

**A Participatory Action Research; Exploring the Economic Aspirations of Youth  
within the Context of the Community Wealth Building Initiative in Newham**

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## ABSTRACT

While the rising inflation and skyrocketing prices across energy, housing, and consumer goods place high economic pressures on millions of people in the UK, the link between socioeconomic factors and well-being is becoming unavoidable. While such a link is backed by a growing body of research that provides unequivocal evidence of the detrimental effects of economic precarity and growing socioeconomic inequality on people's mental health, the economic realm remains overlooked by the profession. More recently, engaging in a new sustainable and democratic economic model, such as the Community Wealth Building (CWB) initiative launched in Newham, has been put forward as one of many possible ways to engage in the economic realm.

Grounded in community and liberation psychology, this research was conducted in collaboration with young people involved with the criminal justice system in Newham, a group often highly impacted by the economy yet mostly excluded from its decision processes. This study used a participatory action research approach, hoping to shift the lens away from the decision-makers towards excluded young people by exploring their relationship with the economy and how they view their future.

A series of focus groups were carried out, and the thematic analysis led to four main themes "Growing up in Newham", "Education fails us", "Building a future", and "Unable to change bigger forces". The findings raised questions about the accessibility, applicability, and acceptability of the current form of CWB amongst young people who experience exclusion and marginalisation. Young people's experiences of the economy were found to be through poverty, lack of opportunities, barriers in education, and rising inequality. Young people were interested in conspicuous consumption as a sign of status, had a strong desire to achieve great material success and appeared to adopt highly individualistic solutions in response to structural and systemic barriers.

## **Glossary**

YP: Young People

Participatory Action Research: PAR

Community Wealth Building: CWB

Criminal Justice System: CJS

Youth Justice Service: YJS

Youth Offending Team: YOT

Director of Studies: DoS

Group Discussion: GD

Co-researchers: Young People who became co-researchers of the project

Collaborators: Organizations and people who supported the research project

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Overview

This research project explores the economic aspirations of youth within the context of the community wealth-building initiative in Newham, using a participatory action research approach. Chapter 1 starts with setting out the current socio-economic and political context within the United Kingdom (UK). It then presents a growing body of research evidencing the impact of socio-economic factors on mental health and well-being. With such evidence in mind, it considers the positioning of British Clinical Psychology while highlighting how the economy has been largely ignored by the profession. It explores alternatives to mainstream individual-centred psychology, including liberation and community psychology, as well as alternative ways of producing knowledge, such as participatory action research, all of which have informed the scope and method of this research project. It introduces a new economic model, community wealth building (CWB), which has been proposed as a possible way of practising community psychology. It provides the historical context and a current snapshot of Newham as a borough, which launched its CWB initiative in March 2020. It highlights the necessity of involving Newham's marginalised and excluded youth in shaping and applying this new economic model. It offers a contextual socio-economic and political background for youth in the UK before reviewing and critiquing the literature focusing on young people's economic aspirations across the country. Finally, it highlights gaps in research and sets out the study rationale, clinical relevance, and research questions. Lastly, it details why this research topic was chosen.

## 1.2 The current socio-economic and political climate in the UK

As one of the wealthiest countries, yet the 5<sup>th</sup> most unequal country in the world (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2022), the United Kingdom is currently living through a cost-of-living crisis. The skyrocketing domestic energy price, the rapidly growing cost of consumer goods and housing costs such as rent and mortgage place real and sustained economic pressures on millions of households following a pandemic that has opened and widened the

cracks in the current system, exposing inequalities (Patel et al., 2020). This was preceded by 12 years of 'austerity policies' that the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government introduced in 2010, which announced the highest cuts to state spending since the Second World War, further reproducing inequality (Nunn, 2016). These austerity policies were justified by the government as a necessary response to the 2008 banking crisis to return the country to economic stability. Such goals have never been achieved (Emmerson & Pope, n.d.) and arguably left the country vulnerable to the effects of a global pandemic by having an underfunded and overstretched healthcare system (Korea et al., 2020).

