). Commenting on the emotional side of trust, Knight (2014, p.110) in her thesis on emotional work with offenders, explains that it is essential for practitioners to form close relationships with offenders within which trust is established. For this to be possible, Knight conjectured that both parties need to negotiate the emotional boundaries of their relationship, decide what information should be shared and the purpose for sharing. This is important, Knight noted, because the information shared can be used to shape individual agendas and/or actions. From her interviews with probation practitioners, Knight observed that whilst officers might trust offenders to carry out certain tasks with honesty, they might not trust them in the same way in terms of their potential to reoffend. Similarly, several YAOs noted that whilst they might find an officer sincere and trustworthy, they would not trust the officer not to initiate breach proceedings or to recall them to prison. However, despite this broad acknowledgement that trust is essential to the probationer and practitioner working alliance (Brown, & Völlm, 2016; Burnett, & McNeill, 2005) the type and quality of trust necessary to form desistance-enabling relationships seems unclear. Knight (2014) concluded, following her research with probation officers, that trust within the practitioner and probationer relationship is 'a broad and fluid concept'. Mearns and Thorne (2008) also warn that the establishment of trust in a relationship is a delicate and complex process. Moreover, it appears the degree of trust necessary for these relationships to work effectively has

not been explored in great detail within criminology. As indicated above, research has solidified the significance of trust within the offender and practitioner relationship. Trust has been constructed as one of three primary components of a good quality alliance between a probationer and a probation practitioner. According to Florsheim, Shotorbani and Guest-Warmick (2000), agreement between practitioners and probationers regarding task development and completion and a trusting and respectful relationship are the bedrock of the case management ideal. However, the type, degree and function of trust have not previously been explored exclusively with young adult offenders or practitioners working with young adult offenders in probation. Although trust in a probation context has been explored more generally (see for example Charlotte Knight's work on emotional work with offenders), this study appears to be the only study to explore how trust works on a granular level within this context.

8.5.3. Implication for practice

A primary aim of any rehabilitative intervention is to reduce the likelihood of further re-offending, which has, for some time, been a key performance indicator for the probation service. This study sits in concert with other studies showing a connection between relational trust and engagement and an intervention outcome. Building trust is essential in negotiating the practical and emotional boundaries of the offender and practitioner relationship (Knight, 2014); enables disclosure from offenders believed to be critical in accurate risk assessment and management (Kemshall 2008, Kemshall 2010), and creates a conducive platform for offence modification interventions. This study provides some insights into the sociology and function of trust in building engaging relationships with young adult offenders that may hold some implication for practice. Given its importance within the working alliance, the probation service should further explore how trust is established and how it functions, and use the findings to enhance practitioners' knowledge and skills.

8.6. Gender, race and engagement (Young Adults' and Offender Managers' perspectives)

The issues of gender and race having perceptible influence on engagement with young adult offenders emerged as noteworthy themes within the study and are discussed below.

8.6.1 Gender and engagement

Both sets of participants expressed the sentiment that gender 'mattered' to the overall relationship but more so to the quality of engagement. The majority of available 'gender in probation' studies appear to focus on the risk posed by male offenders and how female officers navigate the challenges of managing, mainly high-risk, male offenders (Dominelli, 1991; Nash, 1995; Worrall, 1990; 1996; Wright & Kemshall, 1994; Petrillo,

2007). Accordingly, it is proposed that a gendered perspective in case management can be influenced by the fact that women are often victims of male violence (Petrillo, 2007). However, while a number of the YAOs in the sample had committed violent offences, and some were assessed as posing a high risk of serious harm, only one had offended against a female (in a domestic setting): the majority had perpetrated offences against peers. This may be because most of the YAOs in the sample were gang nominals.

However, the findings support a previous study by Petrillo (2007) who conducted a gender-related study amongst female probation officers in London, Petrillo found that female officers were anxious about working with young men who committed certain types of violent and sexual offences. Practitioners (most of whom were female), agreed that whilst the gender of the officer could serve to mitigate certain interpersonal challenges, it could also serve to heighten certain relational tensions. Several officers put forward that from their experience of practice, young adult males who were perpetrators of domestic violence, for example, were more likely to present as difficult when working with a female officer. As such, practitioners argued that gender mattered more depending on the offence that the young adult male had committed. Furthermore, practitioners also suggested that gender mattered more in circumstances where officers were younger or had a youthful appearance. Being young or having a youthful look could, as one practitioner described, end up with the YAO 'taking a fancy to the OM because they look young, which has happened to me, because they think I am the same age group as them'. A study by Walsh (1984) revealed that female probation officers were more lenient with sex offenders than their male colleagues and offered less severe sentencing proposals in their report recommendation to courts. Whether this leniency at report stage transcended into case management was not explored in this study and may require further exploration. However, the study shows that aside from certain operational practicalities, female officers were able to build good working alliances with YAOs despite their index offence.

This study shows that the gender of the officer was perceived as a factor that could potentially enhance rather than hinder engagement with YAOs. Most of the practitioners believed that female officers brought certain feminine qualities, perspectives, attributes, experiences and understanding to supervision, that made them ideal candidates for working with young adult men. Male officers were perceived as more authoritarian by both sets of participants. One officer remarked that if she was to go on annual leave, the young adults on her caseload would request not to have a male officer in her absence. The majority of YAOs also expressed a preference for working with female officers, citing them to be more caring, less authoritarian and more understanding. There was also a shared perception amongst both groups of participants that male practitioners were more controlling than their female counterparts. The majority of young adults disclosed that they found it easier to speak with females, and that they found females were more motherly.

These results are also consistent with Petrillo's (2007) assertion that offenders compared their relationship with a female officer to significant women in their lives. As one officer put it, "YAOs have a moral code amongst them that they would not speak to a female in certain ways". Whilst this extrapolation may suggest that females do better in engaging with male offenders because of feminine qualities, Mawby and Worrall (2013) offer an alternative explanation. They contend that contrary to popular wisdom (which suggests that women perform better in an environment where they can draw on their caring and nurturing instinct) women actually work well in conditions where structured, organised, methodical and valued approaches are required (p, 135). Knight (2007) contends that probation, like most other health and social care public sector organisations, continues to attract more females. The reason, as argued by Knight, is that despite the professed rhetoric of 'punishment and control', probation is seen by many as a service that 'helps people', and that this perception remains a stronger influencing factor for women than men in making a vocational choice.

Overall, participants appeared to see gender as serving a practical case management function. It was suggested, for example, that a female officer could work better with a vulnerable female who, for instance, had experienced domestic abuse. Also, female officers may work better with some males who lack appropriate male role models in their lives and may find it difficult to relate to males. It is of note that only two of the YAOs had grown up with their fathers. The emergence of gender serving a practical case management function appears to be a proven operational strategy (Stout, 1973). However, practitioners pointed out that, whilst female offenders often have a choice of male or female officer, male offenders do not.

8.6.2 Race and engagement

Although participants presented as conflicted regarding the precise role that race plays in the engagement process, there was a general concession in acknowledging its relevance. This conflict was not surprising given the probation service's history in being aware of, and engaging with, issues of race (Lewis, Raynor, Smith & Ali Wardak, 2006). As Lewis et al. (2006) assert, the probation service's response to race cannot be wholly disentangled from the country and culture in which the service has evolved. As such, issues of disproportionality, discrimination and unequal treatment experienced by minority ethnic groups may be intricately rooted in colonisation and imperialism (p, 4). Kendi (2017) agrees that occurrences of racial inequalities in many western regions (e.g. the USA and the UK) are likely to have their influences in historical discriminatory policies. Consequently, manifestations of prejudices in the administration of justice within these democracies are but natural symptoms of these wider policy initiatives.

In a related evaluation of the American criminal justice system, Tonry (2010) argues that the disproportionate incarceration of black Americans (which is about five to seven times higher than those for white Americans) evolves from decisions to focus attention on policing and arrest in black neighbourhoods, concentrating on drugs blacks sell, and places where they sell them. Tonry (2010) further points out that these decisions and subsequent manifest behaviours are shaped by a combination of 'legislative and executive policy choices that systematically treat black offenders differently, and more harshly than their white counterparts' (p183). More recent US-based analysis indicates that these disparities remain pervasive (Schleiden, Soloski, Milstead, & Rhynehart, 2019). Similar extrapolations have been made of the criminal justice system in the UK (Crow, 1987; Reiner, 1989; Shallice & Gordon, 1990). Furthermore, these unequal treatments remain, despite widespread societal disapproval, changing normative values and even legislation (Ross, Lypson & Kumagai, 2012; Ahmad & Bradby, 2008; Qureshi, 2007; Bechtold, Monahan & Chauffman, 2015). The recent report by Lord Lammy (Lammy, 2018) stressed that notions of unfair treatment towards BAME offenders remains a real challenge for criminal justice agencies, including the probation services. However, research indicates that whilst BAME offenders are generally wary of the criminal justice system, and its agencies, they believed probation staff were likely to treat them more impartially than staff from other criminal justice agencies, such as the police (Calverely, Cloe, Kaur, Lewis and Raynor, 2004; Calverley, Cole, Kaur, Lewis, Raynor, Sadeghi, and & Wardak, 2006). This antipathy, towards the police in particular, surfaced as a strong and emotive theme amongst the young adult participants and was also referenced by a number of practitioners. However, there were recurring comments that inferred race as being a symbol of inclusivity and professionalism, as well as a representation of ingroup biases.

8.6.2.1 Race as a symbol of inclusivity and professionalism

Most young adults expressed no opposition or serious concerns about being supervised by an officer from another ethnic group. This result concords with conclusions from the study by Calverely et al., (2004), who observed that only a third of Black and Asian offenders showed a desire to be supervised by someone from the same ethnic background as themselves. Most YAOs were of the opinion that as professionals, probation officers have a moral imperative, and the requisite training to be inclusive and impartial. More poignantly, this discovery is consistent with the findings of Calverely et al., (2004), that participants expected probation staff to treat them fairly, both as individuals and as 'normal people'.

8.6.2.2 Race as a representation of ingroup bias

Most participants, regardless of ethnicity, asserted that race created a real or perceived sense that being of the same race makes it easier to understand each other. This notion of 'understand each other' was used again and again by participants in a cognitive sense to imply that being of the same race made it easier to comprehend the YAO, including their socio-economic background. Notably this interpretation of 'knowing' was regularly linked to the officer's capacity to relate to, and ultimately empathise with, the YAO. For instance, some BAME YAOs argue that they would not feel comfortable in describing certain life situations to a white officer because they felt that officers from white backgrounds would not understand their plight. According to these YAOs, a lack of understanding would not only impact the officer's ability to relate but meant that the officer would also be less empathetic. Conversely, they perceived that officers of the same race were more likely to be empathetic. As one YAO submitted, officers of the same race would naturally want to see a young man of the same race do well. This was despite the fact that the officers, although BAME, were often from different ethnic cultures. For instance, a YAO from a Black British African culture still felt that an officer from a Black British Caribbean background would understand him better. Some officers, mainly those from BAME backgrounds, expressed similar views to the BAME YAOs. While a few white officers acknowledged that cultural competence was important to the engagement process, they suggested that any shortfall in cultural awareness could be mitigated by learning about YAOs from different cultural backgrounds. This presumed association between race congruence and empathy may hold particular implications for engagement with YAOs for a number of reasons. For one, practitioners within the sample perceived YAOs as a challenging group to engage with and manage, often presenting with complex personal issues and difficult life experiences. For instance, practitioners spoke of noting significant degrees of lifestyle complexities stemming from variables such as traumatic life events, dysfunctional families and negative peer influences. Although YAOs did not use the term trauma, almost all alluded to witnessing or experiencing savage acts of violence, some of which involved the demise of close friends and loved ones. Furthermore, the majority were, themselves, preparators of grievous acts of violence against other young men. Overall, the result indicates that, while race did not appear to be a significant barrier for supervision, it may be a potential barrier to effectively engaging YAOs.

It was therefore not surprising that empathy was identified by both sets of participants as a key skill for working with this group. Behavioural psychologist, Staub (1974; 2013) suggested that, ordinarily, for a variety of reasons, people are motivated to help others improve negative experiences and alleviate suffering where possible. Although empathy for others is cited as a crucial, intrinsic motivator for helping (Batson, 1986; Fultz, Batson, Fortenbach, McCarthy, & Varney, 1986; Batson, Sager, Garst, Kang, M., Rubchinsky, & Dawson, 1997), this predisposition to care for and help others can be mitigated by a number of variables. Evidence

suggests that some people may be less motivated to care about those who are not like them, and in such cases, empathetic responses are rare and fragile (Cikara, Bruneau, & Saxe, 2011).

Furthermore, evidence suggests that a reduced empathetic response to 'outgroup' pain is strongly correlated to higher implicit racial bias (Avenanti, Sirigu, & Aglioti, 2010; Azevedo, Macaluso, Avenanti, Santangelo, Cazzato, & Aglioti, 2013). Advancement in cognitive science has helped to improve understanding of the neuroscience of empathy. Some of this research shows that the suffering of 'outgroup members' may elicit reduced empathetic responses compared to ingroup members' suffering (Cikara, Bruneau, & Saxe, 2011; Xu, Zuo, Wang, & Han, 2009). Researchers propose that there is a physiological and neural explanation for why some people may show dampened or absent neural and physiological responses to the plights of 'outgroup' members (Cuddy, Rock, & Norton, 2007). These academics argue that:

- In-group biases or showing a lack of empathy for those not like us, correlates to neural mechanisms in the brain network, which underlies how we divide the world into an 'us' versus 'them' binary (Molenbergh, 2013).
- Lack of intergroup empathy is intricately linked to, and is perhaps at the heart of, the 'them and us divide' (Batson & Ahmad, 2009; Luo, Li, Ma, Zhang, Rao & Han, 2015).
- Reduced empathetic responses are directly linked to diminished helping responses (Cikara, Bruneau, & Saxe, 2011; Cuddy, Rock, & Norton, 2007; Mathur, Harada, Lipke, & Chiao, 2010).
- Reduced empathetic resonance in response to outgroup pain is correlated with higher implicit racial bias (Azevedo, Macaluso, Avenanti, Santangelo, Cazzato, & Aglioti, 2013; Avenanti, Sirigu, & Aglioti, 2010; Chiao, & Mathur, 2010).

