

Despite some progress, the system of juvenile justice in the United Kingdom remains excessively punitive. The state's response to juvenile crime should focus more on rehabilitation" (Hammarberg, 2012). Examine the effectiveness of rehabilitation and/or restorative justice as a means of reducing re-offending among young offenders. Your answer must be based on academic research, but you may make reference to relevant case studies.

Within this assignment, the effectiveness of restorative justice as a means of reducing re-offending among young offenders will be conducted. This assignment will discuss adverse childhood experiences as being one of the main factors for juveniles committing criminal offences. This will also involve the General Strain Theory as an explanation for the association between ACEs and violent behaviours.

The age of criminal responsibility in the United Kingdom is 10 years old meaning that anyone between the ages of 10 and 17 can be arrested and taken to court if they are alleged to have committed a criminal offence. Juveniles are automatically eligible for special measures to help reduce the anxiety that is likely to come with attending court. Special measures can include the judges removing their wigs and providing evidence from behind a screen (Crown Prosecution Service, 2023). It is important to understand the reasons why juveniles are committing criminal offences in the first instance so that early intervention by all agencies can be made.

One explanation for juveniles committing crimes is due to experiencing adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). According to Public Health Wales (2015), 'those experiencing four or more ACEs are 14 times more likely to have been a victim of violence, 15 times more likely to have committed violence against another person in the last 12 months, and 20 times more likely to be incarcerated at any point in their lifetime'. Intervening at the earliest opportunity when a child is showing signs of behaviour problems should always be considered. However, this cannot always be helped, and a child may go on to commit crime. Once a child has committed an offence, some argue that the best option would be to treat them as an adult and go down the route of imprisonment however, research has shown that this is not the best option and restorative justice/rehabilitation should be focussed upon. According to Lambie and Randell (2013), imprisonment of juveniles is not an effective option in terms of outcome and instead, community-based and supported intervention practices are a better alternative. Different approaches by agencies show better outcomes than imprisonment such as strong family systems, behavioural approaches, and police-led diversion schemes.

The General Strain Theory conducted by Agnew (2006) explains the associations between ACEs and violence. The General Strain Theory states that when an individual experiences stress or strain due to an event, they tend to go through a range of emotions such as anger, depression, and frustration. As a result of this, the individual is likely to release these emotions and respond to the strain by committing crime or acting in a delinquent manner.

Agnew argues that children experiencing ACEs are more likely to commit violence against others especially if they have experienced strains of child abuse, neglect, and parental rejection. They enter a cycle of their anger being caused by rejection, parents not being able to control them and as such, they are forced into friendships that consist of other children going through similar strains and emotions to them. As such, they form delinquent and criminal groups (Wyk, 2023). Despite Agnew's study on the General Strain Theory being a useful explanation, it could be argued that his study appears to be too broad and that any event could be considered a strain.

Whilst it is important to intervene early and prevent juveniles from committing crimes, it is important to understand how to deal with them if they have committed an offence. Restorative justice is known to be one of the better options in dealing with offenders in terms of the reduction of re-offending and the reason that not all victims wish to participate in the criminal process and prefer to see the offender repair the harm caused. Restorative justice involves the repairing of harm caused by committing the offence which can take form in different ways such as the offender going through mediation with the victim. This is known as 'victim-offender mediation' (VOM) which is a process that allows the victim to meet their offender in a safe setting so that the offender can be held accountable, and they can discuss the impact that the crime has had on the victim (College of Policing, 2015). Other methods include family group conferencing, sentencing circles, and teen courts. Teen courts are used in first time and less serious cases where the roles of court personnel are filled by other young people. Sentences can include apology letters, educational workshops, and community service. According to the Local Government Association (2022), restorative actions have been shown to reduce re-offending by juveniles by 20%. They also argue that the methods best used for the reduction of re-offending are systemic therapeutic approaches such as family therapy. It can be argued that providing youths with therapy at the earliest opportunity would prevent them from going down the route of criminality. This ensures that the youth is given a chance to speak about any strains that they are experiencing and provides them with the best support.