In October 2022, the shortest-serving UK prime minister's government crashed the pound with a budget that aimed to cut the taxes of the richest by borrowing money, throwing the markets into turmoil (Kutllovci, 2022). At the time of writing, the economic forecast anticipated by OECD is that inflation will keep increasing (*OECD Economic Outlook, Volume 2022 Issue 2*, 2022). Yet again, the new Tory government pledged Austerity 2.0 for public services and real-term cuts to benefits (Lucas, 2022); while people struggle to make ends meet and are forced to choose between heating and eating (Webster & Neal, 2022), the connection between socio-economic factors and well-being is becoming ever so prominent, indisputable, and unavoidable.

### **1.3 The impact of socio-economic factors on mental health**

A growing body of research provides unequivocal evidence of the adverse effects of economic precarity and growing socio-economic inequality on people's mental health. Socio-economic hardship, including unemployment, poverty, low income, debt, and poor housing, is linked with poorer mental health, resulting in high levels of distress (Friedli, 2009; Macintyre et al., 2018; Pickett & Wilkinson, 2010).

Furthermore, income levels, poverty, and changes to social security have been identified as risk factors for poor mental health across all ages (Cooper & Stewart, 2017). People with lower incomes, particularly those below the poverty line, are likelier to have poorer mental health and well-being (Kessler et al., 1994; Marmot, 2005; Subramanian & Kawachi, 2006; Ngui et al., 2010;). Those living in the most deprived fifth of households are two to three times more likely to experience mental health difficulties than those with the highest incomes (Bell et al., 2010; *Mental*

*Health Foundation Impact Report 2020 - 2021 | Mental Health Foundation, n.d.*). A similar association exists between unemployment and poor mental health (Clark, 2003; Clark & Oswald, 1994; Ohayon et al., 1999; Stauder, 2018; Theodossiou, 1998). Moreover, low socio-economic status has been found to lead to greater concerns about neighbourhood safety, again impacting mental health adversely (Meyer et al., 2014).

#### **1.4 Clinical Psychology's positioning against this backdrop**

Since its emergence, Clinical Psychology has sought to find its identity besides psychiatry. To validate and legitimise itself as a social science, it has privileged the values of disciplines with more of an established identity and a scientific status within the public domain, like medicine (Pilgrim, 2010). In doing so, it has medicalised distress through medical language, such as likening it to physical diseases like diabetes or cancer, privileging medical practices, and offering medical treatment while also attempting to discover biomarkers for 'mental disorders' (Deacon, 2013).

Marxist theory argues that neoliberal capitalism, as an economic and political ideology characterised by individualisation, competition, and consumerism instead of community, solidarity, and harmony, has penetrated all social spheres and shaped psychological thinking and practices (Cohen, 2017). As a discipline and knowledge complex, psychology has frequently been considered to create a self-actualised and reliant modern subject, a prominent ideal in modernity influenced by individualist ideologies (Cohen, 2017). While Clinical Psychology has developed and expanded its boundary, starting with behaviourism, and shifting its focus to cognition, it has been criticised for putting macro-level forces beyond its disciplinary limit, favouring intra-psychic explanations (Danziger, 2016; Smail, 1994a). This has also meant decontextualising human distress, ignoring the realities of social and material disadvantages and experiences of oppression (Bayetti et al., 2016; Friedli, 2016; Patel, 2003). Locating the causes and experiences of distress within the individual and promoting formulations of individual dysfunction can result in a position that 'blames the victim' (Ryan, 1971) and can reinforce the idea that failure to succeed in the dominant society is an individual problem that must be remedied by individual treatment (Cohen, 2017). It is important to note that Clinical Psychology is a diverse field with numerous theories, perspectives, and therapeutic approaches, and not all

theoretical frameworks and modalities have focused on the individual. However, for evidence of the dominant focus on individualism, medicalisation and reactive rather than preventative interventions within the mental health arena, one needs only consider the increasing move towards individually focused mental health interventions, either psychiatric medication or/and psychological therapy (Harper, 2016). The most commonly provided intervention in mental health remains to be psychiatric medication, as highlighted by the Healthcare Commission (2007) report.