Ciakara and colleagues (Ciakara et al., 2011) submit that by just being a member of another group, one is likely to elicit diminished perceptions of the suffering of others, and a failure to generate the appropriate physiological and affective empathetic responses. The converse of this submission is that it would be more instinctive to elicit the appropriate physiological and affective empathetic responses in a same race context. This may account for why there appeared to have been a natural tendency by some participants to believe an officer of the same race would better understand the plights and circumstances of a YAO of similar race. Correspondingly, cognitive behaviourism, a central pillar of the rehabilitative ideal and the desistance paradigm, advocates that behaviours are shaped by one's thinking and feelings. It is therefore arguable that if one's thinking shapes his or her behaviour, this is likely to have a material impact on engagement. Yet, despite this mutually held view of same group congruence, there was no evidence to suggest that white officers, for example, had less engaging relationships with black YAOs, or vice versa.

What emerged as more pertinent from the result is the conceptualisation of race by participants as a marker of inclusivity and professionalism. Essentially, both groups of participants felt that if an officer was professional and experienced, race should not matter as it would serve as a benchmark of their professional integrity and commitment to inclusivity. In this regard, participants argue that professionalism trumps race. This suggests that, despite the perceived congruence of being from the same race, when it comes to the actual administration of the work, YAOs believed that they would be treated fairly, and practitioners believe that race should not impact how they treat an offender.

8.6.3 Practice and research implications: gender and race

The aforementioned suggestion that female offenders are more likely to have a choice of being managed by a male or female practitioner is consistent with current staffing profiles. Annison (2007) asserts that since 1993, there have been more women than men in the probation service, an assertion validated by the current staffing record (355 males to 1015 females). This 'feminization' of probation, according to Mawby and Worrall (2013), which has been steadily occurring over the last 20 years, marks a shift from what was previously a male-dominated profession. Drawing on the work of Heidensohn (1992), Mawby and Worrall (2013) made the point that women's involvement with men in criminal justice takes into account more than just men's criminalisation; they also address their socialisation and civilisation. Arguably, it is the socialisation and civilisation aspects of YAOs that are most amenable to engagement. Practitioners alluded to the added complexities of working with YAOs and the need to bring order to chaotic lives. Practitioners also declared that they often had to 'come down to the YAO's level' in order to understand and communicate effectively with them. This may hold some case management implications when working with young adult offenders. As an organisation, the NPS may need to consider any specific qualities or techniques that female officers bring to the role that may be beneficial in engaging this cohort of offenders and focus on these when training with male officers. Likewise, perceptions of male officers being more challenging and authoritarian may require further research to see if this claim is actually a practice reality.

Available studies regarding race in the probation service appear to be concerned with the administration of justice rather than engagement with offenders (e.g. Calverley, Cole, Kaur, Lewis, Raynor, Sadeghi, Smith, Vanstone, 2006). This research suggests that perceptions of same-race congruence may improve feelings of being understood and could potentially play a role in engagement with some YAOs. However, this is an under-researched area with young adults: no prior research was found that addresses how perceptions of in-group bias might impact engagement with young adult offenders, the majority of whom are BAME. It seemed that a perception of similar race may create an impression of relatability that could serve to augment the

engagement process with same race officers, but equally may present extra challenges with officers from other ethnic groups. Yet, it appears that professionalism may mitigate the potential benefit of same-race or cross-race case management, hence the experience and skills of the officer may be more important when engaging YAOs.

8.7 Overall contribution to knowledge and practice

Whilst conducting this research I have tried to listen to the lived experiences of young adult offenders and probation practitioners directly involved in supervising young adults in probation. This type of listening is essential in order to better understand engagement. However, it would not be coherent with the limits of qualitative research and a commitment to pluralism and practice, to theorise and compose a set of guidelines for effective probation practice based solely on 30 interviews, regardless of the strength of analysis. Furthermore, the findings of this study and its unique contribution to knowledge and practice should not be disentangled from an evolving meaning-making process. However, the literature examining engagement with young adult offenders seems fairly limited and research comparing and contrasting the perspective of practitioners and young adult offenders appears to be absent altogether. This study appears to be the first of its kind to systematically explore the perspectives of practitioners and probationers in a probation context. It contributes to both the research and practice literature by empirically exploring what constitutes effective engagement from the perspectives of those who work with young adult offenders, and young adult offenders themselves. What is emerging from the limited existing research and practice literature is that young adults within the criminal justice system require a tailored approach to engagement and treatment. This research supports the claim that young adults can be considered as a unique offending group and that taking a customised approach in engaging them should be encouraged in practice. The findings from this study sit in concert with existing case management (core correctional practice) literature about the skills required to engage offenders generally. Furthermore, this study shows that these putative core correctional skills (operative with the general offender population) if correctly delivered, are likely to be effective when engaging YAOs. In addition, the study also suggests that these skills are likely to work better if they are delivered by officers possessing particular characteristics and tailored to account for issues such as YAO's immaturity and experience of trauma.

In accord with the practice and research literature, this study highlights the essentiality of positive therapeutic alliances between YAOs and their supervising officers. It shows that whilst young adult males are keen to

have these relationships, both practitioners and YAOs agree that these therapeutic alliances must be built on perceptions of trust and 'family-like' connections between practitioners and the young adults they are supervising. The study also introduces the concept of functional versus absolute trust to the therapeutic space. The YAOs in particular, described a trust that is necessary for every day rapport but stops short of complete honesty with their supervising officer due the fear of enforcement.

The research suggests that a catalogue of informal knowledge based on young adult offenders' lived experiences and perspective of engagement, may be fundamental to effectively engaging with this group and should possibly form part of a catalogue of the legitimate knowledge required to work with young adult offenders. The research raises questions about how maturity is understood amongst probation professionals and advocates that the prevailing maturity/immaturity binary may be unhelpful in the engagement process because young adults' perception of maturity does not comport with that of their officers.

Penultimately, the research suggests that whilst time, both in length and quality, may be important when engaging young adult offenders, how time is operationalised may raise tensions. Officers are keen to have more contact time whilst young adults are desirous of more quality time. Finally, the research suggests that race and gender are important variables that should be carefully considered when engaging young adult offenders. Same-race alliances may be susceptible to 'ingroup' bias whilst cross-race alliances may test professionalism. The findings suggest that there is a general preference amongst young adult offenders to be supervised by female officers and highlight the functional benefits of gender within the case management sphere.

8.8 Impact on practice to date: taking the research forward

The only literature on the subject to date is a brief guide on the effective approaches with young adults published in 2015 (Clinks, 2015). The guide was written following consultation with professionals and young adult offenders and offered practitioners some practice advice on how to work with this cohort. Currently, the National Probation Service (NPS) does not have a model for working with young adult offenders. The approach previously taken by the London division of the Community Rehabilitation Company is now defunct. The number of YAOs in the NPS is set to increase significantly with the pending reunification of offender management in the NPS and CRC, making the need for a unique engagement approach even more urgent. Undoubtedly, having an established engagement model specific to young adult offenders would be of significant benefit to the reunited service, as well as the Youth Offending Service - who also have YAOs on its caseload. This is particularly so, given the evidence cited in chapter one: that young adult offenders

are disproportionately overrepresented in the CJS, as well as the absence of an established engagement method. The author, along with his colleagues, Patsy Wolliston and Koreen Logie have designed an engagement and transition model for practitioners to be used when working with young adult offenders in transition from the Youth Offering Service to Probation (Beckford, Wolliston & Logie, 2019). This programme focuses on a structured approach to engaging YAOs and, in 2019, was piloted in two local Boroughs: Lewisham and Southwark. The young adult transition programme is also used to engage with those YAOs who were sentenced on or close to their 18th birthdays and who were sent directly to probation from court. The author has also redesigned a maturity assessment guide for court staff to use when assessing young adult offenders at the pre-sentence report stage.

8.9 Policy and practice implications and recommendations

Policy formation, including criminal justice policies, is reasoned to be evidence-based (Naughton, 2005; Sanderson, 2002; Stevens, 2007). However, it is suggested that evidence-based approaches often fail to compete successfully with the affective approaches to law and order policies because they resonate more with the public (Freiberg, & Carson, 2010). Besides, although there is an established history of social research informing policy development (Caplan, 1975; Hedges & Waddington, 1993; Merton, 1949; Sabatier, 1987), how social science research informs policy making is not always straightforward. Humes and Bryce (2001) submit that the evidence-based process (from conception to consultation, development and implementation) is often 'messy'. Besides, evidence suggests that the majority of well-intended research recommendations are relegated to library catalogues and data banks (Rich, 2018). It is therefore suggested that a certain level of deliberateness and strategic thinking is necessary to transform research evidence and recommendations into policy development (Schlager, 1995; Schlager, & Blomquist, 1996). From this strategic standpoint, this research, in the first instance, stands in solidarity with the aforementioned House of Commons Justice Committee (2016) report which laid out a blueprint for step changes in policy to include:

- acknowledging the developmental status of YAOs
- considering new approaches to intervention
- developing specialist training for staff who work with young adult offenders
- broadening the catalogue of promising young adult specific programmes and evaluating them

Beyond solidarity, there are several policy and practice implications and recommendations that can be derived from this research, which arose as salient themes in equipping practitioners to effectively engage young adult offenders:

1. The operationalisation of personal reflection within a limited reflective space in probation
2. The need to rethink how practitioners are recruited and trained to develop and retain the essential competencies to effectively engage young adults
3. Mending the gap between practice and academia - including the need for a black criminology
4. The need to accumulate and apply evidence around maturity and embed it into the supervisory relationship
5. The function and operationalisation of trust within the supervisory relationship

Knowledge about maturity should influence policy and practice

The study highlights a number of potential blind spots in the available academic knowledge, which has implications for both the competencies staff require to work with young adult offenders and the development of wider policy and practice. With a few anomalies (e.g. children aged 0-9) age-related criminal justice legislations and justice processing are traditionally dichotomised between children and young people, those aged 10 to 17 and adults, aged 18 and over (Farrington, Loeber & Howell, 2012). Consequently, young adult offenders are dealt with in the same manner as adults on or about their 18th birthday, despite evidence that they are still immature in many of the indicators of adulthood (Scott & Steinberg, 2008). However, as noted by Cauffman and Steinberg (2000) because maturity deficits can have a material impact on adolescence judgment and culpability, greater knowledge and understanding of maturity and its function should be included in the formation of criminal justice policy and effective practice. Besides, there is official acknowledgement that current YAOs' related criminal justice policies do not adequately consider or address the unique needs of this group, and as such urgent step changes are required (House of Commons Justice Committee, 2016). The research identified that there is a knowledge gap in specific young adult awareness around maturity and points to the growing body of evidence on maturity, its impact on decision making, culpability and potentially the supervisory relationship. Although the probation service is now mandated to consider maturity in its assessment of offenders at the court stage, when it comes to engagement this seems to be left down to good practice. The research evidence suggests that the importance maturity plays in young offenders' lives is central and suggests that this information should be better considered, incorporated and enshrined in both policy and practice within the criminal justice system.

Young adult specific training and specialism

The management of young adults is currently not a structured specialism within probation. Also, the competencies necessary to engage young adults appear to require further research and structured implementation. The research raises several areas where specific training and more research is required (e.g. maturity, trauma, trust and street knowledge). Presently, probation training is generic, and specific

knowledge and skills to work with young adult offenders are generally only driven by personal interest often developed via self-directed learning. The research proposes that working with young adult offenders should be a specific training focus made up of modules that include subjects such as trauma and maturity. Moreover, the probation service should consider re-establishing young adult teams as specialist units and develop bespoke training, either as a mandatory module in the current training curriculum, or a continuous development pathway.

Mending the gap between practice and academia.

This research highlights an apparent gap between practice and academia. Although there are practitioners who have transitioned to academia and have used their knowledge to influence research, only a few work in both disciplines. Moreover, initiatives such as the operationalising of research and lecture series, which formerly bridged that gap by inviting academics to share research directly with practitioners, has now become defunct. Likewise, the prior training model that allowed practitioners with suitable academic qualifications to be seconded to university faculties whilst still retaining practitioner status no longer exists. The service would do well to re-establish the defunct operationalising research and lecture series as a viable means of bridging the gap between academia and practice and forge closer working alliances with local universities.

More Black Criminology within practice and policy

This research also raises issues regarding the place and purpose of a black criminology in influencing criminal justice policy and practice. The Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement and related world events such as the death of the African American man (George Floyd) at the hands of the police, and the subsequent protests across many countries, has highlighted new concerns in an age-old debate about racial inequalities in criminal justice. Freiberg, and Carson (2010) reasoned that because debates about criminal justice are played out in broader arenas, penal reforms should take into account the emotions people feel in the face of perceived injustice. To this end, effective criminal justice policy formation should ideally account for changes in public 'mood' or emotions and demonstrate sensitivity to changes in political and societal beliefs. Freiberg and Carson based their reasoning on the logic that evidence-based -by itself- is not likely to be the primary basis of policy outcomes. They recommend (and I agree) that the creation and effective implementation of policy requires wide-ranging engagement and dialogue with concerned and affected parties. This, arguably, necessitates a different kind of approach for evidence-based policy developments. It has also been argued that the means by which society develops a response to crime or any other social problem is subject to a variety of social, cultural, and political dynamics. Therefore, both the means and the energy by which we respond to some crime problems can be prejudiced by these lenses, including that of race (Mauer, 2004).

According to Mauer (2004) an analysis of the race determinants of criminal justice policy is essential to understand racial inequities. Using drug policy as a point of reference, Mauer (2004) posits that policy choices in law enforcement, prosecution, and sentencing are formulated from theorising that pathologizes black as a problem. Consequently, the means by which the problem is addressed and the subsequent punitiveness of the approach applied, serve to worsen the inequalities black people face.

This research raises awareness around the need for a more structured coherent approach of a black criminology in filling a void in the formation of criminal justice policy. Drawing on my own training experience and knowledge of the current learning and development platform, I am aware that the notion of a black criminology is not a structured component within the current training curriculum, or on-the-job training packages. This is necessary, given the disproportionate number of Black individuals within the Criminal Justice System in general, and the Black young adult cohort in particular. The government should consider how to advance the scholarship within the UK given the noticeable deficit (Parmar, 2017). More specifically, a short course could be introduced as a fixed module within the Professional Qualification in Probation (PQiP) qualification.

Reflection in a probation space

The operationalisation of personal reflection within a limited reflective space in probation emerged from my own private reflection throughout the research process. Admittedly, in probation, reflection and reflective practices are positively celebrated and encouraged. However, the study highlights a practical realism mentioned by several practitioners who felt the 'daily grind' of probation work allowed limited capacity for reflection on practice. Mawby and Worrall (2011) in their study of probation culture, also found that probation workers described their work as stressful; marked by long hours, worries over workloads and anxiety associated with balancing contact time with offenders in addition to the demands of completing paperwork, and keeping computer systems updated.