Whilst evidence has shown that the best restorative approaches are systemic therapies, parental programmes, and cognitive behaviour therapies, other methods of restorative justice are not very effective and causes an increase in crime. Research has shown that teen courts may be effective at reducing reoffending in the short term, but the effects do not appear to last more than a year and are no more effective than formal procedures (Bouchard and Wong, 2017). Another method used is putting juveniles in contact with prisons so that they can have feel what is it like to get convicted of a crime, however, evidence has shown that this method is not effective and has increased offending. Giving juveniles curfews to not be allowed in public spaces during night-time hours does not appear to be effective in reducing their involvement as victims or offenders of crime (Local Government Association, 2022).

Overall, restorative justice approaches are very beneficial, especially if used early on. Evidence has suggested that some methods are far more beneficial than others. It appears that therapeutic and supportive methods are the options that can have an impact on the reduction of crime rates committed by juveniles. Methods such as telling juveniles that they have a curfew and not to enter public spaces during night-time do not work. Methods, such as introducing them to prison, are also not effective and have shown an increase in the crime rates. It is evident that youths committing offences are doing it for a reason therefore, providing them with support and therapeutic approaches at the earliest opportunity is going to be beneficial in intervening with their delinquent behaviour.

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In a recent survey by HMICFRS, 65% of respondents agreed “that police in their local area treat people fairly and with respect” (Justice Inspectorates, 2019). Evaluate the impact of public perception on response policing.

Within this assignment, the evaluation of the impact of public perception on response policing will be conducted, as in a recent survey by HMICFRS, 65% of respondents agreed “that police in their local area treat people fairly and with respect”. This assignment will also explore the reasons as to why there are positive and negative views on the police.

It is important in policing to ensure that interactions with the public are positive so that the public has trust in their local police. A lack of trust can undermine the perceived legitimacy of the police (GOV UK, 2023). According to Tyler (2006), the key behaviour of authorities that shapes legitimacy is the fairness of procedures through which they exercise their authority. The way in which police are perceived by members of the public will influence how crime is reported and recorded. One of the reasons for the lack of trust in the police and the public feeling as though they are not being treated fairly is simply down to insufficient communication with the public. When the public is given a lack of or incomplete information, it can leave them feeling undervalued (Bain et al, 2014). The public only understands what the police are doing in relation to a criminal offence taking place, if they are being told. When the public is left wondering and assuming what is happening, they begin to lose trust in the police and assume that no action is being taken.

According to a study conducted by the Independent Office for Police Conduct (2023), the public feels more positive towards the police than the government with 38% stating that they felt fairly positive towards the police as opposed to 23% in the government. However, the study showed that there is a perceived failure of police to tackle crime and that is one of the main reasons why the members of the public feel any negativity towards the police. The statistics showed that 45% of people felt negative due to police failings to tackle crime and the lack of presence not making the public feel listened to.

Another study conducted by the Office for National Statistics (2015) supports the study of the IOPC, as their study in 2015 states that high police visibility was one of the main associations with the positive ratings of police. The statistics showed that 71% of the public gave a positive rating to the police for this reason alone. Perceptions of fairness are a lot higher when police are more visible in the local areas and it increases the trust that the public has in the police (Yesberg et al, 2021). This may be due to the public feeling safer within their areas knowing that the police are present to deter and prevent criminal acts from taking place. It could be argued that despite the study supporting the IOPC, it is quite an outdated view, and it appears that there was higher visibility of police during 2014/2015 compared to 2022/2023. A study conducted by the HMICFRS (2018) also showed that

there has been a decline in police visibility as in 2018, only 24% of the public stated that they were satisfied with the frequency of police visibility. The reasons for this may be due to a shortage of police officers and higher call demand. It could be argued that although these figures have been released by credible sources, the figures are not reliable and do not reflect the true perception of police by the public due to the dark figure of crime where unreported incidents go undetected and unchallenged, members of the public not answering the surveys truthfully or at all etc (Doorewaard, 2014). Therefore, it can be argued that these statistics cannot be relied upon due to them being unreliable and the lack of validity.

Overall, the public perception of response policing is fairly positive and statistics have shown that 65% of the public agree that the police in their local area treat people fairly and with respect. However, there is a percentage of the public who has a negative perception of the public due to reasons such as experiencing police failings to tackle crimes that they have reported and even just the lack of presence in their local area can have a detrimental impact on how the public are viewing police. One of the largest groups who do not have trust and confidence in the police are those of black and mixed ethnicity groups with at least 5% stating they are less likely to agree that police would treat them fairly (The Police Federation, 2020). It appeared that the positive ratings from the public in relation to the police are in terms of the visibility and their presence but according to statistics, it appears that this has decreased. This could be due to many reasons such as a shortage of police officers and an increase in call demand. Trust in the police tends to be higher where police visibility is higher as this gives the public the impression that the police are doing something to control crime and in turn, provides the public with confidence (Yesberg, 2021). Despite the figures being released by sources considered to be reliable, the figures cannot be relied upon to show a true representation of the public perception of police due to the dark figure of crime and due to people potentially not responding to surveys truthfully or at all which affects the validity of the studies.