The profession has long debated how much it should be involved in advocacy and activism and how much it should be a 'value-free science'. While processes such as medicalisation and individuation are argued to have occurred, some also critiqued that Clinical Psychology has become depoliticised, leaving out the political in favour of the 'pure' scientific and 'neutral' professional discipline in its bid to position and brand itself as an 'objective' and 'value-free science' (Russell & Bohan, 2007). Conversely, organisations such as ACP-UK and many eminent clinical psychologists engage with activism, advocacy, and macro-level work, such as working on policy, human rights, and public health (Browne et al., 2020), although they can be considered a minority.

### **1.5 Economy: the blind spot**

Smith et al. (2015) argued that the dominance of biomedical, psychiatric, and psychological perspectives on mental health had distracted the profession from socio-economic factors, as they are strikingly understudied in comparison (Shim et al., 2014).

Much of the literature focuses on the psychological aspects of individuals living in poverty rather than addressing the political and economic factors that contribute to the persistence of poverty (Macintyre et al., 2018). This is mirrored by social scientific research on poverty, where many of the explanations of poverty were found to be individualistic amongst the general public (Harper, 1996).

Friedli (2016) argued that privileging individual analysis over economic analysis has significant ramifications for how issues of social justice are explained and responded to. Many called for a shift from addressing individuals' psychological states to focusing on the political economy, which is about interactions between political and

economic systems within a society, encompassing the distribution of power, resources, and wealth. (Macintyre et al., 2018; Burton, 2015; Zlotowitz & Burton, 2022).

## **1.6 Beyond the Individual**

While there are many more non-individualistic approaches, such as Systemic Family Therapy (Dallos & Raper, 2000), that focuses on the relationships between people and Behavioural Approaches (Watson, 1930) that are concerned with the environment, only two approaches are discussed above as they underpin the values and framework of which this project was borne out.

### **1.6.1 Community Psychology**

One such approach is Community Psychology, which rejects a neoliberal way of thinking and doing individualised psychology and instead focuses on working with communities and people in the context of their community (Kagan & Burton, 2001).

Community Psychology is concerned with the impact of meso- and macro-level factors (social structures, socio-economic factors, political context) on the well-being of communities and firmly grounds itself in an understanding of poverty, oppression, disadvantage, exclusion, and exploitation, with a pursuit of social justice through social action, as a part of a broader movement for a just society (Kagan & Burton, 2001). It advocates for a more liberatory, preventative and transformative praxis—rather than just reactive and ameliorative – interventions. It promotes a shift from individualist to more collectivist interventions (Orford, 2008) to better relational empowerment, a sense of community and inclusivity (Boffi et al., 2015).

Community Psychology recognises that oppression based on various aspects of one's identity (class, race, gender and many more) can lead to states of learned helplessness, conformity, self-blame, and worthlessness (Prilleltensky, 2003). Coupled with other factors, this contributes to downward spirals in well-being and health (Prilleltensky, 2003). Hence, community psychology research and interventions target the wider influences and systems that create oppression (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005).

### 1.6.2 Liberation Psychology

A collection of Liberation practices has emerged across different locations and times, and under varying influences with an overarching aim to liberate individuals and communities from oppression (Afuape & Hughes, 2016). The most closely associated figure with liberation psychology is Martín-Baró (1994), who critically analysed psychology's tendency to reduce complex social phenomena to individual psychological disorders. Martín-Baró (1994) did not position liberation psychology as a new discipline of psychology but rather as an ethical approach in which psychology can be practised. He proposed that psychology needed a new objective, contextualising personal suffering within social and political spheres. He believed in the need for knowledge to be created in dialogue with communities and through psychologists giving up their roles as experts (Martín-Baró, 1994).

Liberation is not something that can be given to individuals (Montero, 2009). The psychologist's role is to move from an expert to a facilitator while bringing social context, power, and history into the purview, supporting communities to make sense of their realities, and engaging in co-producing critical analysis and social action.

In psychology, while there are exceptions, knowledge production is mainly derived from institutions in power rather than communities who experience marginalisation and oppression. This leads to questions about who determines what needs to be researched, whose agenda is being prioritised, and who holds power. Adopting a liberation approach means actively questioning conventional methods of knowledge production and power imbalances within research by working with, not on, or on behalf of a community.

