

Research conducted on behalf of HMICFRS found that if people do not believe that the police treat the public fairly and with respect, they are significantly less likely to report crime either as a victim or a witness (BMG Research, 2018). How effective are measures in place to ensure that officers act with integrity and treat the public fairly and with respect? Your answer must be based on academic research rather than personal experience.

Trust in the police and the relationship between the public and the police is something which is an essential part of society. The UK's model of policing by consent only works if the relationship and trust between the police and public is good. The relationship between the public and the police has always been one of a volatile and easily broken one. This has also often been different for the different communities in the UK.

The integrity of officers and the fair treatment of the public has been criticised in past years, in this essay I will discuss some of the measures put in place to enhance the trust of the communities and in turn their willingness to report crimes.

The first method which has been implemented widely across the police is the use of Body-worn Cameras (BWCs).

The introduction of BWC's was to increase the transparency and accountability of officers when attending incidents 'Body-worn cameras can play a substantial role in improving police behaviour and enhancing public trust' (Ariel, Farrar and Sutherland, 2015). There are numerous studies which back up the fact that they serve their intended purpose as well as decreasing the number of complaints made against officers. Body worn cameras not only hold police to account for their actions but also give an insight into why they have acted that way. In the past misconduct investigations have relied solely on the statements given by officers to justify why they have taken the action they have, with the use of body worn cameras, the footage can now be viewed and reviewed to see if the action taken was appropriate and leaves no ambiguity.

The difficulty with BWC's though is the fact that they are totally dependent on the officers turning them on. Incidents where integrity is being questioned may not be captured due to officers not turning their cameras on or as will all technology the cameras malfunctioning and not recording the incident. This can result in officers' integrity coming into question and investigations into why this is happening. Officers are often not scrutinised if they forget or don't turn their body worn cameras on occasionally but if it is a reoccurring thing then this may lead senior officers to question why they are doing this.

The next factor that has been used to ensure that officers are acting with integrity is the comprehensive training and education that all officers receive. During initial training and throughout their careers with the help of training days, officers continuously receive enhanced training which focuses on their integrity. In addition, they receive training on ethics, cultural competencies, and de-escalation techniques which have all been proven to improve police conduct, 'officers who receive training in procedural justice are more likely to treat people with respect and fairness' (PERF, 2016).

Training and continued education can massively effect officers conduct and this can be supported by studies demonstrating that 'well-educated officers are less likely to engage in misconduct and more adept at managing complex social situations' (Rydberg & Terrill, 2010)

In addition to the above which are both related to officers' actions, there are also external factors which can affect officers conduct and integrity. The use of internal and external investigations is crucial when maintaining the polices integrity. It is essential for trust from the public that they know that there are processes which investigate allegations of misconduct, and this is done by independent people rather than it being completely internalised 'External oversight bodies, such as civilian review boards, can play a critical role in monitoring police actions and ensuring accountability' (Archbold,2019)

It is also essential to understand how demanding, stressful, and often traumatic the job of being a police officer is. Research has shown that continued and ongoing mental health support for officers increases integrity and reduces the risk of misconduct 'psychological support and intervention can reduce stress levels among officers and improve their interactions with the public'. Due to the stress of the job a high percentage of officers often struggle with their mental health, if we are able to tackle this then we will increase integrity and decrease the risk of officers partaking in misconduct. 'Seventy-seven per cent of officers reported facing difficulties with their mental health during the last year with 90 per cent saying it was due to work, the report said' (Butterworth B, 2021)

The last factor which has been seen to improve integrity amongst officers is legal reforms and the adaption of existing policies. Legal reforms and policy changes play a vital role in shaping the behaviour that is tolerated by the police. This can be policies such as the mandatory reporting of any use of force, which has been seen to reduce the risk of tactics which could be seen as more risky such as chokeholds, 'policy changes that restrict use-of-force practices result in fewer incidents of excessive force' (Maciag, 2018). This has been seen to contribute to a fairer treatment of the public. Furthermore, consent decrees, often imposed by federal authorities in response to systemic misconduct, have led to significant improvements in police practices and community relations (Rushin, 2017).