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Evaluate the effectiveness of cognitive interviews as a strategy for obtaining initial accounts from victims and witnesses. Your answer must be based on academic research.

Within this assignment, the evaluation of the effectiveness of cognitive interviews as a strategy for obtaining initial accounts from victims and witnesses will be conducted. This assignment will also include a discussion of the PEACE model and the Betari Box.

Within criminal investigations, information must be obtained from witnesses and victims of a criminal offence as they play an integral part in an investigation. Cognitive interviews are a way of obtaining that information and can impose many positives. The framework that was created to assist police officers in investigative interviews is known as the PEACE model. The PEACE model was designed in the early 90s by psychologists and law enforcement as a way of making interviews less confrontational (Forensic Interview Solutions, 2024). It involves the process of planning and preparation, engaging, and explaining, account, clarification, challenge, and closure.

Alongside the PEACE model, another model that is valuable in helping us to understand the impact that our attitudes and behaviours have on other people around us is the Betari Box. The Betari Box states that our attitude has an impact on the behaviours of other people (Forensic Interview Solutions, 2024). Although the Betari Box provides a simple explanation for people's actions and how they are influenced by others. It can be argued that this is very vague, and our attitudes cannot be the sole reason for another individual's behaviour. There are always other reasons and factors as to why somebody has committed an act, for example, mental health, being under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol, experiencing trauma etc. Our attitudes and behaviours can play a part in somebody else's attitude however cannot be used as a reason for their actions.

According to Geiselman (1986), cognitive interviews were designed to aid eyewitnesses in recalling the details of crimes and were created in response to a criticism of the standard police interviewing technique. It was 'designed to improve the witness memory performance by using techniques from cognitive psychology to gain as much information as possible'. Geiselman (1986) argues that a critical aspect of law enforcement is the investigators' ability to obtain accurate and detailed information from eyewitnesses.

There are many benefits to using cognitive interviews as a strategy for obtaining initial accounts from victims and witnesses. According to Forensic Interview Solutions (2024), cognitive interviews have allowed for the correct information to be obtained by 30-50% and it allows the interviewee to have control over the event they are recalling. The statistics show that cognitive interviews are beneficial in obtaining information regarding an event that has taken place however, this may only be effective for events that are significant and rich in detail. The richer the details, the likelihood of

the individual being able to recall information will be greater. Cognitive interviews also require the individual to be co-operative with the process therefore, the investigator may go through a lot of timely planning and preparation and building a rapport with the person, for the person to end up not wishing to participate and provide many details. Many police officers tend to use a standard interviewing procedure as they do not have the time to conduct cognitive interviewing due to the rapport building and planning that must go into them. These types of interviews are only useful with certain eyewitnesses and cannot be used for everybody. Fisher (2010) agrees that cognitive interviews are successful when it comes to improving the quality of interviews however they require specialist training which a lot of police officers are still not having and therefore, are making mistakes which is affecting the outcome of the interviews. Gudjonsson (2010) argued that police interviews can go wrong and can have damaging consequences which shows that more work needs to be done with police interviews. Gudjonsson (2010) argued that police officers often do not recognise the vulnerabilities of victims and witnesses which can affect the reliability of the interview. He found that police identified 4% as being vulnerable and requiring support from appropriate adults 'whereas the clinical evaluation of detainees suggested between 15 and 20% required the services of an appropriate adult'. This statistic showed that improvements need to be made to ensure that cognitive interviews are being conducted as fairly and efficiently as possible.