Although reflective practice is currently taught as part of the current curriculum and is recognised by practitioners as important and necessary, in the 'daily grind' the ability to reflect-on-action is known to be challenging, due in part, to a lack of space and time (Gregory, 2007). Moreover, how to reflect on or during practice, is not taught; reflective practice training focusses on the what, not the how. The how of reflection may require further disentangling and systemising to include ideas and skills that have evolved over time from on the job practice (Smith, 2005).

Functionalising Trust

This thesis has highlighted the importance of trust within the therapeutic alliance more generally, and more specifically the different perceptions of trust between practitioners and probationers. The novel concept of functional versus absolute trust was coined to explain these divergent insights. This aspect of trust, it is believed, has not been formally explored in a practice context although it appears to be a recognised lived reality. How trust is conceptualised may impact on engagement or perceptions of engagement, particularly if officers have to enforce infringement of an order or licence. To use an example cited earlier, one officer commented on how difficult it was to rebuild her relationship with a young adult after she had recalled him to prison. If, as argued, trust requires honest and open conversations, how to account for this anomaly may require a more structured and reasoned approach. The probation service should therefore consider how this may be explored in more detail and incorporated into current training or continuous development.

8.10 Research limitations

Although the research has many strengths there are undeniably some limitations that may have impacted the findings and those limitations need to be acknowledged when evaluating the claims made in the study.

Locality

There were practical constraints, including time and resources, that necessitated only carrying out research in London. Although the city provides a unique setting to conduct social research, limiting data collection to its boundaries meant that the findings are shaped by its socio-economic, cultural and demographic characteristics. Further large-scale quantitative studies and qualitative research outside of London would aid the understanding of this area and also allow for research findings to be generalised to other probation divisions.

Ethnicity

As the most ethnologically diverse division, it was felt that carrying out research in London would facilitate the recruitment of a diverse cross-section of participants. Due to practical constraints not all of the 32 boroughs within the London division were represented. The notable predominance of young adults from Black Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities was indicative of an overrepresentation within the CJS. However, white working-class boys, particularly those from Gypsy Roma and travellers' communities were absent or underrepresented. This group could have provided pertinent data for analysis and may have generated different views on engagement. Furthermore, it would have been informative to include participants from other parts of England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

Sample size and complexity

Although efforts were made to select a wide range of staff and offenders, the study was limited by those who were willing to participate: e.g. 13 of the 15 practitioners were female. Similarly, the majority of YAOs were from Black British backgrounds and most were involved in serious group offending. Even though a number of pertinent themes emerged, it is likely that the extrapolations from the study cannot be generalised to other young adult offenders and staff.

Gender

All participants in the young adult cohort were young adult males. However, it would have been informative to include female offenders and service users who have transitioned and how this differs from young adult male offenders.

Class

Although the 30 interviews conducted with 15 young adults and 15 practitioners and participants provided very rich data on engagement with young adult offenders, it is important to note that the sample, by design, only included young adults and practitioners with a specific profile. Whilst the design facilitated participants from all social class, class status was not a requisite criterion. All practitioners were qualified probation officers and by virtue of their educational attainment and position in the labour market would be classified as middle class. It emerged throughout the study that all the young adult participants occupied similar disadvantaged position and could potentially be classified as from the 'underclass'. They had basic educational attainments, and limited social and economic capital. For example, only one of the 15 was in full-time employment, and none had a university qualification. It may have been helpful to interview participants from more privileged backgrounds and higher achievers.

Methodology

Thematic analysis is a flexible method and I focussed on analysing emerging themes. Data for the study were produced via a qualitative approach reliant largely on eliciting stories from young adult offenders and probation practitioners, who although willing and consenting agents, are to some degree institutionalised and may not be regarded as wholly reliable witnesses. A selective purposive sampling approach was chosen to generate a deeper understanding of engagement with young adult offenders, located in practitioners' and young adults' experience of supervision. Therefore, my aim was more about highlighting relevant aspects of

engagement and less about generalisability. Nonetheless, it is likely that the research, through its findings, might augment existing qualitative accounts of engagement with young adult offenders that is reflective of the reality of a wider cohort of young adult offenders.

8.11 Suggestion for future research

The literature on young adult offending appears to be sparse. Even more scarce are studies that focus specifically on engagement with this cohort of offenders. Both the research literature and the effective practice literature could benefit from further research that explores engagement with young adult offenders in a number of areas. What we know about young adult offenders and their needs are, in the main, informed by established criminological, psychological and sociological literature, as well as 'what works' (mainly cognitive behavioural) research and the desistance literature. This study suggests that an informal body of anecdotal knowledge, based on the views of young adult offenders and their daily social interactions may serve to improve our understanding of young offending adults. However, this pool of knowledge does not appear to be accounted for in the current catalogue of research or practice literature. Therefore, further exploration in this area may be beneficial. Research focusing on capturing young adult offenders' perceptions of supervision may also prove useful to practice and policies relating to the management of young adult offenders. The research raises the awareness that not much is known about the relationship variables that work with young adults and as such, more research about the quality of the relationship is required and recommended.

Trauma emerged as a significant issue for both young adult offenders and practitioners in this study. This study infers that young adult offenders have had multiple experiences of trauma. Staff noted that there was a lack of general information and an absence of a trauma-informed approach and/or training opportunities: yet, only one participant reported having completed trauma-informed training. Current evidence indicates that trauma is prevalent amongst this cohort of offenders (Eitle, & Turner, 2002; Williams, Cordon, Mewse, Tonks & Crispin, 2010). The probation service should commission research to study the impact of trauma on YAOs and to implement trauma-informed training as standard training for those working with young adult offenders.

Staff skills, and characteristics, are important when trying to engage offenders in the catalogue of rehabilitative interventions believed to support desistance (Birdgden, 2004; Durnescu, 2012; Ward, 2008) and this research supports this claim. Whilst both staff skills and personal characteristics emerged as

significant to the engagement process it is unclear from the literature if the pertinent staff characteristics are innate or can be cultivated? If they are innate, what competencies are focussed on with staff who wish to work with young adult offenders may be crucial. Furthermore, how can these characteristics be effectively measured? If they are not innate, then the probation service would do well to research how such traits can be developed. Either way, further research on staff characteristics may prove useful in informing future work with young adult offenders as well as to inform recruitment of offender management staff.

Experience and use of authority

The use of authority emerged as an essential skill when working with young adult offenders. It was noteworthy that one officer in her reflection on the use of authority noted that her age, youthful appearance and limited experience of service, made it more challenging for her, and more essential to establish clear lines of authority in her work with YAOs. The research highlights the importance of the appropriate use of authority which is largely supported by the wider pool of effective practice research. It could be assumed that this comes with time, practice and experience or it may be indicative of different training that officers might have had which then impacted on their different approaches to supervision. A recent internal analysis (Wilson, 2020) shows that a significant amount of the current probation staff has less than five years' experience. It is also acknowledged that probation practitioner's training has experienced significant changes in the past decade (Aldridge, 1999; Gregory, 2007; Nellis, 2003; Treadwell, 2006) which has given rise to concerns around de-professionalisation (Aldridge, 1999; Annison, Eadie, & Knight, 2008). Treadwell (2006) notes, for example, that whilst the intention of probation training was not to create an obedient 'enforcement' driven mindset, some trainees acknowledge adopting that approach, which Treadwell attributes in part to a culture of enforcement within the organisation. Practitioners spoke throughout about the tensions between national standards and the use of discretion and their struggle to find a balance with their use of authority. Given the imperatives of national standard enforcement within a target-driven culture and the managements of risk, it may be tempting for an officer to lean towards an overuse of authority. Practitioners also alluded to the fear of a serious offence occurring and the likelihood they may be found blameworthy as a result of not enforcing their authority. Nelis (2001) alludes to the managerialist pressure of the organisation as a recognisable tension between training and practice, whilst Annison, Eadie, and Knight, (2008) questioned if the departure from previous social work-oriented training was a deliberate attempt to introduce a 'new breed' of officer: more versed in control than care.

Also, of relevance is the evidence from current recruitment campaigns, which show that the majority of intake on the Professional Qualification in probation pathway (PQIP) are mainly young females. It is likely that this

may create tensions with young adult offenders who may see their officers as peers rather than authority figures. This may then require officers to develop resilience over time through experience. Knight and Stout (2009) articulate nuances between knowledge acquisition and practice consolidation; noting that practice is designed to consolidate theory but the skills to operationalise theory into practice is often specialised and targeted to work with particular groups of offenders. Whether or not the current curriculum in conjunction with a managerialist culture in a risk conscious society has any bearing on an officer's approach to their use of authority, is of relevance to the analysis and requires further exploration in future research.

8.12 Some final reflections: The challenges of being an insider

My relationship to the research as 'an insider' is undeniable. I was a probation practice manager and the participants (upon which this study has been based) were service users and colleagues, some of whom (practitioners) I had known from years in the service. A researcher being part of the social group that they are investigating is not uncommon within qualitative research (Breen, 2007; Bonner & Tilehurst, 2002; Dwyer, & Buckle, 2009; Ganga & Scott 2006; Unluer, 2012). However, the role of an insider researcher has often been regarded as potentially problematic; the researcher is seen as susceptible to personal biases, which can negatively affect the research outcome (Rooney 2005). This 'insiderness', according to Mercer (2007) has been further problematised within traditional research literature by suggestions that insiders are not well supported in their attempts to deal with the ethical and methodological challenges of 'insiderness'. I was aware of these challenges from the onset, and at times moderately anxious about the tensions my position as an insider held within this research: an academic researcher, practice manager and colleague. Furthermore, I was also aware of how my insider status vacillated at various points during the study as I interacted with participants and navigated organisational boundaries in order to be ethically prudent, reflective and responsible (Allen, 2004; Ganga and Scott,2006). Nonetheless, being an insider was beneficial in many ways, without being an insider it is doubtful whether this research could have been conducted during a period of much uncertainty and change in probation. It was also important to remain pragmatic about the inherent challenges of operationalising reflectivity in a front-line managerial role whilst straddling the lines between being a researcher, colleague and manager. More often than not, the 'daily grind' takes precedence, leaving very little space for reflection on practice, which arguably could have potentially negative impacts on practice. I purposed to reduce potential problems by employing rigorous methods, having a keen awareness and being reflective, and transparent about my role and position (Ritchie, Zwi, Blignault, Bunde-Birouste, & Silove, 2009).

8.12.1 Mitigating the challenges of insiderness: Reflectivity - a principal thing

Personal reflectivity is considered crucial to the quality and rigour of qualitative studies in a number of ways. It has been noted that individual reflectivity can enhance transparency and help researchers recognise biases, intrusive values and beliefs, and increase awareness on where personal interests should be recognised and challenged (Tuffour, 2018). It was necessary for me to maintain a mental and physical journal of the many challenges, questions and tensions as they arose, paying keen attention to my emotional state, opinions and judgements about their effects on the development of the study. Having frequent discussions and conversations with my research supervisors, academic mentors and trusted critical friends, proved invaluable throughout the process. My principal supervisor was keen to stress the importance of keeping a reflective journal. However, this not only proved challenging, it highlighted one of the tensions between being an academic researcher, having to evidence reflections and being a reflective practitioner. It was not always convenient to document thoughts as they arose, and I recalled feelings of frustration in trying to document those sporadic thoughts at a later time: it felt constructed and inauthentic. Yet, I recalled how easy it was at times having discussions with my supervisors about my feelings or views on particular issues within the research, but also as it relates to practice and the changing trajectory of probation. Fortunately, one of my supervisors is a former practitioner and keen observer of the many developments and changes that the probation service has undergone. We were able to have many helpful conversations drawing on his knowledge of both research and probation practice. These discussions also helped me in identifying -more clearly - a gap between practice and academia and set me thinking about ways by which this gap could be closed.

On one hand, being an insider was serving a useful function in helping me explore and find answers to local organisational problems (Smyth & Holian, 2008). However, the range of experiences and emotions my insider status brought was often unexpected. As a researcher, I had to ask questions about practice, many of which, as a practice manager, I was expecting standard answers in line with organisational policies and or practice. It was challenging, at times, not to make judgements or not to impose my knowledge or expectation on participants. For instance, when one young adult offender indicated that he had gone for a meal with his officer, I immediately thought, ok I should explore that further as a manager, and realised that this would not be appropriate as a researcher.

I also felt unsettled and anxious at times when some participants gave answers to questions which suggested there may be inadequacies in management structures, processes or practice. Yet the tensions I felt professionally paled in comparison to the inadequacies I sometimes felt as a researcher: I was not a master

in this field and at times, feelings of being overwhelmed and uncertain were difficult to shift. Most surprisingly, I was astonished by the various levels of emotional states I went through throughout the project.

Finally, I have been acutely aware of the missing voices throughout the process of conducting this study, and what contributions they might have brought. I am equally mindful that from the beginning, my insider position shaped the development of the study, including the methodology and research decisions I made along the way. Without question, the ethnocentric characteristics of my relationship to this research requires critical reflection. The decision to carry out the research in London and the questions the research tried to answer were informed by personal and professional quest as a criminal justice practitioner and long-standing employee of the probation service. I started the research with the intent of finding answers to a problem in which I was intimately involved. Clearly my position as an insider may be perceived as neither impartial nor unbiased, and despite careful reflections, ethical prudence and safeguarding processes, it is impossible to say what ways my position might have impacted upon my critical engagement with the data.

8.12.2 Concluding comments

The rationale for this research evolved over 16 years. As a newly qualified officer I recall my frustrations and feelings of inadequacy when engaging with young adult offenders. The absence of available empirical evidence or a definitive approach to effectively engage with this cohort led to professional curiosity and experiments in the way that I worked with members of this group. A significant encounter about seven years ago led to a conscious decision to explore more effective ways of engaging young adult offenders subject to probation supervision. The result contributes to the body of knowledge by answering the research aim and questions. Theoretically it develops a more modified understanding of the concept of engagement with young adult offenders in a probation supervisory context. The findings suggest that practitioners require a set of core competencies (skills, knowledge and personality characteristics) to effectively engage young adult offenders. I argue that young adults, as an offending group, have unique needs, and submit that a customised approach to engagement should be encouraged. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first study to empirically explore effective engagement with young adult offenders (from the perspectives of young adult probationers and probation practitioners) within a probation setting. However, the findings of this study are not exhaustive, I have found some answers but not 'the answer'; therefore, the search for resolutions regarding how to effectively engage young adult offenders should continue.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Information letter for Supervising Officers

Criminology Department
Middlesex University
Hendon
London NW4 4BT
Eric Beckford
Supervisor: Professor Anthony Goodman - a.goodman@mdx.ac.uk

Re: Research exploring engagement with young (male) adult offenders (18-24).