### 1.6.3 Participatory Action Research

Participatory Action Research (PAR) is one approach that challenges the dominant processes of knowledge production in research. It is a process rather than a method that holds shared values of liberation, democratic participation, social justice and action with liberation and community psychology (Ochocka et al., 2002). It provides a framework to address the community's concerns and the fundamental causes of the oppression, aiming to drive positive social change (Kagan, 2012).



The critical difference between PAR and traditional research is the attention to and shift of power. While there is a spectrum in traditional research methods in terms of how participatory they are, in PAR, knowledge is specifically aimed to be produced by communities that have traditionally been excluded from the process of knowledge production and marginalised in general. Through PAR, community members not only participate in the research but also become researchers, collectively deciding on the topics to be explored, the methods to be employed, and the ways in which the research findings will be shared (Wadsworth, 1998).

Using the principles of working with -rather than for- communities, meeting them where they are at through the PAR approach, this project seeks to centre youth expertise and perspectives as vital resources for identifying and addressing community problems, positioning young people (YP) themselves as change agents. It privileges insider knowledge from those who are from the community.

### **1.7 Engaging with the economy**

While Community Psychology acknowledges that the current economic system is based on exploitation (Kagan & Burton, 2001), Burton (2015) argued that it often limits its mission to simply local action to improve conditions, failing to engage meaningfully with the economic systems and power structures. Zlotowitz and Burton (2022) further argued that the economic realm is often deemed a structural issue, seen as out of reach by profession.

Zlotowitz and Burton (2022) call for psychologists to engage in the economic realm, suggesting the need to focus on political economy rather than simply economics to analyse how political forces and power relations influence the economy and its outcomes and further how economic factors, in turn, influence political processes. They draw attention to questions such as who holds economic power, who lacks it, who has a right to ownership, and who remains perpetually dispossessed and powerless and how such political-economic power structures influence the well-being of communities. They caution that neglecting this level of analysis results in ignoring the alienation people can feel in their everyday lives. Furthermore, such neglect will hinder supporting the participation of excluded groups in decision-making, policymaking and democracy.

Zlotowitz and Burton (2022) further explore political economy as the context for practising Community Psychology and offer the Community Wealth Building (CWB) model as an example of political economy more aligned with the values of Community Psychology.

## **1.8 Community Wealth Building**

The growing degradation of the environment and unequal distribution of resources, coupled with the adverse effects of the global financial crisis, have raised doubts about the ability of the current growth-focused economic system to effectively promote the well-being of individuals and society as a whole (Matthey, 2010; Stiglitz, 2010).

In contrast to the neoliberal economy, which privileges global private partnerships without any loyalty to local communities, Community Wealth Building (CWB) is a local economic strategy aiming for sustainable, democratic, and inclusive local economies (Guinan & O'Neill, 2019). In the current system, communities can feel that their lives are controlled by powerful external forces, often economic in nature. CWB is about shifting this power imbalance, moving citizens from being solely bystanders to active agents who can collectively shape the economic future of their community (Guinan & O'Neill, 2019).

CWB reflects what is at the heart of community and liberation psychology and PAR; practices of empowerment and participation that attempt to restore and equalise disparities (Kagan & Burton 2001).

The term Community Wealth Building first emerged in the United States two decades ago and was coined by the Democracy Collaborative. Its first eminent example is Cleveland in the US (CLES, 2020). The democratisation and transformation of Cleveland reportedly inspired the Labour council of Preston, a northern city in Lancashire in the UK, who took the Cleveland Model and expanded it. CWB is not one congruent set of measures; instead, its principles are adapted to the needs and characteristics of the local community (Guinan & O'Neill, 2019). Key elements and strategies of CWB include community ownership, inclusive and equitable economic development, leveraging local economic multipliers and engaging with anchor institutions to support local hiring and sourcing (CLES, 2020).

Preston set out its CWB journey in 2013, through a comprehensive program consisting of various partnerships between anchor institutions representing large public or not-for-profit organisations (Manley & Whyman, 2021). Anchor institutions enabled economic inclusion and well-being within Preston by creating new procurement policies supporting local supply chains' development. This included support for local businesses, investment in the local economy, improvement in recruitment and employment conditions, and enhancing use of land and property (Manley & Whyman, 2021). Such interventions increased the money spent locally in Preston from 5% to 18% and within the county of Lancashire from 39% to 79% (CLES, 2020).