To conclude, cognitive interviews can be a vital tool as a strategy for obtaining initial accounts from victims and witnesses. Cognitive interview statistics have shown that if done correctly with a sufficient amount of planning, preparation in line with the PEACE model and building rapport with the eyewitnesses, it can be very successful in obtaining correct information regarding an event. However, many police officers opt for the option of carrying out a standard police interview to obtain basic information regarding an event as they do not have the time to plan, prepare and build a strong rapport with the eyewitnesses to conduct a cognitive interview. It appears that cognitive interviews are successful in improving the quality of police interviews however the cognitive interview style requires specialist training which police officers do not have time to go through. Research has shown that more work is required in terms of cognitive interviewing and many police officers do not recognise victims' and witnesses' vulnerabilities when they are being interviewed therefore not offering the correct support through special measures or appropriate adults. By not recognising vulnerabilities, it can have a detrimental effect on the outcome of the interview as it would be considered to be unreliable.

Examine the positive and negative aspects of media attention when dealing with public protection incidents. Your answer must be based on academic research rather than personal experience.

This assignment will be examining the positive and negative aspects of media attention when dealing with public protection incidents.

When a public protection incident occurs, there is a high chance of there being media attention from members of the public and/or news journalists. There are positive and negative aspects when the media becomes involved with incidents. Sometimes, media attention can be a positive thing as it can assist with investigations. For example, the media is a beneficial tool in publicising an incident and informing a large amount of the public. Due to this, more people are likely to come forward and assist the police with the investigation by stating that they are witnesses to what happened or have vital information which could fill the gaps of the investigation where there is missing information leading up to the event (Feist, 1999).

It is important for police officers to continuously show principles and standards of behaviour set out by the Code of Ethics. One of the Code of Ethics is openness and transparency (College of Policing, 2014). Whilst police do not have to disclose a lot of information in relation to an incident, it can be a positive thing when police speak with the media if they are able to, to show the continuous demonstration of this ethic. Being open and transparent with the media improves the trust and confidence within police by members of the public, and in turn, they are more likely to want to assist the police with the investigation and any future investigations which over time would increase the rates of positive prosecutions (Metropolitan Police, 2021)

Depending on what the incident is that has occurred, sometimes it is easier to communicate with the media by issuing a statement and including information regarding the questions that members of the public or journalists wish to know. This should reduce the demand for information and take pressure off the number of questions asked. This will also reduce the likelihood of the media and/or members of the public creating rumours and causing a moral panic.

Despite there being positives with police communicating with the media, it appears that the negatives outweigh the positives. When the media becomes involved in an incident, this can open a scope for rumours to be formed by members of the public, especially if the police are withholding details regarding the incident, and this can cause moral panic amongst the public particularly in violent or sexual offences (Cohen, 2011). This can then prompt vigilantism where the public believes they should take matters into their own hands, and this causes more issues within the investigation. For example, there are groups known as paedophile hunters who claim that they are forced into catching predators due to the police failing to do so. The police state that these groups are

obstructing their investigations and creating more work for the police due to them being the ones under investigation for offences such as assault (Halkon, 2019).

Another negative aspect of media attention whilst dealing with public protection incidents is that media attention can affect police tactics. If the media releases information regarding an ongoing investigation, it can make any outstanding offenders aware that the police wish to speak to them and take action against them. This can create difficulties especially if the offender flees the area.

Sometimes, members of the public and the media may mean well and attempt to assist with the police investigation however, they can become too involved in the processes and end up obstructing the police by interfering with the investigation. In relation to high-profile incidents, it can be difficult for police to manage the information released to the media and this type of incident tends to be dealt with differently to an average incident. A media strategy will be agreed upon by a senior officer and any other police officers should not release information that goes beyond the agreed strategy. If information does get released beyond the strategy, it can have a detrimental effect on the investigation therefore it is important to ensure that all police officers and staff are aware of the agreement and there is no confusion (College of Policing, 2017).

Overall, there are positives and negatives to media attention when dealing with public protection incidents. It appears that the negatives outweigh the positives in relation to the public and news becoming too involved in the investigation and obstructing police with their enquiries, similarly, with the public taking matters into their own hands and interfering with the investigation and preventing the police from investigating diligently and expeditiously. If too much information is provided to the media, it can severely impact an investigation as it can give away to outstanding offenders that the police are actively looking for to seek action against them. If the offender is not aware of this happening, they are less likely to believe that they are wanted by the police. Despite the negatives, the media can be a positive thing and can help with the progression of an investigation. By the police being open and transparent in relation to an incident, the public is more likely to appreciate their honesty and in turn, decide to trust and have confidence in them to assist in the investigation and report crimes in the future. It can also take the pressure off the police if they issue a statement including the answers to some of the questions the public wishes to know.

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