In conclusion, the measures which are currently in place to ensure that officers act with integrity and treat the public with respect and fairness are multifaceted and have extensive grounding in academic research. The use of Body-worn cameras, training, psychological support, and legal reforms have all contributed to the goal of a higher integrity and accountability from officers. Whilst no measure on its own will make a significant difference, when used together the combination of these strategies presents a robust framework which can be added to promote integrity amongst the police. Continued research will be needed to address the ever-evolving challenges of policing and maintaining trust, but the above steps have certainly made a difference and will continue to do so.

Word Count - 973

How effective are cognitive interviews as a means of obtaining initial accounts from victims and witnesses? Your answer must be based on academic research.

The success of an investigation and how quickly and efficiently it can progress can be directly related to the accuracy and the reliability of the victim and witnesses first accounts, 'an initial account is vital to inform any police action that is immediately necessary in respect of an allegation or an incident' (College of Policing 2020). This essay will be discussing the how effective the process of cognitive interviewing is in relation to initial accounts from both victims and witnesses.

To discuss its effectiveness, it is first key to understand what we mean by cognitive interviewing, 'The cognitive interview (CI) is a questioning technique used by the police to enhance the retrieval of information about a crime scene from the eyewitness's and victim's memory'. (Mcloed, 2023). Cognitive interviewing methods have their foundations grounded in psychological theories and principles which allow for both victims and victims to account more detailed and accurate recollections of incidents which in toll increases the efficiency overall of an investigation.

The process of cognitive interviewing was developed by Geiselman et al in 1985, and it is broken up into four parts,

- 1) reinstate mental context
- 2) report everything
- 3) recall events in different orders
- 4) change perspectives (Geiselman et al,1984).

This original version was shown to produce approximately '35% more information compared to controls' (Kohnken, Thurer and Zoberbier, 1994).

Prior to the interview being conducted it has also been seen in research that during the planning for the interview, making sure that the interviewee is comfortable will have an impact on the evidence produced, from research one of the main aspects is the reliance on the interviewing officer to build a good rapport with the victim/witness. Rapport building has been referred to as the process of establishing a harmonious working relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee (Abbe and Brandon 2013).

The building of rapport has resulted in '38% more information during interview' (MacDonald, S. et al. (2017). This is where we can first see how effective the process can be.

On the other hand, the fact that building rapport is an essential part of the process can be a negative because the procedure can be a time-Intensive and often more time-consuming than traditional methods. The detailed nature of the cognitive interview process, including the use of multiple retrieval paths, can extend the duration of interviews. This time investment can be a constraint in situations where resources and time are limited, this example is not one of which directly discredits the reliability of the process but focuses more on the practicality of it in day-to-day policing 'a major problem for many officers was that they do not have the time to conduct a full cognitive interview' (Kebbel R, 1999). This does not take away from the validity of the process but does question how practical it can be.

The next benefit which highlights the effectiveness of this process is from A meta-analysis conducted which was conducted in 2010 by Memon, Meissner and Fraser, concluded that cognitive interviews produced a significantly higher accuracy and more correct details than the standard police interview, this was with the amount of accurate information increasing from a range of 25% to 40%. It was believed that the specific techniques such as context reinstatement, and varied recall, both stimulate several of the memory pathways in the brain and reduces retrieval inhibition.

On the contrary the next limitation highlights how the variability in Witnesses and victims may not have been considered, the effectiveness of cognitive interviews can often vary depending on the witness's characteristics, such as memory ability, communication skills, and emotional state. Some witnesses may find it challenging to engage in context reinstatement or varied recall techniques, potentially limiting the amount of information retrieved, unlike the first limitation this limitation is focused on the reliability of the process rather than the practicality of it. It has been argued that this calls for the initial account to be taken 'as soon as possible before the gaps are filled' (Sammons, A. and Putwain, D. (2019)

The effectiveness of the technique can be seen by the fact that the College of Policing have adopted and integrated this method into the way they interview both victims and suspects.

In 1992 The College developed and introduced the PEACE model which is taught to all new recruits in the aim of getting the best evidence from a witness or complainant (ACPO, 2001)

The level 1 PEACE model which is adapted from the complex cognitive interview process, is taught to all new recruits in training in both England and Wales. The model is broken up into different parts 'These components are explaining the aims of the interview, rapport building, report everything, never guess, uninterrupted free recall, encourage concentration, mental reinstatement of context, and witness compatible questioning' (NSLEC, 2004).