Improvements were observed in wages and employment in Preston by 2015, in life satisfaction in 2016, and in mental health beginning in 2017, with the largest effects in 2018 and 2019. These improvements appear to have occurred at a similar level across areas of deprivation within Preston. While other factors and influences may be at play, these findings suggest that their CWB programme may have led to economic gains, translating into mental health and well-being improvements. Preston was named the most improved place to live in the UK in 2018 (Partington, 2018).

When Zlotowitz and Burton (2022) discussed CWB as an example of community psychological political economy, they also made a case for involving marginalised YP in shaping CWB in their communities. They highlighted that YP who experience marginalisation, exclusion and social and material disadvantages are a group that can most relate to the significance of how the political economy determines their lives and futures.

### **1.9 Why Newham?**

Only 5 miles far from the UK's central financial district- the City of London, Newham is one of the most deprived areas in the UK, with one of the highest rates of poverty and income inequality across all London boroughs. The child poverty rate is 49%, significantly higher than the London average (London's Poverty Profile, 2022), and an 81% cut in youth services has left YP with little to do and few places to go (Newham Council, n.d.). Coincidentally, it is a predominantly young borough (a median age of 31.9) and one of the most culturally diverse areas in the UK, with 73%

of the population made up of minoritised and racialised communities who are also disproportionately affected, with a link between poverty and ethnicity, the highest levels of poverty being recorded among the Bangladeshi (61%) and Pakistani communities (59%) (Tiwari, 2021). Such

Before the 2012 Olympics, Newham had already suffered nearly 40 years of economic deterioration (White, 2020). It had been a disjointed post-industrial area with long-standing high degrees of deprivation and unemployment coupled with significant problems with housing (The Newham Housing Survey, 2009).

Newham has a very transient population, with a third of it moving in and out yearly. This churning mechanism has been argued to result in less potential for commonality amongst the self-contained networks (Fraser et al., 2019).

Regeneration schemes such as the 2012 Olympic Games, which promised to 'close the gap' between the richest and poorest residents (Mayor of London, 2011), have been criticised for failing to fulfil such a promise and even further worsening the situations of those who are the most disadvantaged (Bernstock, 2014; Watt, 2013).

The above context exposes a glimpse of material and social deprivations and reveals the unique characteristics of Newham, which inevitably play a role in shaping the residents' experiences of the economy. While such historical, social, geographic, economic, and political dimensions converge to create a complex and pivotal context, rendering Newham attractive for the locus of this study, the Newham Council also launched their CWB initiative as their economic strategy in March 2020 to address poverty and inequalities (Newham Council, n.d.), which added another layer of significance to the choice of Newham as a focal point for investigation.

### **1.10 Why Youth?**

While further education funding has been increasingly cut over three decades (Lewis & Bolton, 2022), free higher education ended in England in 1998 with an introduction fee of £1,000; it has increased to £9,250 within the following two decades. The cost of attending university has been individualised, leading to approximately £44,000 per person in student debt (Bolton, 2020). This has meant that YP enter the labour market with a heavy debt, which can add pressure when in work (Gill, 1995). Additionally, degrees may not necessarily increase employability. While real wage

growth had already been low before the 2008 financial crisis (TUC, 2019), youth have been severely hit by the knock-on effects of such economic collapse; unemployment peaked in 2011 (Marcus & Gavrilovic, 2010). The economy has stagnated, and austerity measures have resulted in an increased cost of living, a high degree of debt, reliance on self, and the fear of rising inequality, impacting YP more negatively than other groups (Chalari & Sealey, 2017). YP have faced a precarious labour market that offers newcomers limited access and insufficient jobs. Such jobs have often been unreliable, short-term, and lower-paid on zero-hour contracts with little to no opportunities for career progression (Ainley & Allen, 2013). This has resulted in the most significant rise in youth unemployment and underemployment; Gardiner (2014) found that 2 in 5 YP were estimated to be underemployed in the UK labour market. While YP experience such difficult labour market conditions, they are also bombarded with implicit and explicit messages that labour market failure is an individual rather than a collective issue, resulting from a failure to develop sufficient employability (Crisp & Powell, 2017). Furthermore, cuts in local spending have resulted in a drastic reduction in youth welfare payments (Watts et al., 2014) and youth services (Unison, 2016) and a sharp decrease in the fraction of young adults being able to move out of the family home to live independently (ONS, 2016).