Dear Colleague

I am currently conducting a study, which aims to explore how front-line staff such as probation officers and youth offending service workers engage with young adult offenders. This research will provide material for my postgraduate degree (PhD). The main purpose of this research is to develop a competence-based framework in order to help practitioners to effectively engage and supervise young adult (male) offenders (ages 18-24) in the Criminal Justice System.

In order to achieve this, the research seeks to explore the perspectives and experiences of operational staff, to determine what competences (knowledge, skills and personality characteristics), they find work in effectively engaging and supervising young adult offenders.

It would be most helpful if you would agree to participate and be interviewed for this research, and discuss your views and experiences. Should you agree to participate, the interview will be conducted individually at a mutually agreed time, in private and will be audio-recorded. The interview will last for about 45 to 60 minutes. If required the interview can be suspended or stopped at any time.

Your invaluable voluntary participation would be very helpful for this research and should you decide to take part, you have the right to withdraw at any time. Should you agree to be interviewed, your details will be treated with the strictest confidentiality, and all your answers will remain anonymous. Whilst it is likely that some short extracts from your interview may be published in academic articles, there will be no information or references, which could identify you, other colleagues or service users.

Should you have any further questions relevant to the research, please do not hesitate to ask. I can be contacted on eb272@live.mdx.ac.uk or by mobile 07949593984.

Thank you

Eric Beckford

Appendix 2A: Consent form for Supervising Officers

Criminology Department
Middlesex University,
Hendon
London NW4 4BT

Researcher's name: Eric Beckford eb272@live.mdx.ac.uk, mobile 07949593984

Supervisor's name: Professor Anthony Goodman, email: a.goodman@mdx.ac.uk

I have read and understood the details regarding the research and have willingly decided to take part in this study with the understanding that at any time I can withdraw my consent.

I have been given contact details for the researcher in the information sheet.

I understand that I can ask for my data to be withdrawn from the project.

I understand the interview will be audio-recorded.

I understand that the interview will be anonymous and that any identifying details will be removed. Nonetheless, I am aware that there are certain exceptions to this, for example if I should disclose the intention to commit a crime or cause serious harm to myself or others, the researcher will have to inform an appropriate person / authority.

I further understand that the data I provide may be used for analysis for a postgraduate dissertation, and anonymous extracts may appear in published articles and I provide my consent that this may occur.

Print Name:
Date

Signature:

Appendix 2B: Consent Form: Offenders

Eric Beckford
Criminology Department
Middlesex University
Hendon
London NW4 4BT
Eric Beckford
eb727@live.mdx.ac.uk

Supervisor: Professor Anthony Goodman - a.goodman@mdx.ac.uk

Consent Form

I have been informed of the purpose of the study; I understand the reason and procedures and wish to participate. Additionally, I understand that in the debriefing at the end of the interview, I will have an opportunity to ask further questions about the study.

I understand that the data collected will be strictly confidential and I will not be identified in the study or associated report/s. I also understand that I can withdraw from the study without prejudice to me.

I have been given contact details for the researcher in the information sheet

I understand that I can ask for my data to be withdrawn from the project until data analysis

I understand the interview will be audio-recorded

I further understand that the data I provide may be used for analysis and postgraduate dissertation, and that anonymous extracts from my interview may appear in published articles and I provide my consent that this may occur.

I understand that the interview will be anonymous and that any identifying details will be removed. However, there are certain exceptions to this, for example if you disclose the intention to commit a crime or cause serious harm to yourself or others, the researcher will have to inform an appropriate person / authority.

Print Name

Sign

Date

Appendix 3 Transcript Notation

The applied structure of transcription notation for the interviews was adapted from Gail Jefferson's system of transcription notation as it appears in Potter and Wetherell (1994. p88). The interviewer is indicated by the word Intvr: for interviewer and the participant is indicated by the word Resp: , for respondent.

Glossary of transcript symbols and use

Symbol	Name of Symbol	Use of Symbol
(.)	Full stop within a closed bracket	A full stop inside brackets denotes a micro pause, a notable pause but of no significant length.
(0.2)	Bracket Number	A number inside brackets denotes a timed pause. This is a pause long enough to time and subsequently show in transcription. Pauses are indicated by number of seconds in brackets, e.g. a 2-second pause: (2)
[text]	Square Bracket	A square bracket indicates the point where an overlapping speech occurs. It shows the start and end points of the overlapping speech
><	Arrows pointing inwards	Arrows surrounding talk show that the pace of the speech has quickened
<>	Arrows pointing outwards	Arrows in this direction show that the pace of the speech has slowed down
()	Closed single brackets	Closed brackets as shows that the words spoken here were too unclear to transcribe
(())	Closed double brackets	Closed double brackets appear with a description inserted denotes some contextual information where no symbol of representation was available.
↑	Up arrow	When an upward arrow appears, it means there is a rise in intonation
↓	Down arrow	When a downward arrow appears, it means there is a drop in intonation
<u>so</u>	Underline words	Words which are underlined were spoken with emphasis It makes me so unhappy.
		emphasis words in uppercase were uttered noticeably louder than the surrounding words
<u>ALL CAPS</u>	Capitalised Text	Indicates shouted or increased volume speech where the uttered words were noticeable louder than the surrounding words. For exempling.: I REALLY, REALLY don't like it
Hum (h)	Bracketed h	When a bracketed 'h' appears, it means that there was laughter within the talk
=	Equal sign	The equal sign represents latched speech, a continuation of talk
→	Right pointing arrow	An arrow like this denotes a particular sentence of interest to the analyst
::	Colon	Colons represent elongated speech or stretched sound. An extension of the preceding vowel sound, or phoneme, e.g.:

		A: Yeah:h, I see:
hh	Lower case h	A sigh or a loud intake of breath are indicated in the text by ..hh. Audible exhalation
xxx	Lower case x	Words which could not be heard/understood during transcription are indicated by a lower case x per word e.g.: xx
X	Upper case X	An uppercase X indicates a name of a person or place which cannot be given for the sake of confidentiality.
{Text }	Curly Brackets	Feelings such as anger, or a distinct tone of voice, are described in curly brackets, e.g. {sounded unhappy}

Appendix 4: Ethical approval Middlesex University

From: Sarah Bradshaw <S.Bradshaw@mdx.ac.uk>

Subject: Re: Fwd: Ethics form and Appendix

Date: 8 August 2016 at 11:02:21 BST

To: Eric Beckford <egbecky@yahoo.com>

Cc: Anthony Goodman <A.Goodman@mdx.ac.uk>, Karen Ciclitira <karen.ciclitira@gmail.com>

Dear Eric,

While all research always carries some level of ethical risk I feel all the relevant potential issues the current research might raise have now been fully considered and all possible actions to limit risk put in place.

As such this email can act as ethical agreement until such time as I receive the form with the signatures of yourself and your supervisors.

I hope the interviews go well and I look forward to hearing about the findings in due course,

Sarah

Appendix 5: Ethical approval National Probation Service

From: Cook, Lisa
Sent: 12 September 2018 14:25
To: Beckford, Eric <Eric.Beckford@justice.gov.uk>
Cc: Opoku, Desiree <Desiree.Opoku@justice.gov.uk>; national.research@noms.gsi.gov.uk
Subject: RE: Research Application

Dear Eric,

I can confirm that your research application was reviewed at the last Divisional Research committee Meeting on 11th September. The committee recommended approval of your research application.

Feedback on your proposal was that it clearly linked with HMPPS proposals, the proposed method was considered appropriate to address the research questions identified. The application and responses you provided to the committee confirmed that you had considered data protection and security and ethics thoroughly in your application. There was no evidence of a clear overlap with existing research and the proposed research plan would not require significant additional NPS resources.

We wish you well in your research. We also look forward to receiving your research summary when your research is complete.

Kind regards

Lisa Cook C.Psychol, AFBPSs
Forensic Psychologist
London NPS Divisional Research Committee Chair
Wandsworth Probation Office
79 East Hill
London
SW18 2QE

Tel: 020 87040248(direct line)
020 87040200 (switchboard)
Mobile: 07894 48231

Appendix 6: Useful contacts and organisations for Young Adult Offenders

Samaritans

Tel: 0207 734 2800

SANE Mental Health Helpline

030004047000

National Office Together for Mental Wellbeing

Tel: 020 7780 7300

Other useful contacts will be sourced in consultation with each supervising officer. This will be based on what is available in each Local Delivery Unit (LDU) where interviews will take place. This is to ensure that support, if required, will be delivered efficiently and reduce the need for preventable travel time and cost.

Appendix 7: Debriefing Letter for Service Users

Criminology Department
Middlesex University
Hendon
London NW4 4BT
Eric Beckford
Supervisor: Professor Anthony Goodman - a.goodman@mdx.ac.uk

Re: Research exploring engagement with supervising staff

Dear (Service User's Name)

I wish to thank you again for agreeing to participate in this research. I would like to remind you that the interview will be fully confidential. All your personal details and any identifying factors will be changed so that no one can identify you.

If you have any questions about this research, please do not hesitate to contact me by email at eb727@live.mdx.ac.uk.

Please be reminded that should you feel distressed after this interview and need advice and or support, you can speak directly to your supervising officer who will be able to make a referral for you or help you to contact an appropriate professional. Please also find enclosed a list of useful contacts and organisations that offer free confidential guidance/ advice/ support.

With best wishes,

Eric Beckford

Appendix 3b: Useful contacts and organisations

Samaritans

Tel: 0207 734 2800

SANE Mental Health Helpline

030004047000

National office

Together for Mental Wellbeing

Tel: 020 7780 7300

Other useful contacts will be sourced in consultation with each supervising officer. This will be based on what is available in each Local Delivery Unit (LDU) where interviews will take place. This is to ensure that support, if required, will be delivered efficiently and reduce the need for preventable travel time and cost.

Appendix 8: Debriefing letter for Supervising Officers

Criminology Department
Middlesex University
Hendon
London NW4 4BT

Dear Colleague (Name of officer)

I would like to thank you again for agreeing to participate in this research and to reiterate that the interview will be completely confidential. Your personal details along with any identifying factors will be changed in order to protect your anonymity.

Should you have any further questions about this research, please do not hesitate to contact me by email at eb272@live.mdx.ac.uk or by telephone on 07949593984. Please be reminded of the free and confidential advice available to you through the Employee Assistant Programme.

With best wishes,
Eric Beckford

Appendix 9: Information sheet (all participants)

Criminology Department
Middlesex University
Hendon
London NW4 4BT

Eric Beckford
Supervisor: Professor Anthony Goodman - a.goodman@mdx.ac.uk

Dear Potential Participant

Re: Research exploring engagement with young male adult offenders (18-24).

Thank you for expressing an interest in this research and the possibility that you may wish to participate. Before you make a decision about taking part, please read the following information carefully. Should you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me using the details below.

About the researcher

My name is Eric Beckford and I am a Senior Probation Officer with the National Probation Service. I am also a postgraduate research student at Middlesex University, and I would like to invite you to take part in a study exploring effective engagement with young adult offenders (ages 18-24). This research will provide material for my postgraduate degree in criminal justice. I can be contacted at eb272@live.mdx.ac.uk

About the research

Current evidence shows that there is an over representation of young adult offenders within the Criminal Justice System (CJS). Correspondingly, it is widely advocated that in order to reduce re-offending and produce better long-term results, it is essential to improve the willingness of this cohort to comply with coercive and voluntary interventions through effective engagement. However, in order for this to happen a different, purposeful and more flexible approach to engagement and intervention is required (HM Chief Inspector of Prison for England and Wales, 2006; Williams, 2012). Conversely, it appears that little is known about the specific competences required to effectively engage and supervise this group of offenders.

I am conducting a study, which aims to explore engagement with young adult male offenders in order to develop a competence-based framework that will enable practitioners to effectively engage with, and supervise young adult offenders (ages 18-24). In order to achieve the stated aims, the research will seek to understand the perspectives of both service users and operational staff. Participants will be asked to discuss the competences such as knowledge, skills and personality characteristics they consider to work effectively in engaging and supervising young adult offenders.

Who I would like to take part?

The research is open to male service users between the age of 18 to 24 years, who are currently being supervised by the Probation Service or who are in transition from the Youth Offending Service. Equally, I am seeking to interview probation officers, seconded probation officers and YOS workers with experience of working with the aforementioned group. I would be very grateful if you would agree to be interviewed for this research to discuss your views and experiences.

What will taking part involve?

Your participation will involve a semi-structured interview in a probation office or other suitable / appropriate private location with myself. The interview will include questions about you and your experience of supervising or being supervised.

If you do agree to take part:

- Your participation will be completely voluntary.
- The interview will be conducted in private and will be audio-taped. However, your identity will be protected and any identifying details will be removed from the data.
- The interview will last for about 45 to 60 minutes (and can be stopped at any time)
- You have the right to withdraw at any time.
- All your answers will remain anonymous and confidential, within the limits imposed by the law. However, there are certain exceptions, for example if you disclose the intention to commit a crime or cause serious harm to yourself or others, I will have to inform an appropriate person / authority.
- Although some short extracts from your interview may be published in academic articles, your name will not form part of the data, and your contribution will be anonymised. The data will not contain information or references which could identify you.

Please do not hesitate to ask any further relevant questions if anything about this information, or the research in is unclear.

Should you decide to participate, I have enclosed a consent form. Please be advised that by signing this form you are confirming that you understand the information above and are giving your consent (which can be withdrawn at any time) to be included in this study. Please bring the consent form with you when we meet.