On the other hand here, there is a reliance on efficient training and expertise. The only way which these interviews become effective is if they are understood and used appropriately by the interviewing officers. There can be a tendency for newer recruits to not be comfortable using the technique properly meaning it not being used to its full potential. 'It has been reported that in-experienced officers joining feel that they have been inadequately trained to conduct effective interviews with and that this issue could be solved by more on the job training, whereby the officer spends more time learning the skill in real life situations instead of in the classroom' (Dando, C., Wilcock, R. and Milne, R. (2008)

Overall, there is extensive research to support the effectiveness of using cognitive interview techniques to obtain initial accounts from victims and witnesses, it has become an essential part of the policing Compared to the standard procedure used, the cognitive interview produced 46% increase in recall and 90% accuracy. The findings suggested that the cognitive interview is more effective than the standard interview, producing higher recall and reducing errors. (Mcloed 2023) The technique is based on well-established and vast research into the understanding of how the

human memory works can be enhanced to obtain more detailed and accurate information.

As psychological research continues, and the understanding of memory continues to develop that the process as it already has will continue to refine and enhance the methods which can be used. In all there are several limitations to this form of interviewing, but these limitations are greatly outweighed by the benefits.

Word Count – 1066

Examine the various socio-economic and psychological characteristics which can make people vulnerable to exploitation by criminal gangs. Your answer must be based on academic research rather than personal experience.

The issue of violent crime by youths which often involves gangs has become an issue for the United Kingdom after years of increasing violent crime such as homicide, knife crime and robbery since 2014 (HM Government, 2018). A recent report estimates that 27,000, 10- to 17-year olds are street gang members (Children's Commissioner, 2018)

To tackle the increase in these types of offences it is essential to look at what causes people to become involved in these types of offences. This is why there has been extensive research into the link between socio-economic background and psychological characteristics which can enhance and increase people's vulnerabilities to exploitation by criminal gangs the research suggests that 'gang members are violent individuals and vulnerable victims, and that the current one-dimensional perception that gang members are merely violent perpetrators is amended'(Beresford and Wood, 2016)

This is backed up by a study by Raby and Jones which states 'The ethology of gang membership is multifaceted with a range of precursors, often occurring simultaneously and across numerous risk factors such as family, individual characteristics, social situations, peer groups, and environmental factors' (Raby and Jones, 2016)

Society has always debated whether nature or nurture will define the path in which an individual will find themselves going with and their lifestyle and choices and behaviours (Mcloed S, 2023).

This essay will discuss both, nature looking at psychological factors and the nurture being the socioeconomic impact.

This essay will first discuss some of the socioeconomic factors which will increase the risk of exploitation by criminal gangs. 'An extensive line of research has demonstrated that low socioeconomic status (SES) is a risk factor for adolescent delinquent behaviour' (Connolly E, 2017)

One of the most prevalent factors which effects this risk would be due to, Poverty and Economic Deprivation this factor is a primary driver of vulnerability to criminal exploitation 'The study for the mayor's office shows that the poorer an area of the city is, the higher the rates of youth violence are likely to be' (BBC, 2019).

Individuals in impoverished conditions often struggle to meet basic needs this can often lead to desperation and a sense of hopelessness. This economic deprivation can push individuals towards gangs, which may appear to offer financial support and a means to escape poverty 'poverty and a lack of youth services were fuelling the increase in child criminal exploitation' (BBC, 2024).

In addition to the factor of economic deprivation and poverty there is also a link between educational levels and the standard of education which people are attaining 'Literature has demonstrated that one of the strongest predictors of academic

achievement is student and school Socioeconomic Status (Sirin, 2005) This is showing that the better the education obtained by youths can predict their future socioeconomic status. In addition, there is evidence to show that if the children are of a higher economic status attending school, then they are more likely to obtain a higher level of education themselves. Education is a critical pathway to socioeconomic flexibility. However, those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds frequently have restricted access to quality education. This has a correlation to employment whereby 'Young people in long-term unemployed or "never worked" households were more likely to feel people like them don't have much of a chance in life' (Census,2023).

This limitation can often result in diminished prospects, which then often result in lower self-esteem, and a lack of constructive activities, making gang involvement seem like a feasible alternative.