Meanwhile, it has been argued that work has increasingly become intensified, meaning workers have to work harder and for longer hours in recent decades in the UK in a manner that disproportionately affects young workers (Felstead & Green 2017). Such conditions have been made possible and allowed to prevail due to the limited successes of trade unions in responding to changes in regulations in work, with some exceptions (Tassinari & Maccarrone, 2020). Furthermore, trade union membership has had a long-term downward trend (Beis, 2022).

More recently, while the COVID-19 pandemic has further contributed to soaring unemployment in almost all countries, it has also increased the long-term unemployment risks among youth in the UK (Deng et al., 2022).

It is crucial to note that YP are not a homogenous group. Due to intersecting aspects of their identity (Crenshaw, 1989) (class, race, ethnicity, geography, ability, gender and more), YP risk being triple or quadruple marginalised, disadvantaged and

excluded. Groups with particular intersecting identities were found to be more exposed to economic hardship. For example, YP from low-income families residing in deprived areas and/or from marginalised, minoritised and racialised communities and/or having particular experiences such as YP leaving care or involved with the Criminal Justice System (CJS), which have been linked to a vicious interrelated cycle of educational failure, poor quality work, low wages, unstable employment and frequent unemployment (Iacovou, 2007; Mizen & Yalcin, 2006). Therefore, this research project focused on youth who face multiple forms of disadvantage, who are often racialised and marginalised through criminal justice involvement, and living in an economically disadvantaged area.

### **1.11 Aspirations**

Aspirations have been a key theme within the socio-economic and political realm in the UK for the last couple of decades. The UK government have adopted the rhetoric of 'raising aspiration' among YP as a way out of enduring socio-economic inequalities (Spohrer, 2011).

A former prime minister, David Cameron, said, "You've got to get out there and find people, win them over, get them to raise aspirations, get them to think they can get all the way to the top" (Social Mobility, 2013, p.4.). Such rhetoric has been critiqued as obscuring systemic injustices and offering an excessively individualistic explanation of disadvantages.

Social scientists have investigated aspirations using various methods and theories (Baker, 2016; Croll & Attwood, 2013; Watt et al., 2012). Generally, aspirations can be described as idealistic projections about one's future, while expectations can communicate what one believes will happen.

### **1.12 Literature review**

A scoping review of PAR studies on YP's economic aspirations within the context of CWB was conducted to provide an overview of the existing evidence base (Peters et al., 2015). An initial systematic database search incorporating all aspects of this study yielded no results. Thus, the scope of the search was widened, intentionally dropping search terms related to PAR and CWB as no studies were found with either

combination. In order to comprehensively explore the breadth of literature related to YP's experiences of the economy, including their economic aspirations and goals, this scoping review employed specific inclusion and exclusion criteria, which served as the framework for selecting relevant studies and shaping the review's scope. The inclusion and exclusion criteria are as follows: All searches were restricted to studies in English. All qualitative and quantitative studies were included. Given the importance of the socio-political context, it was decided only to review studies published within the last twenty years, 01/01/2002 and 31/12/2022. In terms of geographical scope, owing to the unique socio-political-economic context described in 1.2, only studies focused on the UK were included.