Thank you

Eric Beckford

eb727@live.mdx.ac.uk

Supervisor: Professor Anthony Goodman - a.goodman@mdx.ac.uk

Appendix 10: Interview schedule for Offenders

1. Thinking about your current relationship with your PO, what are the things that work well between you and your supervising officer?
2. What do you consider to be the most important qualities of a good supervising officer?
3. Are there any barriers/difficulties to expressing your views / needs to your supervising officer? If yes, what are they and how do you think this could be overcome?
4. If the relationship between you and your supervising officer could be more as you would like, or want it to be, what would that be like, and what would he/she need to do differently? (Prompt: please describe this)
5. Is there any approach or engagement style that you find unhelpful in your supervisory relationship now or in the past, if yes please explain?
6. To what degree does your relationship with your supervising officer motivate you to improve the quality of your life? (For example, to pursue education, training or employment, improve relationships with others, or be more organised etc.)?
7. To what degree (if any), does your relationship with your supervising officer motivate you to stop offending?
8. If there are (were) any barrier/s to establishing a good rapport with your supervising officer (talking with or establishing having a good “vibes”) what are (were) they?
9. What effect if any do you feel your assigned risk category / level has on how you get on with your supervising officer?
10. To what degree (if any) do you believe the ethnicity (race) of your supervising officer impacts on your relationship with them or willingness to get on with them.
11. Do you believe your ethnicity impacts on the way you are treated or the quality of engagement / relationship with your supervising officer?
12. To what degree (if any) do you believe the gender of your supervising officer impacts on how you get on with them?
13. Can you explain what it means to be mature; and based on that understanding, how mature do you consider yourself to be?
14. Do you believe your level of maturity impacts on your relationship / engagement with your supervising officer and if so how?
15. Do you believe that how well you get on with your supervising officer is dependent on the stability or quality of the relationship you have with him / her? For example, how long you have known him/her or the level of rapport you have with him/her?

16. If you could change how well you get on with your supervising officer and improve your relationship and or how they treat you what would those things be?
17. I would now like to ask you a few questions about your childhood. Please can you tell me who looked after you when you were a child (e.g. parent/guardian/adopted parent/foster parent/care home)?
18. Will you please tell me a bit about your family/carers when you were growing up? (If brought up in care / institution tell me about your experience of main caregivers)
19. How would you describe your relationship with your current caregivers?
20. Are you able to talk about your problems and feelings (prompts what do you think about talking about difficult feelings and situations? Do you find it easy to talk about problems?).
21. Is there anyone within your family or anyone else you can talk to when you are feeling distressed? (If so what was your relationship like, if not why not?)
22. Do you find it more difficult / challenging or easier to get on with people who are older than your own age group (18-24) and if so why? (prompt: if you get on better with younger people can you explain why?)
23. How well do you get on with adults (over 24) in authority?
24. Have you suffered any particular traumas while you were growing up? If yes please can you describe them?
25. Is there anything else that you would like to tell me about this topic?

Appendix 11: Interview schedule for Offender Managers

1. From your experience of working with both adult offenders and young adult offenders, are there any observable differences in engagement and how you get on with these two groups, and if so what are they?
2. What do you consider to be the most important competences of a good supervising officer?
3. What skill/knowledge or personality characteristics do you find most effective in your engagement with young adults?
4. What approach do you find most useful in motivating a young adult offender to engage well with you or change in a positive way?
5. What do you consider to be the main barriers / challenges in positively engaging young adult offenders?
6. How important (If at all) is earning / securing a young offender's trust and building a rapport, and how do you go about doing so in your supervisory relationship?
7. Is there any particular approach/s that you have found unhelpful in engaging positively with young adults?
8. Describe any specific training you have undertaken, information you have received or skills developed that you believe may have enabled you to engage more effectively with young adults?
9. Please describe any training or support which you think could help you in your work.
10. By what means do you continue to develop your knowledge / skills in working with young adult offenders?
11. Have you experienced any tensions between organisational procedures and daily practice when dealing with young adult offenders? If yes please describe these?
12. How do you critically reflect and evaluate your current work practice?
13. How able do you feel - within the strictures of National Standards - to apply creativity and use discretion in your work with young adults?
14. Commitment is believed to be a key feature of therapeutic engagement. How able do you feel to commit the time / resources required to support / enable young adult offenders to change?
15. In your experience what are the most fundamental needs of young adult offenders?
16. From your knowledge, how and in what ways, can a deficit in those fundamental needs, impact on positive engagement and on your relationship?
17. What Model/ theory/ approach predominantly underpins your current practice with young adults?
18. What mechanism is in place to measure/evaluate the quality of your relationship with young adult offenders?

19. If you had the power / resource to change how you work with young adult offenders, what change/s would you make and why?
20. Do you find your job rewarding – if yes in what ways and if no why not?
21. Do you have a good work life balance? (If not please can you tell me more about this)
22. Does your work affect your life outside of work (i.e. on a personal level)? If so, in what way?
23. Are there any special interventions or process in your establishment to support you or a young offender when engagement breaks down between a young offender and a supervising officer?
24. Do you feel supported by your colleagues and senior management in your work when engagement with a young offender is particularly difficult?
25. What are the most challenging aspects of your job as it relates to young adult offenders?
26. In addition to OASys / ASSETT, what other information informs your risk?
27. What would you do if you were worried about a young offender's welfare? (If he is suicidal, taking drugs, being violent, etc.)?
28. How much supervision do you receive and is it helpful?
29. What other support do you receive for your work with young adults?
30. What you think are the main problems with staff working with disruptive young offenders?
31. To what degree (if any) do you believe the ethnicity (race) of the supervising officer or the service user, impacts on your relationship or quality of engagement?
32. To what degree (if any) do you believe the gender of the supervising officer or the service user, impacts on your relationship or quality of engagement?
33. Are there any additional point/s that you would like to discuss regarding this topic?

Appendix 12: Ethnicity and Disability monitoring form

Please note this form is confidential and will not be passed on to any authority as a result of this research. You have the right to refuse to provide the requested information.

DISABILITY

Please tick if the statement relates to you

I have no disability

I have a mental health condition such as anxiety disorder, schizophrenia

I am blind or have a serious visual impairment uncorrected by glasses

I have a learning difficulty such as dyslexia, dysphasia OR AD (H) D

I have a mental health condition such as depression or anxiety disorder

I have a social / communication impairment such as Asperger's syndrome or other autistic spectrum disorder

I have a medicinal condition / disability / impairment not on this list- if so what is this?

I do not wish to disclose my disability

ETHNICITY

I describe myself as: Tick one below

Asian or Asian British- Indian

Asian or Asian British-Pakistani

Asian or Asian British- Bangladeshi Black or Black British Caribbean

Black or Black British –African

Chinese

Mixed- White and Black- Caribbean

Mixed- White and Black African

White British

White Irish

Other Mixed Background

Other Ethnic Background

I refuse to say

Appendix 13: Questionnaire for Offender manager.

1. To which age group do you belong? 20-25, 25-30, 30-35, 35-40, Over 40.....
2. How many years' experience do you have in this or other similar role?
Newly qualified, 1-3 years, 3-5 years, 5-7 years, 7-10 years, over 10 years.....
3. Have you received/ participated in any specialist training to manage young adult offenders?
4. Do you regularly participate in any forum/s conference/ specifically geared towards those managing young adults, if yes please state what they are:
5. What is your highest educational qualification achieved or currently in progress?
6. Has structural changes impacted on your work with Offenders and if so how:
.....

Appendix 14: Offender engagement questionnaire

What is your highest educational qualification achieved or currently in progress?

Did you experience physical abuse as a child? (By physical abuse we mean non-accidental injury, including, beating, burns or strangulation) Yes No

If yes, at what age did the abuse happen?

Have you ever experienced sexual abuse?

(By sexual abuse we mean any form of non-consenting sexual encounter, including rape) Yes No

If Yes – was this when you were a child?

At approximately what age were you first sexually abused?

At approximately what age were you most recently sexually abused?

Have you ever experienced psychological/mental/emotional abuse/neglect as a child?

Yes No

Are you currently taking any mood-altering medications (e.g. anti-depressants) prescribed by a doctor?

If yes what are you taking?

Have you ever been a psychiatric in-patient?

If yes what was this for and for how long?

Have you found it easier to engage with voluntary agencies, if yes, why do you think that is?

Appendix 15: Email to Practitioners

From: Beckford, Eric

Sent: 12 September 2018 16:05

To:

Dear Colleague, I am contacting you as you are (or may be) aware I am conducting a research exploring effective engagement with young adult offenders. I am trying to recruit at least 15 young adults offender (18-24) from different ethnicities, gender, class etc, who will be willing to talk with me for up to, but not more than an hour about their experience of engagement. I am also seeking 3 OM (I already have 12). I am keen to interview those who may be deemed more challenging to engage as well as those who engage well. I have attached relevant information (including information letter/ leaflet about the research and what participation involves). I would be most grateful if you could cascade this to other colleges, disseminate amongst your team or discuss with your service user and let me know about willingness. I will travel to your office for interviews. I have attached relevant information.

(NOTE: Please only provide service users with Appendix 5, 6 and 7). I am happy to take any questions

Please note that I have been granted permission by the MOJ to conduct this research. Please do not respond to all.

Thanks and kind regards



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Appendix 16: Offender's Themes

Master Theme 1: Effective Engagement Competencies (YAOs perspective)		
Main Theme	Sub-Theme	Related category /codes
Main Theme 1: Effective Practice Knowledge	Sub-theme 1: Having street knowledge	Being street wise Understand the road Understand the cycle of change Understand what I have been through
	Sub-themes 2: Having knowledge of YAO	Understand YAO's personal circumstance Understanding YAOs world Understand YAO's Understanding of YAO Understanding of where young adults come from Understand where YAOs come from Understand where offender comes from understand offender's personal experiences Get to know YAO beyond what is written Understand offender's heterogeneity Understanding YAOs Understand YAO's perspectives Being able to understand YAOs PO understand offender Know how to engage YAO Understand every young person is different Know how to engage
	Sub-theme 3: Having knowledge of your Job	Able to answer questions Being able to provide YAO with answers Knowledgeable of the job
Main Theme 2: Effective Practice techniques/approaches	Sub-theme 4: Being consistent	Is to be a constant in the young person's life Being constant Being a constant/stable Having a constant/stable officer Being consistent Being a constant in the young person's life Being constant
	Sub-theme 5: Being helpful	Being helpful Being helpful Providing practical help Helping YAO with practical things Help with resettlement Provide practical help Provide practical help Provide practical support Provide practical help Provision of practical help Provision of practical help

		<p>Offering practical support and encouragement</p> <p>Provide guidance to YAOs</p> <p>Provide YAO guidance</p> <p>I got professional help</p> <p>I get practical help with ETE</p> <p>It does help to know I have support</p> <p>It provides help with practical things</p> <p>Help me with practical things such as accommodation</p> <p>I get practical help to achieve my goals</p>
	Sub-theme 6: Willingness to get to know the YAOs	<p>Getting to know YAO</p> <p>Willingness to get to know YAOs</p>
	Sub-theme 7: Establishing a bond with YAOs	<p>Having a friendship bond</p> <p>OM is like a family (aunt)</p> <p>Having a relationship</p> <p>OM is like an Aunt</p> <p>Allows YAOs to freely express self</p> <p>Is one where a bond exists</p> <p>Establish bonds-not feel like you talking to an officer</p>
	Sub-theme 8: Showing interest in the YAO	<p>Talk about other things than probation</p> <p>Show interest in YAOs</p>
	Sub-theme 9: Involves the ability to communicate effectively	<p>Knowing how to communicate</p> <p>Willingness to speak and listen</p> <p>Involves good communication skills</p> <p>Involves good communication skills</p> <p>Involves being a good Communicator</p> <p>Good communication skills</p> <p>Effective communication skills: knowing how to communicate</p> <p>Good communication skills</p> <p>Good communication skills</p> <p>Communication skills</p> <p>Good communication skills</p> <p>Good engagement skills</p> <p>Having a PO who is lenient helps</p> <p>Helping with cost benefit analysis</p> <p>Listening skills</p> <p>Listening skills</p> <p>Listening skills</p> <p>Listening skills</p> <p>Involves good communication</p> <p>Involves good communication</p> <p>My PO tells me the truth</p> <p>Being able to probe</p> <p>Good communication skills</p> <p>Simplifying things to ensure understanding</p> <p>Talk to YAOs</p>
	Sub-theme 10: Being a motivator	<p>Be motivating</p> <p>Involves being inspiring</p>

<p>Main Theme 3: Characteristic of a Good OM</p>		<p>Involves being motivational Involve being motivational Involve being motivational Involves being motivational Being motivational Believing in YAO's ability to do more My PO gives me hope Being given practical support and encouragement Inspire YAO Inspire YAO Effective practice approach: Being motivational Effective practice approach: Being Motivational Effective practice approach: Being motivational Being motivational Being inspiring Letting YAO know they can do good Being positive Being positive I am inspired to do things I was told are beyond my abilities She wants me to do well Is about being able to motivate Motivate / push YAO Motivational skills Being positive and cheerful</p>
	<p>Subtheme 14: Being relatable</p>	<p>Able to talk to YAOs about anything (affable) Being affable Being courteous Making YAOs feel comfortable (affable) Comfortable to speak with Being laid back X 3 Being genuine X 3 Being or showing Understanding X 8</p>
	<p>Subtheme 15: Knowing when to use authority</p>	<p>Know how/when to use authority</p>
	<p>Sub-theme 16: Be respectful</p>	<p>Being respectful Showing respect Being respectful</p>
	<p>Sub-theme 19: Being Honest</p>	<p>Telling YAOs the truth Being open Be honest Being honest Being honest My PO is honest with me Telling YAOs the truth Tell the truth</p>
<p>Master theme 2: Relationship and engagement (Part 2)</p>		

<p>Main Theme 1: Characteristics of a positive OM/YAO relationship</p>	<p>Sub-theme 1: A positive relationship is: Marked by Trust</p>	<p>Involve mutual trust Involves trust Is marked by trust Is marked by trust- attending probation less The OM tells the truth Establish trust Establish trust Establish trust</p>
	<p>Sub-theme 2: A positive relationship is: one where OMs are available and helpful</p>	<p>Be available Being available I am able to talk to my PO about anything Being available</p>
	<p>Sub-theme 3: A positive relationship is: one where OMs use discretion and show compassion</p>	<p>OM uses discretion OM uses use of discretion OM is understanding Exercise leniency Being able to compromise Being able to compromise Exercise leniency Exercising compassion Kindness Use discretion</p>
	<p>Sub-theme 4: A positive relationship is: one where YAOs are able to open up and talk</p>	<p>OM understand YAOs personal views OM offers advice Involves listening YAOs are able to open up to PO YAOs can open up to OM YAOs are allowed to talk YAOs are lowed to talk</p>
	<p>Sub-them 5: A positive relationship is: one where OMs show care/interest</p>	<p>OMs are affable The OM is honest Officer characteristics: Show care/concern Officer characteristics: Show concern OM show shows care Establishing a bond between PO and YAO Showing care Showing care, not just doing a job Showing care</p>
	<p>Sub-theme 6: A positive relationship: is one that inspire hope and belief</p>	<p>Relationship encourages me to pursue ETE opportunities Relationship and offending- offering hope: The expectation is that I will do good Believe in YAO Yes, because my PO believes in me Relationship and offending- offering hope: The fact that PO sees more in me than what is written on my record Relationship and offending: I feel like trying because she is trying</p>