The lack of prospects can lead to low self esteem issues 'Low self-esteem is, in general, a psychosocial risk factor that is associated with a wide range of negative outcomes' (Rosenberg, Schooler, and Schoenbach, 1989). One study state that 'Low self-esteem predicted gang membership (low-level and high-level) at a younger age' (Dmitrieva J, 2014)

Another factor which can affect young people's self-esteem and increase their risk of joining a gang is the sense of belonging, 'after being rejected by their conventional peers, youth with low self-esteem are more likely to turn to antisocial peers in an attempt to gain their approval' (Kaplan, 1980).

A sense of belonging is another part of why many youths join gangs 'need for a sense of connectedness as a significant psychological factor associated with gang affiliation'. This can enable gangs to prey on these insecurities, by giving these vulnerable individuals a sense of belonging and identity in addition to this There is also the fact that there can be a status which comes from being associated with a gang, this can often lead to these individuals who may have had low self-esteem to become more confident due to their newfound sense of belonging. 'Participants expressed the belief that "if they are seen as being part of a gang or being associated with older gang members then they will be respected by their peers' (Harris D, 2011)

The next factor which is crucial to understand is the community environment and the social marginalisation of specific communities. Most of the time people living in disadvantaged neighbourhoods will often encounter high levels of crime and violence 'Recorded crime in London is more prevalent in the neighbourhoods with the higher levels of income deprivation, Overall, 40% more crimes were recorded in the most income deprived areas in 2023 compared to the least income deprived 10%' (Trust for London, 2023). This exposure can normalize criminal behaviour and make gang involvement seem like a necessary means of protection and belonging. Social marginalization further exacerbates this by alienating individuals from mainstream society, pushing them towards groups that offer acceptance and identity.

The next factor to explore is the psychological characteristics which can make people more vulnerable to exploitation. A lot of the time these characteristics can

present as a direct link from the socioeconomic factors which have been discussed previously.

The next factor which will be discussed is the impact that mental health can have on a person's vulnerability and how this can often lead to exploitation.

'Exposure to violence is also associated with internalizing and externalizing symptoms, such as depression, delinquency, and increased aggression' (Gorman-Smith and Tolan, 1998; Schilling et al., 2007).

The impact that ACE'S have on young people is also something which can be seen here as young people from a lower socioeconomic background often have more this links to poor mental health and exploitation as 'Exposure to ACEs also relates to lower levels of mental and emotional wellbeing' (Boullier and Blair, 2018). Studies have found that males that have been subjected to the adverse childhood experiences stated above experience a complex relationship between violence, vulnerability, and identity (Frances, T. 2023) which in turn is increasing their susceptibility to joining gangs.

Overall, it is clear to see that there is a link between socioeconomic background and psychological characteristics which influence individuals' vulnerabilities to exploitation, by understanding the links we can better equip ourselves to address the issues and to break the cycle of economic hardship and poor education resulting in involvement with the criminal network. The better we understand it the more we can do to combat exploitation of vulnerable people and help them to avoid criminality.

Word Count - 1182

Critically assess the effectiveness of options available to reduce re-offending. You may choose a specific type of offence for this answer e.g. domestic violence, anti-social behaviour, knife crime. Your answer must be based on academic research, but you may make reference to relevant case studies.

For this essay I will be focusing on the effectiveness of the options available to reduce the reoffending of people who are involved in any form of violent crimes whether this be domestic, sexual or general violence. The task of reducing reoffending amongst the people involved in violent crime is a complex challenge which requires a multidirectional and multiorganizational approach.

Numerous interventions have been implemented with varying degrees of success, including rehabilitation programs, educational and vocational training, community-based initiatives, and systemic reforms. To critically assess their effectiveness, it is important to examine the evidence supporting these strategies, identify potential limitations, and consider the broader context in which they operate.

The first option to be discussed is Rehabilitation Programmes. These would include but are not exclusive to, programmes such as psychological counselling, therapy programmes or substance abuse treatment programmes. For the purpose of this essay I will focus on the CBT therapy.

CBT or cognitive behavioural therapy which can be practiced in a group setting has been seen to have a great deal of success when looking at a reduction in aggressive behaviour, in addition to this it has also been seen to be effective in the improvement of emotional regulation 'CBT programmes aim to build cognitive skills and restructure biased or distorted thinking. Elements of CBT for offenders may include cognitive skills training, anger management, moral development, and relapse prevention (College of Policing, 2018).