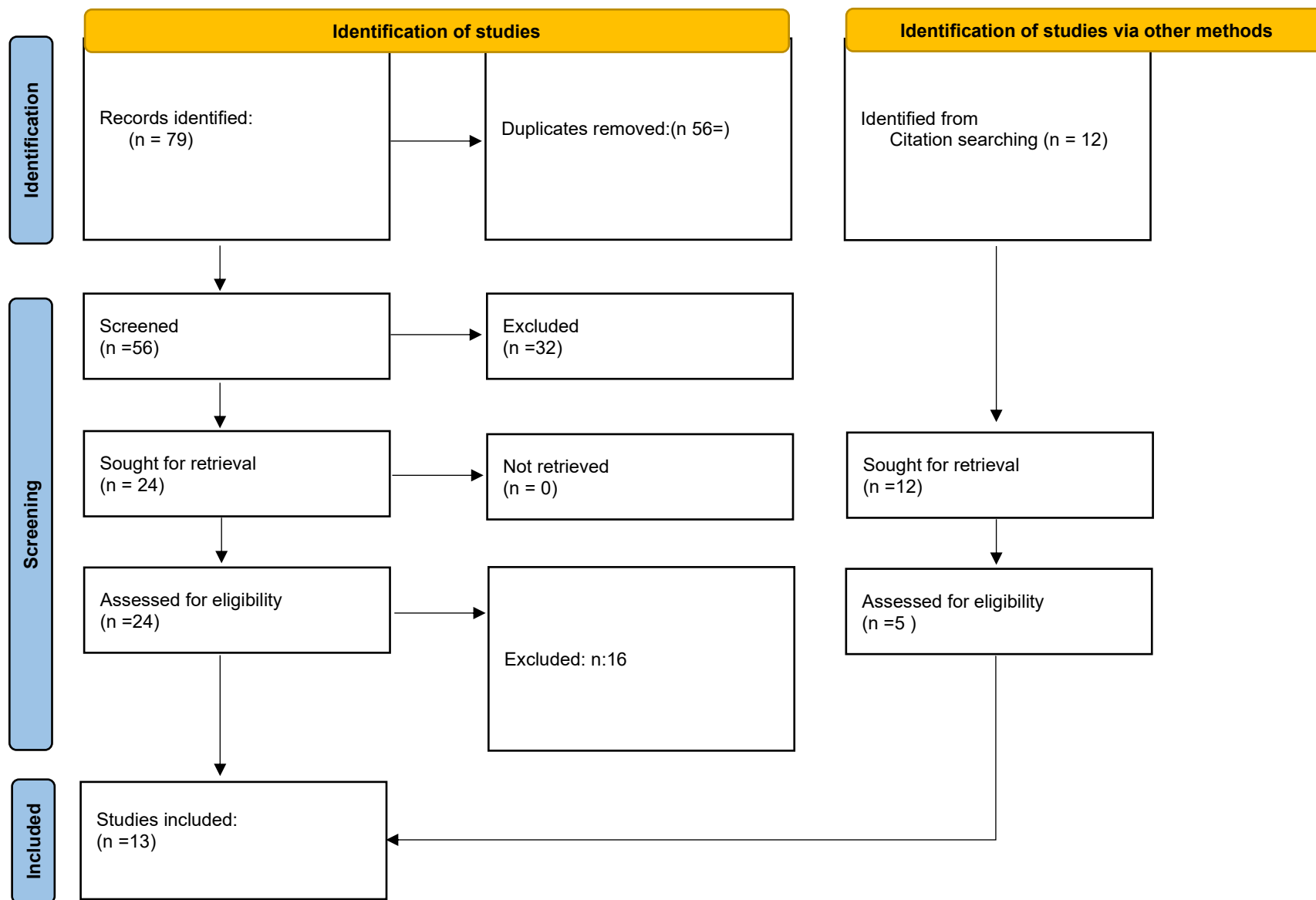
The search terms were kept broad to find as many contributions as possible. They were ("youth" or "adolescents" or "YP" or "teen" or "young adults") and ("economic" or "socio-economic" or "economy" or "financial") and ("aspirations" or "goals" or "hopes" or "desires") and ("United Kingdom" or "UK" or "England" or "Britain" or "Scotland" or "Northern Ireland" or "Wales").

A systematic database search was conducted using PsycINFO, Academic Search Complete, British Education Index, ERIC, and CINAHL to identify literature consistent with these objectives.

Appendix A details the search strategy, including inclusion and exclusion criteria and Table 1 presents a flow chart for the scoping review (Page et al., 2020).

After identifying some publications, reference lists were reviewed to identify other literature. This list was filtered through, and 13 studies were considered relevant at the final stage. Themes across publications were explored to synthesise various studies and identify gaps in research.