		Knowing my PO thinks I can do more inspires me to stop offending
	Sub-theme 7: A positive relationship is: one where OMs use humour	OM is bubbly and alive OM can use humour I would like to see more banter Officer characteristic: I would like to see more banter Having a sense of humour
	Sub-theme 8: Involves being none-Judgemental	None judgemental Being none judgemental Being none judgemental My PO judges me based on who I am not just the saying of the court
Main Theme 2: Race and Engagement	Sub-theme 9: Race as a representation of ingroup bias	Most black people would want to help a black boy Most black people would want to help a black boy Most black people would want to help a black boy I feel someone from the same race can relate to me, they are more aware of my circumstances A black/white person would want to see another black/white person do well Similar background, better able to relate Similar racial background, better understanding I feel comfortable expressing myself to someone of the same race, I feel they understand I feel someone from my own race will treat me better Race matters only if my PO is the same race PO race have a moderate impact on relationship
	Sub-theme 29: Race as a representation of inclusivity and professionalism	PO My race has a positive effect My officer's race has no impact on the relationship My officer's race has no impact on the relationship PO race doesn't matter-What matters is personality Officer's race does not matter Its more about the individual I grew up around black people The race of my PO makes no difference to our relationship
Master Theme 8: Barriers to engaging YAOs (part 2)		
Main Theme 6: Barriers to engagement	Sub-theme 30: Inability to talk	Unable to talk to OM- I can talk to my PO about anything I can talk about anything but I chose not to I don't see POs as someone I can talk to about everything I don't see POs as someone I can talk to about everything I find it difficult to talk about personal stuff I kept my feeling bottled up inside

		<p>I never expressed my feelings Lack of communication Not being able to confide in my PO</p>
	Sub-theme 31: Lack of trust	<p>Lack of trust / fear of sanction Lack of trust in probation officers Lack of trust Not liking on officer could be a barrier to conversing</p>
	Sub-theme 32: Fear of sanction	<p>I can talk to my PO about anything but I chose what to say Somethings you have to keep to yourself Talking about some issues have negative consequences I have been through is difficult but I can talk about my offending and personal issues Fear of sanction resulting from disclosure You could incriminate yourself You have to choose your words wisely Chose not to talk because PO is not friend or family Disclosing certain things can cause concern Having to be careful about what you say Having to limit what you can share with your PO Limit to what can be disclosed to PO Some discloser cause risk concerns. Some discloser has implication Reasons for barrier: Lack of trust in probation Reasons for barrier: One has to be careful with what you say Reasons for barrier: You could be recalled for saying certain things. Reasons for barriers: Not knowing PO well enough Age-related relating: Older people provide guidance (Miscellaneous) Not having enough banter Tring to be independent (Miscellaneous) Asking too much personal questions Having arguments</p>
Main Theme 7: Dealing with Authority	Sub theme 32: Negative view of Police	<p>YAO have negative view of police I don't get along with the police I don't get on with the police I don't get on with the police The police do excessive stuff The police, it depends if they are being disrespectful or not Is dependent on mutual is respect How I get on with authority depends on the situation</p>

		<p>We get along well as long as they are not taking the piss</p> <p>I normally get on with authority figures but not the police</p> <p>I see authority figures as people doing their job</p> <p>Authority figures are there to help</p> <p>If they are genuine you see past the authority</p> <p>It depends on who they are as a person</p> <p>No issues dealing with Authority</p> <p>No issues with authority figures</p> <p>No problem dealing with authority figures</p> <p>No problems dealing with people in authority</p>
<p>Main Theme 8: Experiences of Trauma</p> <p>11 of the 15 YAO expressed experiencing trauma.</p>	<p>Sub-theme 32: Trauma as Normal</p>	<p>It's the first time I remembered crying-impact I don't think it impacting me now, I got over it.</p> <p>Prison- once you get into a routine it was ok</p> <p>Prison was difficult but I got used to it</p> <p>Prison was good-it saved me</p> <p>You brushed it off and keep going</p> <p>No experience of trauma, I just got on with prison</p> <p>I chose to grieve on my own</p> <p>Trauma through the normal struggles of life</p> <p>I lost loved ones but see it as part of life</p> <p>Help for Trauma-</p> <p>I received no professional help but think I need it</p> <p>I see traumatic events as part of life</p> <p>I was offered but did not accept professional help</p>
<p>Main Theme 9: Ineffective Approaches</p>	<p>Sub-theme33: Being Judgemental</p>	<p>Being judgemental</p> <p>Being non- judgemental</p> <p>Being non- judgemental</p>
	<p>Sub-theme 34: Being Intrusive</p>	<p>OM asking personal questions that could get YAO into trouble</p> <p>Being put on the spot</p> <p>Interrogating YAOs</p> <p>Trying to know everything about a YAO's personal life</p> <p>Wanting to know everything about a YAO's life</p>
	<p>Sub-theme 35: Being Inflexible</p>	<p>Being closed minded</p> <p>Being inflexible</p> <p>Closed mindedness/inflexible</p> <p>Unwillingness to learn from YAO</p> <p>Not willing to understand others</p> <p>Don't stereotype</p>
	<p>Sub-theme 36: Being Threatening</p>	<p>Threatening YAOs</p>
	<p>Sub-theme 37: Trying to Baby YAO</p>	<p>Trying to baby YAOs</p> <p>Treat YAO like a kid</p>
<p>Master Theme 9: Maturity and Engagement</p>		
<p>Main Theme 10: YAO's perception of maturity</p>	<p>Sub-theme 38: To be mature is to take responsibility</p>	<p>Maturity is about taking responsibility</p> <p>Maturity is about being responsible</p>

		<p>Maturity is about being responsible: I see maturity as being responsible</p> <p>Maturity is about being responsible: Maturity is about taking on your responsibility</p> <p>Maturity is about being responsible: Maturity is being able to hold things down</p> <p>Maturity is about being responsible: Maturity mean taking responsibility for own actions</p> <p>Maturity is about being responsible: taking responsibilities such as paying your bills</p> <p>Maturity is about being responsible: taking responsibility</p> <p>Maturity is about responsibility: growing your children in the right way</p> <p>Maturity is about responsibility: mean getting things done</p> <p>Maturity is about taking perspective</p> <p>Maturity is about perspective</p> <p>Maturity is about perspective taking: Being able to resist how people perceive you</p> <p>Maturity is about perspective taking: Being able to resist how people perceive you</p> <p>Maturity is about adult like privilege</p> <p>Maturity offers adult privileges: Enable better understanding and commutation</p> <p>Maturity offers adult privileges: Others pay attention</p> <p>Maturity offers adult privileges: POs see past certain things</p> <p>Maturity offers adult privileges: You are treated like an adult</p> <p>Maturity is about doing the right ting</p> <p>Maturity is about having morals (1)</p> <p>Maturity is about how you build relationships</p> <p>Maturity is having your priorities in order</p> <p>Maturity is: about personal knowledge generally</p> <p>Maturity is: about the knowledge one possesses</p> <p>Maturity is: about understanding life</p> <p>Maturity is: to understand life</p>
	<p>Sub-theme 39: Maturity offers adult privileges</p>	<p>Enables better decision-making which impact relationship positively</p> <p>You get listen to more X 2</p> <p>Positive impact of maturity: Others pay attention</p> <p>POs see pass certain things</p> <p>You are able to have grown up conversation</p> <p>You are treated like an adult</p> <p>You get more respect</p> <p>Positive therapeutic alliance with PO</p>
	<p>Sub-theme 40: Maturity is about being independent</p>	<p>Maturity is about financial independence X 8</p>

		Maturity is about general independence: moving out of your parent house and find you own accommodation
	Sub-theme 41: Maturity is about perspective taking	Maturity is about how you think and react to things Maturity is about how you view life Maturity is about how you view life Maturity is about how you view life Maturity is about how you view the world Maturity is about how you view the world Maturity is about how you view the world Maturity is about YAOs reasoning ability Maturity is about your outlook on life
	Sub-theme 42: To be mature is to take responsibility	Maturity is about taking on your responsibility Maturity is about making appropriate decision Maturity is about being able to make cost benefit analysis Maturity is about making appropriate decision-not smoking shit Maturity is about making better choices Maturity is about making own choices Maturity is about not giving in to instant gratification Maturity is about not reacting When you are mature things don't trouble you as before Maturity enables better decision-making which impact relationship positively Maturity is about making appropriate decisions
	Sub-theme 43: Maturity is about growing Up	Maturity is about growing Maturity means: being able to have grown up conversation Maturity is about being a grown up Maturity is about growing Maturity is about growing up: leaving childishness behind Maturity is about growing up: Maturity means growing up Maturity is about growing up: means leaving childishness behind Maturity is to be growing up: free of immature urges Maturity means growing up Maturity: is about growing up
Main Theme 12: Multiple experiences of trauma	Sub-theme 45: Trauma through death	Trauma: I experienced the death of my friend Trauma through abandonment Trauma through death- family Trauma through death- friends and family Death of a loved-one Death- of a loved one

		<p>Not being able to attend my mom's funeral</p> <p>Trauma: I experience trauma through death-friend</p> <p>I was not allowed to see my friend-attend his funeral</p> <p>Physical trauma</p>
	Sub-theme 46: Trauma through life on the street	<p>Trauma through life in the hood-street life</p> <p>Trauma through pain-been stabbed</p> <p>Trauma: through personal harm- stabbed</p> <p>Trauma through hurting others- I stabbed a kid</p> <p>Trauma through Prison</p>
	Sub-theme 47: Trauma through Prison	<p>I experienced trauma via isolation/separation</p> <p>Trauma: Physical and emotional trauma-I suffered physical and mental abuse</p> <p>Trauma: I believe my experience of trauma have moderate impact</p> <p>Trauma through lack of attachment</p> <p>Trauma via prison: Being in prison makes you a soldier</p> <p>Trauma- I experience trauma in custody</p> <p>In prison you can end up in a worst place mentally</p> <p>Trauma through friend going to prison</p> <p>Trauma through custody</p> <p>Trauma via isolation</p>

Master Theme 1: Competences for Working with Young Adult Offenders (YAOs)

Main Theme	Sub Theme	Related Codes
Effective Practice knowledge	An amalgam of established theories and methods	I combine approaches I use a fluid working style An Amalgamated approach using various style No particular theory but different approach I use multiple approaches I Use the good lives model OMs use the Good Life Model Good lives Model The Good Life Model The GLM Focus on boundary setting Focus on getting to know the offender Focus on moving offenders forward Focus on the good offenders bring Focus on Employment Training and Education Focus on YAO personal life situations Desistance theory Attachment theory Utilise family involvement Building identity, Collaborative working Seeing the person as a whole. Use of CBTs Asking YAOs to reflect on life choices Cost benefit analysis Maturation assessment Taking a strength-based approach Trauma informed approach Using a trauma informed approach Have a realistic life plan Person centered UPR- unconditional positive regard Use motivational interviewing Approach-Use motivational interviewing Understanding lifestyle issues and not throw generic solution on the problem Understanding what changes YAOs need to make and how Understanding what support, they need to stop of offending

		<p>Lack of awareness about youth trend- street life</p> <p>Limited experience of trauma young people faces</p> <p>Limited understanding of YAO</p> <p>Not being aware (clued up) to what is going on the young person's world (e.g. using snap chat)</p>
	<p>Knowledge about the Complexity of YAO Lives</p>	<p>YAO's life can be chaotic</p> <p>Complex personal life-Consider personal background-broken homes</p> <p>Anticipate the YAO may have had a negative experience of the CJS</p> <p>Personal life experience: an understanding of life as YAO</p> <p>Be mindful of YAO personal experience</p> <p>Understanding of what it is like to be a young person in these days- having an understanding about what it's like to be a young person in this day and age</p> <p>Knowledge- about YAOs lives</p> <p>Lifestyle: Understand their world</p> <p>Understanding of manipulative behaviour- be quite clued up on their manipulation.</p> <p>A good understanding of the gang activity and things that go on out there for young people and what they are exposed to.</p> <p>Understanding about life in the street</p> <p>Being mindful of your limited knowledge into their reality</p> <p>An understanding of life as YAO/comparable life experience</p> <p>Not every service user comes in with the same needs. So, you need to be mindful of things that are happening with them</p> <p>YAOs Needs are complex</p> <p>Knowing what is happening to YAO</p> <p>Trappings of a criminal/gang lifestyle</p> <p>Difficult home life- it doesn't matter how much work you are doing</p> <p>Attitude- Nonchalance to court order, life is more important than a court order/licence</p> <p>Parents of Yao can become a barrier</p> <p>Parents who mollycoddle YAOs</p> <p>The trappings of a criminal/gang lifestyle</p> <p>The YAO's entranced lifestyle and behaviour</p> <p>YAOs involvement in gangs</p> <p>YAOs transitioning via the YOS in particular their prior experience of being mollycoddled</p>
	<p>Knowledge of Development and Maturity</p>	<p>Maintain their sense of adulthood/masculinity</p> <p>Turning 18 does not mean being and adult</p> <p>Understand immaturity</p> <p>Understand immaturity</p> <p>Development: Understand maturation process</p>

		Understand maturity Understand they may have issues with authority
	1.4 Understand Trauma amongst YAO	Trauma- Be mindful YAO may have experienced trauma Trauma- Being aware of trauma Trauma- Deal with trauma and its symptoms Trauma- Being aware of trauma Trauma- Understand trauma Trauma- Understand trauma Trauma- Be mindful they have trauma Perpetrators as victim Perpetrators as victim Dealing with trauma emotional Wellbeing Dealing with mental health Trauma-difficult life Background experience and past hurt- trauma Dealing with trauma Dealing with mental health
Effective Engagement Techniques	Appropriate use of Authority	Ability to make professional judgement Be assertive not authoritative Appropriate use of authority Being able to use authority well Appropriate use of boundary Set boundaries around enforcement Hold YAO accountable Having clear boundaries Maintain boundaries Manage the fine line between friendship and a good relationship Be boundried manage the fine line between friendship and a good relationship Knowing where to draw the fine line- Be boundried Being able to strike a balance X4 Finding a balance Understanding the fine line between discipline and helping Willingness to be tough (use authority) Being firm but not doing battle Being boundried Having firm boundaries Having clear boundaries
	2.2 Maintain Confidentiality	Confidentiality-define boundaries of confidentiality
	2.3 Be Consistent	Provide consistency Provide assurance / stability Don't blur role
	2.4 Address Trauma	Trauma- dealing with trauma