But what is CBT and how does it work? Well, 'CBT is a class of therapeutic interventions based on a common theory about the connection between our thoughts, attitudes and beliefs — cognitions — and our behaviour.' (Thomas Feucht 2016).

These types of programs have quite a good success rate with 'A six percentage point reduction in one-year reconviction rates was found when the treatment group was compared with a matched comparison group. (Sadler, 2010).

Similarly, it was also found that 'A meta-analysis of outcomes from all 58 studies in Review one showed a statistically significant reduction in reoffending of 25% among participants who received CBT compared to those who did not. The meta-analysis, containing 8 studies, from Review two showed a similar statistically significant reduction in general (23%) and violent (28%) reoffending among those who underwent CBT' (College of policing, 2018)

The challenges that come with this form of rehabilitation can be the fact that it can be costly, and it requires a qualified practitioner that can aid the sessions, the cost of programmes is often why a lot of them get disbanded which can then result in the positive work which has already been undertaken, stopped and reoffending occurring again.

There is little evidence to prove that this form of rehabilitation has negative impacts on reoffending and overall would be seen to have a high effectiveness in the reduction of reoffending which is evidenced in the above studies.

Another method which has had extensive research conducted for it would be the use and introduction of educational and vocational training for offenders whilst still in prison.

The effectiveness of correctional education in offender rehabilitation process is still under debate among scholars. As a result, currently, there are mixed perspectives on the effectiveness of correctional education (Patzelt, Williams, & Shepherd 2014) One study found that 'A sample of 3,000 prisoners with access to study showed 19% had reoffended within a year of release, compared with 26% of 3,000 similar inmates without' (Howse P, 2014).

Similarly to this another found that 'correctional education seems to play a significant role in offender rehabilitation process since it transforms offenders, subsequently; may reduce crime and recidivism rates' (Vandala, et al, 2019)

In addition to the above studies which have shown its effectiveness it also has the benefit of the costings The cost it would ensue for education is significantly less than the cost of a place in prison 'Courses we fund typically cost £250 a piece, he said, which is a minor cost when set against the £37,648 annual cost of a prison place.' (Clarke R ,2014).

On the other hand, a more recent study found that 'vocational education was not related to better outcomes in terms of either recidivism or employment' (McNeeley S, 2023)

From more recent studies though the outcomes have been seen to potentially have been as a result of the Covid 19 Pandemic whereby the results also showed lower rates of post-release employment during the COVID-19 pandemic. This was expected due to the disruption in the service and retail industries that occurred during the pandemic (Suneson, 2020)

Overall, this method seems to have many benefits, it is seen to be successful in most cases and does not incur a substantial cost to the public. In all the cost spent would in the long term be reduced due to the difference in the cost of the courses compared to a prison place. The research which indicated that there was not a link has also mitigated the reasons behind the findings resulting in an overall positive view of this method as an option which is successful for reducing reoffending.

The final option which has been used to reduce reoffending is the use of community-based programmes, this has been in the form of drug and alcohol interventions.

It has been seen that 'There is good evidence that a wide range of drug interventions have a positive impact on reducing reoffending' (Holloway et al 2005). Similarly to this another study found that 'random drug testing and treatment combined with sanctions for breaches which are swift and certain, but not necessarily severe, are found to reduce reoffending' (Hawken and Kleiman,2012).

On the other hand, there is evidence to suggest that the above studies are consistent with the USA, but there is no strong evidence to prove that this works the same in the UK. (Mitchell et al. 2012).

In addition to support after being released these programmes would also argue the fact that prison does not work for short term sentences and that reoffending would decrease if people served community sentences rather than being sent to prison. 'a number of studies have found that community sentences are more effective in reducing reoffending than short-term prison sentences' (Bales W D, 2012).

Overall, each of these studies have shown both positives and negatives and a varied degree of success, their effectiveness though is often contingent on the successful implantation, sufficient funding, and a wider societal and institutional context.

The Rehabilitation programs, educational and vocational training, and community-based support each address different facets of the reoffending problem and would be most effective when combined into an all-inclusive strategy.

However, there are critical challenges that remain. Ensuring the consistent access to high-quality services, overcoming stigma and employment barriers for former offenders, and securing sustainable funding for programs are all ongoing issues. Moreover, the individual needs and circumstances of offenders must be carefully considered to tailor interventions effectively.

Word Count - 1139

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