		<p>Trauma- Emphasis on supporting the YAO though trauma</p> <p>Deal with trauma and its symptoms</p> <p>Use a trauma informed approach</p>
	2.5 Be Patient: Take time to Know YAO	<p>Take time</p> <p>Take time and get to know the YAO</p> <p>Taking a strength-based approach</p> <p>Time- Give YAO space</p> <p>Time-Allowing Time-Sometimes it takes more than 15 minutes</p> <p>Time-Patience and allow them time</p> <p>Time-YAO needs lots of time.</p> <p>Tolerance</p> <p>The ability to be patient-give them time</p> <p>Be patient with YAOs</p> <p>It will take that much longer to build that rapport than with an adult</p> <p>Takes time- don't rush</p> <p>Building trust takes time</p> <p>Clarity and transparency of process is important to build trust and rapport</p> <p>Building trust: Clarity of process is important to build trust and rapport</p>
	2.6 Show Genuine Interest in YAOs	<p>Get to know them</p> <p>Showing interest in YAOs- have a vested interest in them</p> <p>Topping into YAOs interest</p> <p>Find out what's going on in their lives</p> <p>Be inquisitive, ask questions</p> <p>Just being human-</p> <p>Demonstrate genuine interest in YAO</p> <p>Show interest in YAOs</p> <p>Taking an overall interest in the life of the YAOs</p> <p>Taking an interest in what goes on in the life of</p> <p>Responsivity- Willingness to take a risk with risk YAOs</p> <p>Understand YAOs interest</p> <p>Belief in YAOs ability to change X 2</p> <p>Try to get to know the YAO</p> <p>Do not show frustration</p> <p>Showing interest in what YAOs like to do</p> <p>Built rapport by finding out what they like doing</p> <p>Know how to build a rapport with a young person.</p>
	2.7 Encourage Autonomy/ Agency	<p>Give YAOs ownership</p> <p>Giving them ownership - they own it</p> <p>Encourage autonomy responsibility</p> <p>Encourage- Be encouraging</p>

		<p>Encourage- Linked in to future hope and aspiration</p> <p>Focus on moving offenders on</p> <p>Focus on the good offenders bring</p> <p>Use the GLM</p> <p>Goal setting</p> <p>Set clear goals</p> <p>Praise- Offering praise</p> <p>Build self-esteem X 2</p> <p>Build confidence</p> <p>Get YAOs involved in their sentence planning</p> <p>Treat each YAO as an individual X3</p> <p>Treat YAOs like individuals-treat them like an individual.</p> <p>Offer praise</p> <p>Offer affirmation</p>
	2.8 Build Trust and Rapport	<p>If they don't trust you, they are not letting you in</p> <p>Build/maintain trust</p> <p>Building trust is 100% important</p> <p>Trust is important even when doing enforcement</p> <p>Maintain trust</p> <p>You still need to build that trust</p> <p>Create trust</p> <p>Build confidence</p> <p>Enable YAOs to feel empowered -being at the centre of supervision</p> <p>Collaborate with the YAO</p> <p>Accept person for who they are, not what they have done</p> <p>Keep your word</p> <p>Building trust takes time- It takes time to build a rapport</p>
	2.9 Establish Clarity and Set Boundaries	<p>Requires being transparent</p> <p>There should be clear expectation</p> <p>Be clear about things</p> <p>Set clear boundaries early</p> <p>Setting boundaries and rules are important to build trust rapport</p> <p>Having clear objectives for supervision/engagement</p> <p>Clarity- Be clear about expectations</p>
Effective Case Management Practices	3.1 Engage with wider family network	<p>Family- Involve the YAO's family</p> <p>Family- Get support from the family</p> <p>Understanding YAO's support network</p>
	3.2 Create a Confidential Space	<p>Building trust requires confidence</p> <p>Create a confidential space</p> <p>YAOs should be able to confide in you without you</p> <p>Build Confidence-Negotiate boundaries of confidentiality</p> <p>You have to be clear about level of confidentiality</p> <p>Being transparent about what is confidential and what is not</p>

		Building trust: There is a fine line between collusion and being a confidant
	3.3 Create a Conversational Space	<p>Giving them space to talk</p> <p>Avoid note taking in supervision</p> <p>Clear communication is significant to gaining trust</p> <p>Give YAOs space to talk</p> <p>Listen to YAOs</p> <p>Listening to them- pay close attention to what they say/tell you</p> <p>Conversing about things that YAOs are interested in can build rapport</p> <p>Fine line between trust and colluding-</p>
4 Effective Practice Skills	4.1 Being Able to Communicate well	<p>Clear communication</p> <p>Coming down to their level so they understand you</p> <p>Ensure the voice of the YAO is heard</p> <p>Communicate on their level</p> <p>Talking to YAO-</p> <p>Willingness to talk to YAO</p> <p>Willingness to have conversation</p> <p>Breaking things down in a way that they understand</p> <p>Communicate- Give YAOs the capacity to talk and express themselves</p> <p>Talk to YAO about what's in it for them</p> <p>Talking to YAOs on a level</p> <p>Tell them exactly what is going on</p> <p>Use different wording</p> <p>Use humour</p> <p>Conversing about things that YAOs are interested in - can build rapport</p> <p>Being able to speak to YAOs on a certain level</p> <p>Communication skill x2</p> <p>Using humour where appropriate</p> <p>Willingness to listen and provide YAOs with a place to talk</p> <p>YAO don't trust the system</p> <p>Using humour</p> <p>Do what you say</p> <p>Do what you say- Don't ever make promises that you can't keep</p> <p>Talking to YAO on a level</p> <p>Using relatable language</p> <p>Communicate-open flow</p> <p>Being able to talk to and engage YAOs on their level</p> <p>Good communication skills as well</p> <p>Speaking in their terms(?)</p> <p>Secure the YAO's trust</p> <p>Being able to talk/engage YAOs</p>
	4.2 Being Flexibility	<p>Flexibility- be flexible</p> <p>Flexibility- be flexible</p> <p>Flexibility- Being flexible</p>

		<p>Flexibility- Being flexible Flexibility- Bing flexible Consider a range of options Finding a balance Meet YAOs in the community Think outside the box You have to be willing to be flexible with YAO Being able to give and take Find alternative approach to offence focus work Think outside the box OM willing to change Being able to give and take</p>
Characteristic of a Good OM	5.1 Being Open	<p>Being open Being open Being open to the needs of YAOs Being open to the needs of YAOs approach: Be open Being transparent x2 Transparency Be transparent Openness Being transparent Be transparent</p>
	5.2 Being Honest	<p>Honesty Be honest with YAOs Being honest about what you can or ant do Being honest and open Being open Be Honest Be honest Be honest and open Being honest about what you can or cant do Being honest Being transparent and honest is important to build trust and rapport Do what you say</p>
	5.1 Being Relatable-Relatability	<p>Be relatable X 5 Being able to speak to YAOs on a certain level Building a relationship is paramount Build relationship Relationship-Foster a sense of connection Interpersonal skills Relationship Focus on building relationship Foster meaningful relationship Knowing about their home life, social life, amongst their peers Knowing what is expected of young people Knowing what's happening to young people in community.</p>

		<p>Learning relevant slangs- Important to learn the slangs</p> <p>Understanding how they work, not how I work</p> <p>Try to understand their world</p> <p>What is expected of them and what they go through</p> <p>Social expectation that they have to behave in a particular way when their peers are behaving in this way</p> <p>Congruence with YAO</p>
	5.2 Being Willing to Listening	<p>Listening- listen to YAOs</p> <p>Listen-Willingness to listen and provide YAOs with a place to talk</p> <p>Provide a safe space to vent</p> <p>Providing them with a</p> <p>List listen then engage</p> <p>Listen and engage</p> <p>Listening skills</p> <p>Interest: Show interest in YAOs life</p> <p>Interest: Showing interest</p> <p>Listening- The ability to listen</p> <p>Ability or willingness to listen</p>
	5.3 Be Genuine/Real	<p>Being real</p> <p>Being authentic</p> <p>Being real</p> <p>Sincerity</p> <p>Being genuine about who you are</p> <p>Be human/real</p>
	5.4 Being Empathetic	<p>Being emphatic X 4</p> <p>Show Compassion X 2</p> <p>Demonstrate care</p> <p>Have a nurturing approach X 2</p> <p>Have a little bit of compassion and understanding.</p>
	5.4 Show Respect	Respect
	5.5 Being laid back	<p>Officer characteristic: Being chilled</p> <p>Officer characteristic: Being chilled</p>
Master Theme 2: Obstacles to engaging Young Adults		
6. Means barrier	6.1 Limited Resource to Support YAO	<p>Limited community intervention</p> <p>Lack of appropriate programmes</p> <p>Lack of related or relevant tool and or materials</p> <p>Lack of appropriate housing</p> <p>Lack of appropriate programmes</p> <p>Lack of resource</p> <p>Not spending enough time with YAOs</p> <p>Poor social support or system</p> <p>YAOs may find it difficult to articulate their needs</p> <p>Not having resource to meet needs/expectation</p> <p>freedom for more interactive work</p> <p>Little time for home visit</p> <p>There is not enough time</p> <p>Less cases give you that time</p>

		<p>Little time for home visit</p> <p>You can't work with young people and have 30 to 40 cases</p> <p>Lack of specific YAO resource</p> <p>Limited resources to meet YAO's need</p> <p>Limited resources</p> <p>Limited resource</p> <p>Managing YAOs needs</p> <p>More ETE provision</p> <p>Withdrawing support because of signs of increase risk</p> <p>More opportunities for YAOs to have relatable role model</p> <p>Lack of therapy to deal with trauma</p>
	6.2 Structural and Organisational Barriers	<p>Location of local offices.</p> <p>Too much paperwork- it's all about paperwork</p> <p>SFO review does not consider the use of discretion</p> <p>NS is restrictive</p> <p>Discretions involve taking professional risk</p>
	6.3 Ineffective Practice approach	<p>YAO is not at the centre of intervention/planning OS</p> <p>Thinking for YAOs (Officer skill)</p> <p>Not being honest with offenders</p> <p>Difficult to strike a balance between help and enforcement</p> <p>Over emphasis on offence focussed work obviously sometimes you need to feed a man before you can talk to them.</p> <p>Take time- don't rush</p> <p>YAO's attitude- not ready (sequencing)</p> <p>Not following through with commitment (practice approach)</p> <p>Barriers to engagement: Anything that suggest you are controlling YAOs- e.g. AP (Controlling)</p> <p>Not being a part of, or understanding YAO's world (knowledge deficit)</p> <p>Lacking the resilience to support YAO's through the cycle of change</p> <p>Understand not all YAOs are the same (O)</p> <p>Knowledge</p> <p>Managing expectation, especially for those coming from the YOT</p>
	6.4 Attitude and Behaviour of YAO	<p>Unwillingness to deal with immediate social issues.</p> <p>Attitude of YAOs</p> <p>Conflict regarding authority figure</p> <p>Dealing with none compliance</p> <p>YAOs can be resentful to being on supervision</p> <p>Dealing with immature behaviour</p> <p>Lack of motivation</p> <p>YAOs are not forthcoming</p> <p>YAOs can at time be resentful</p>

		<p>YAOs can be rude</p> <p>The mindset of the YAO</p> <p>Sequencing of intervention</p>
	6.5 Relationship Issues	<p>Little time to engage with wider family network</p> <p>Young age of officer as a barrier- Officer perceived as peer rather than authority figure</p> <p>YAO are concerns about what they disclose to probation</p> <p>YAO are suspicious of probation due to pre-conceived ideas</p> <p>The lifestyle of the YAO</p> <p>Trust: Ensuring trust is highly essential</p> <p>YAO, can see officers as their friend-not authority</p>
	6.6 Lack of role Clarity	<p>Clarity about expectation</p> <p>Clarity- Having clarity about the objective of supervision/engagement</p> <p>Clarity: role clarity- be honest and upfront about your role</p> <p>Clarity- Be clear about expectation and outcome</p> <p>Clarity- Be clear about expectations</p> <p>Clarity- Being clear</p> <p>Clarity- Be clear about expectation and outcome</p> <p>Clarity- about boundaries and consequences</p>
	6.7 Managing Challenging Behaviours	<p>Trying not to take it personal</p> <p>Challenges staff encounter: Dealing with the reality not the reputation of YAOs</p> <p>Dealing with the reality not the reputation of YAOs</p> <p>Dealing with immaturity deficit-wanting instant gratification</p> <p>Inability to see through/understand disruptive behaviour</p> <p>Limited experience of dealing with difficult YAOs</p> <p>YAOs are disrespectful</p> <p>Challenges staff encounters: Dealing with immaturity</p> <p>Managing disruptive YAOs</p> <p>More difficult to deal with the real issues dealing with immaturity</p> <p>Managing immature behaviour</p> <p>Dealing with impatience</p> <p>YAOs choosing lifestyle over intervention</p> <p>An automatic dislike for authority/officers</p> <p>Unwillingness to engage</p> <p>Dealing with YAOs who are repeat offenders</p>
	6.8 Attitude and Behaviour of YAO	<p>Unwillingness to deal with immediate social issues.</p> <p>Attitude of YAOs</p> <p>Conflict regarding authority figure</p> <p>Dealing with none compliance</p> <p>YAOs can be resentful to being on supervision</p> <p>Dealing with immature behaviour</p> <p>Lack of motivation</p>

		<p>YAOs are not forthcoming</p> <p>YAOs can at time be resentful</p> <p>YAOs can be rude</p> <p>The mindset of the YAO</p> <p>Sequencing of intervention</p>
	6.9 Managing Meddling Parents	<p>Dealing with interfering parents</p> <p>Overprotective or absent parent</p> <p>Dealing with interfering parents</p>
Knowledge Management	<i>Self-Directed Learning</i>	<p>Accessing available training</p> <p>Accessing outside training</p> <p>Doing an external course</p>
		<p>Learning from the YAO</p> <p>Openness to be educated by the YAO-</p> <p>Learn from the YAOs</p>
		<p>Taking initiatives</p> <p>Self-directed learning</p> <p>Informal advice from others</p> <p>Limited related training</p> <p>Building knowledge: Little or no specific training.</p> <p>Missing training- Gangs training required</p> <p>Missing training- No trauma informed training</p> <p>Missing Training-Training providing insights into brain development and human development required</p> <p>No YAOs specific training</p> <p>Take advantage of training provided by partner agencies</p> <p>Using information from the WEB</p> <p>Attend mandatory training</p> <p>Newly trained OMs have the benefit of recent research/training</p> <p>Different ways of explaining the order/licence</p>
Using creativity and discretion with YAOs	<i>Creativity and Discretion is Risk Sensitive</i>	<p>Able to use discretion in none risk situation</p> <p>Creativity and flexibility is risk sensitive</p> <p>Creativity and flexibility is risk sensitive</p> <p>Creativity is limited when it comes to being risky</p> <p>Creativity and discretion: Easier to be creative with medium/lower risk</p> <p>Some flexibility creativity but not in relation to making recall decision/risky decisions</p> <p>Creativity and discretion: the need to be defensible</p> <p>Risk takes priority</p> <p>Flexibility: Limited flexibility with risk issues</p>
	<i>Creativity and Discretion is Possible Despite NS Restrictions</i>	<p>There is room for own thinking-but must be structured</p> <p>Reasonable amount of discretion to do rehabilitative work-Flexibility to work with partners.</p> <p>There is some flexibility</p> <p>Some freedom to be creative and flexible</p>

		<p>Limited flexibility with NS related issues</p> <p>Must remain defensible</p> <p>NS are restrictive</p> <p>There is some manoeuvrability</p> <p>Discretion is possible as long as it is defensible</p> <p>If I can defend/rationalise what I do then it is possible to use discretion</p> <p>Flexibility and creativity: I can use discretion as long as it is defensible</p> <p>Flexibility and creativity: I feel able to be creative and flexible</p> <p>Flexibility and creativity: If I can defend/rationalise what I do then it is possible to use discretion</p> <p>Flexibility and discretion: Limited flexibility with targets- E.g. ISP</p> <p>Flexibility and discretion: No flexibility when it comes to enforcement and risk</p>
How OM's evaluate engagement quality	<i>Compliance as an Engagement Indicator</i>	<p>Poor compliance and boundary pushing</p> <p>Regular and timely attendance</p> <p>They attend appointment on time -Not habitually late</p> <p>They look forward to sessions and they are engaging</p>
	<i>YAOs Show Trust and willingly communicate</i>	<p>Levels of disclosure from YAOs is a good measure</p> <p>The YAO trust you enough to ask for help</p> <p>They recommend / talk about you to peer</p> <p>Willingness to open up and trust you</p> <p>YAO call to tell you something- confide in you</p> <p>YAO shows a willing to talk to you</p> <p>Level of engagement and conversation</p> <p>Level of engagement- not necessarily compliance</p> <p>Levels of rapport</p> <p>Meaningful supervision sessions</p> <p>Not rushing to leave supervision sessions</p> <p>Small changes with how you interact with YAOs.</p> <p>Trust is present</p> <p>What the YAOs say</p> <p>Willingness to discuss/disclose personal thing</p> <p>Willingness to talk (genuine) in supervision</p>
Fundamental needs of YAOs	<i>Lack of Suitable Accommodation</i>	<p>Lack of suitable accommodation</p> <p>Homelessness-suitable accommodation</p> <p>Suitable accommodation</p> <p>Need for suitable accommodation-located out of crime area</p> <p>Housing</p> <p>Lack of suitable accommodation</p> <p>Needs of YAOs: Need for suitable accommodation-located out of crime area</p>
	<i>Lack of Appropriate Resource</i>	<p>Limited finance</p> <p>Poor ETE opportunities</p> <p>Deficit in finances</p>

		<p>Financial difficulties Limited ETE opportunities Resource-ETE</p>
	<i>Need for Appropriate Social Support</i>	<p>Someone to have faith in them - To have faith in them. To believe change is possible- To believe that they can change Fundamental needs of YAO: To be understood-To get their perspective seen To be understood YAOs Need someone to see things from their perspective YAO needs someone who cares and is interested in them To be understood- YAOs need to be understood. To be accepted - There will be a time within supervision that they will need to be accepted The need for stability and support- I think they need to feel stable and supported. YAO need someone to take interest in them- someone to discuss things as they arise YAOs need support (someone they can approach Need for guidance Appropriate people to talk to someone to listen Poor role model Negative peer influence/associates</p>
	<i>Consistency in Relationship</i>	<p>YAOs need consistency in relationship with practitioners YAO needs consistency Someone to be there- to be there for them when they need you Lack of stability YAOs need stability YAOs needs consistency</p>
	<i>Stable relationship built on trust</i>	<p>Need for trust YAOs need someone they can trust Lack of stability Setting boundaries and rules are important to build trust and rapport Trust is essential Trust is important I think it takes double the amount of time than it does with an adult offender to build that trust Trust: Trust takes time Trust: Absolutely important but not unconditional Trust: Honesty- is important to build trust and rapport Trust: Is as important as Honesty Trust: Is important Trust: Is very important</p>

		Trust: Is very important when your unit works closely with police Openness is important to building trust Trust: Trust is essential Trust: Trust is important Trust: Trust is important Trust: Trust is significant Trust: Trust is significant in order for YAOs to value what OM's say
	<i>Help dealing with vulnerabilities</i>	YAOs need help dealing with it Dealing with trauma Psychological support Mental health psychological support Difficulties whilst at school Deficit in maturity Lack of basic social skills- e.g. budgeting, shopping Susceptibility to exploitation- Sometimes exploited Young people are vulnerable
	<i>Self-Expression: to be heard</i>	<i>Need of expression/discussion</i>
Maturity and engagement	<i>Secure Attachment</i>	Family breakdown Need for Safety Lack of appropriate relationship with parents The displacement -Some of them has been displaced since school so they never had anyone
	<i>Impact of immaturity</i>	Poor internal /self-regulation Deficit in needs can undermine rehabilitative progress and or intervention Issues with drugs and or alcohol Lacking direction Lifestyle and associate Poor internal /self-regulation Poor lifestyle choices
YAO related Supervision	<i>No Specific YAO Supervision</i>	Available supervision is focused on managing risk Heavily focussed on accountability Limited supervision No specific supervision- part of generic caseload YAO related supervision: Not holistic in nature SPO aren't trained to facilitate YAO specific supervision Supervision is often based on targets Supervision is useful for general case management Supervision was target based (not specific to engagement unless management oversight is required) No specific support available Not from direct line manager

Gender and Engagement	<i>Gender Matters More Than Race</i>	Gender matter more than race Gender matters more than race Gender seems to or may matter more than race Gender matters more than race Gender is more important to engagement than race
	<i>Genders Matters More for Some Offences</i>	Gender matters based on the offence. Gender matters more depending on offence type gender matters when it comes to certain offences It matters for DV case In DV cases it may be problematic Gender matters more in DV cases it may be problematic
	<i>Some Male YAO Prefer Working with Females</i>	Male prefer female workers Male to male can be seen as a challenge Perception females are more caring Perception male workers are more authoritative Women have a different approach Gender and engagement: Women have a different approach YAO don't want to work with male officer
	<i>Gender Matters</i>	Depend on experience, knowledge and skills of officer. Gender matters more for marginalise group Female offenders have choice of worker, males don't Female officer may come across as not threatening Female service user is more manipulative Gender matter moderately- Gender matters more if you are a younger practitioner Gender matters more if you are a younger practitioner Gender matters significantly It matters more for vulnerable girls Matters when it comes to indivial engagement This female would rather work with males Yes and NO, it depends on the YA's experience Gender matter Gender matters Gender may serve a practical function
Ineffective Engagement Approaches	<i>Misuse of Authority</i>	Not exercising too much authority Being authoritative Being authoritative Being authoritative Being an authoritarian /authoritative- Being authoritative Avoid being authoritative Coming across as a prison or police officer Don't come across like a prison or police officer Use authority appropriately Dictating to YAOs

		<p>Don't dictate to YAOs</p> <p>Do not dictate</p> <p>Not being firm</p> <p>Rigorous enforcement</p> <p>Telling YAOs what to do- Don't tell YAOs what to</p> <p>Not being clear about expectation</p> <p>Be tough (hard on them for own good)</p> <p>You can't be too heavy handed with YAO-punitive</p> <p>Being an authoritarian like a parent/teacher</p> <p>Not being too police/procedure/process focussed</p> <p>Resist the need to always challenge</p>
	<i>Being Rigid/Inflexible</i>	<p>Being rigid</p> <p>Being rigid</p> <p>Being rigid</p> <p>Not being a know-it-all</p> <p>Not being too police/procedure/process focussed</p> <p>YAOs may not respond to certain formal approaches</p> <p>Do not apply a one size fits all approach</p> <p>Being authoritarian like a parent/teacher</p> <p>Don't blur the lines- be consistent</p> <p>Don't be unrelatable</p> <p>Flexibility: Be willing to give and take</p> <p>Roll with resistance</p>
	<i>Being Fake</i>	<p>Being fake-Not being yourself</p> <p>Being false: Not being genuine</p> <p>Don't patronise YAOs</p> <p>Don't pretend to know what YAOs are talking about- research it</p>
	<i>Being Punitive</i>	<p>Being punitive doesn't work</p> <p>Being punitive</p>
	<i>Being Judgemental</i>	<p>Being judgemental</p> <p>Being too quick to judge</p> <p>Don't be judgement</p> <p>Don't make assumptions about young adults</p> <p>Do not be dismissive of YAO's experience</p> <p>Do not be dismissive of their experience</p> <p>Ineffective approach: Becoming alarmed by disclosure made by YAO</p>
	<i>Being Confrontational</i>	<p>Being confrontational</p> <p>Being confrontational- Direct confrontation</p> <p>Ineffective practice: don't take behaviour personally</p> <p>Ineffective practice: Not showing alarm</p> <p>ineffective: Mirroring the YAO's behaviour can be unhelpful</p>
	<i>Mirroring YAO's negative behaviour</i>	<p>Don't mirror YAO's negative behaviour</p> <p>Don't take thing personally</p>
Appraising Engagement Effectiveness	<i>Conversation Flows</i>	<p>Conversation flows naturally</p> <p>Conversation flows naturally</p> <p>If the YAO can call you up</p> <p>Judge by the YAOs interaction with you</p>

		<p>YAOs are willing to talk</p> <p>YAO confide in you-Tell you about things going on with them</p> <p>There is a willingness to talk</p> <p>YAO open up to you</p> <p>There is a reciprocal relationship</p> <p>they recommend or talk about you to peer</p> <p>YAO have conversation</p> <p>There is rapport</p> <p>What the YAOs say</p> <p>YAO shows a willing to talk to you</p> <p>Small changes with how YAOs interact with you</p> <p>In their opinion things are going well.</p> <p>Build rapport</p>
	<i>YAO Demonstrate trust</i>	<p>Trust is present</p> <p>YAO trust you enough to ask for help</p> <p>There are levels of disclosure from the YAO</p> <p>Trust is present</p> <p>There is YAO are willing to open up and trust you</p> <p>YAOs call to tell you something- confide in you</p> <p>there is a willingness to discuss/disclose personal things</p> <p>Measured by a willingness to disclose</p>
	<i>YAOs are Compliant</i>	<p>There is regular and timely attendance</p> <p>They attend appointment on time -Not habitually late</p> <p>They look forward to sessions and they are engaging</p> <p>If they attend regular and on time</p> <p>If they are not rushing to leave supervision</p> <p>Not rushing to leave supervision sessions</p> <p>Level of compliance</p>
	<i>Signs of Progress</i>	<p>Engagement can be measured by: Looking for evidence of progress</p> <p>Poor compliance and boundary pushing</p>
	<i>Ineffective measures</i>	<p>Engagement cannot be effectively measured by:</p> <p>Reoffending</p> <p>Reoffending-not really a good measure</p> <p>Offender survey</p> <p>Reoffending is not really a good measure</p>
17. How to Motivate YAOs	<i>Demonstrate Care</i>	<p>Show you care</p> <p>Showing you care</p> <p>Acknowledge the difficulties they face</p> <p>Create a space for them to talk</p> <p>Acknowledge the difficulties they face</p> <p>Listen to them</p> <p>Be patient- it takes time</p> <p>Checking in with them regularly</p>
	<i>Sequencing: Care Before Intervention</i>	<p>Don't just focus on offence-Try and get to know them as a person- just trying to get to know them as a person before heading into all of their offending</p> <p>Don't rush into offender management work</p>

		<p>Focus on their goals sequentially x 2</p> <p>Be willing to deviate from the offense focussed work</p> <p>Set goals</p> <p>Having clear objectives</p> <p>Having a long-term goal- It's always ideal to have a long-term goal</p>
	<i>Connect with Family</i>	<p>Engage with family where appropriate</p> <p>Talk to family</p> <p>Talk to family members</p> <p>Connect YAO with a sense of purpose</p>
	<i>Focus on YAO's Area of Interest</i>	<p>Find an area of interest relevant to the YAO</p> <p>Latch on to something they are interested in- something they aspire to</p> <p>Use their interest as a way of motivating them</p> <p>Find out about their general interest, what they like</p> <p>Find out and show interest in what they are interested in</p> <p>Get them engage in something of interest to them</p> <p>Getting them to do things that interest them, work STE etc</p> <p>Focus on achievement</p> <p>Becoming interested in the things that matters to them</p> <p>Use their personal interest as a means of motivation</p>
	<i>Offer Hope/Advice/Support</i>	<p>Offering advice / support rather than deciding for them</p> <p>Show them the positive thing that the can achieve</p> <p>Showing them the positive things that can happen in the future- instil hope</p> <p>Recognise small and positive progress, provide feedback</p> <p>Being an enabler</p> <p>Get under their skin and support them</p> <p>Being supportive</p> <p>Regular encouragement</p> <p>Hope- they will do it again hopefully</p>
19. Race and Engagement	<i>Personality and Professionalism Trumps race</i>	<p>In most cases no- It's more about the experience of the OM</p> <p>Cultural awareness- understanding the YOA is more important than race</p> <p>Initially race may matter but it is really down to the individual skills of the officer</p> <p>It may initially but it's the work completed that matters</p> <p>It may not matter; practitioners' skill seems more important</p> <p>Personality of the officer matters more than race</p> <p>Race does not matter as long as the OM understands</p> <p>Showing compassion is more important</p>

		<p>The Knowledge and skills of officer is more important</p> <p>The relationship matters more</p>
	<p><i>Race as a Marker of Trust and Relatability</i></p>	<p>Race associated with trust</p> <p>Race equates to better understanding</p> <p>Race equate to the ability to relate</p> <p>Some YAO relate better</p> <p>Understanding the background of the YA is more important than race</p> <p>Being from a similar background is helpful</p> <p>Ethnicity can make a difference-It legitimises the quality of the OM</p> <p>Someone of the same race will understand their challenges</p> <p>YAOs identify with similar race</p>