Table 1 Scoping Review Flow Chart





### 1.12.1 Descriptions of Individual Papers

Table 2

Author(s)	Location	Aim(s)	Study Design	Participant Demographics	Main Findings
Allen and Mendick, 2013	London Southwest England Manchester	To explore YP's future aspirations and what they thought they needed to achieve them.  To explore how YP's educational and career aspirations relate to celebrities and their social gender and class.	Qualitative  Semi-structured focus groups  Analysed Using Thematic Analysis	N: 148  Gender: 81 female, 67 male  Age (yrs): range = 14-18  Ethnicity: Asian: 27 (Pakistani and Indian), Black (Caribbean and African): 9 Somali: 7 Afghan :5 Mixed: 9	Themes included hard work, thrift, entrepreneurship, authenticity, and happiness, optimism, resilience, and self-realisation. YP's aspirations drew on individualised frameworks which position future success as dependent on individual effort, determination, and entrepreneurialism.
Croll (2008)	England	To examine the ways in which	Quantitative	N: 763	YP were found to be occupationally ambitious; they appeared to be more

		<p>individuals' responses and educational achievements persist or evolve across generations, as well as to assess the extent to which socio-economic and occupational advantages or disadvantages are inherited within families.</p>	<p>Panel Survey Exploratory Longitudinal and Cross-Generational Data Analysis</p>	<p>Gender: Not specified</p> <p>Age (yrs): 15</p> <p>Ethnicity: White (77%) White and Black Caribbean (2%), White and Black African (less than 1%) White and Asian (1%) any other mixed background (&gt;1%) Indian (6%) Pakistani (5%) Bangladeshi (4%) Caribbean (3%) African (3%) Chinese (&gt;1%), any other (&gt;1%)</p>	<p>aspired to professional, managerial, and technical jobs than the possible availability of such positions. Occupational outcomes were linked to early decision-making, educational achievements, and the occupational backgrounds of parents.</p>
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<p>Gutman and Schoon (2012)</p>	<p>England</p>	<p>To explore the factors contributing to the development of uncertain aspirations regarding educational advancement.</p>	<p>Quantitative  Longitudinal Panel Survey  Analysis: Descriptive statistics, an analysis of variance (ANOVA), structural equation modelling (SEM) and The Satorra–Bentler Scaled Chi-square Difference Test.</p>	<p>N: 8309  Gender: 4120 females and 4189 males  Age (yrs):11-14  Ethnicity: Same sample as above</p>	<p>Parents' educational expectations served as a mediating factor in the connection between socioeconomic status and uncertain aspirations. Likewise, the link between academic performance at the age of 11 and uncertain aspirations was mediated by both parents' educational expectations and the self-perceived ability of adolescents. This, in turn, predicted academic performance at the age of 16 and enrolment in educational programs at the age of 18.</p>
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Franceschelli and Keating (2018)	England	To examine how the perspectives of YP interact with their lived experiences, taking into account factors such as age, social institutions, and individual backgrounds.	Mixed methods  A cross-sectional web survey, semi-structured interviews.  Analysed Using Inductive and Deductive Thematic Analysis	N: 1,003 (survey) N: 101 (interviews)  Gender: 52 male, 49 female  Age (yrs):  Ethnicity: White British: 57 Black British: 19 British Asian: 16 Other: 9	While there was some recognition of the struggles and difficulties presented by systemic and structural conditions, there was an overall optimism about the future. Such optimism appeared to be borne out of a prevalent and deep-rooted belief within YP that working hard enough would result in actualising their goals. However, this belief was coupled with anxiety due to uncertainty about employment opportunities and working conditions.
Keating and Melis (2022):	England Wales Scotland	This study looked at how agency and resources influence youth optimism about	Mixed Method	N: 2025  Gender: 57.6% female, 42.4% male	Individual resources and attitudes had an independent effect on levels of youth optimism. Self-efficacy coupled with educational resources was argued to be the strongest

		their futures, separately and in interaction with one another.	Cross-sectional survey, Interviews  Exploratory factor analysis, Confirmatory factor analysis, stepwise multivariable regression models	Age (yrs):22-29  Ethnicity: Not specified but reported to be broadly representative	predictor of youth optimism. Attitudes such as individualism affected youth optimism in various ways, depending on the individual-level resources available to them. Those with fewer resources, such as YP not in education, employment and training (NEET), were found to be more pessimistic than their peers only if they were highly individualistic, indicating an exacerbating effect of negative attitudes on a disadvantaged socio-economic position.
Baker (2016)	East London	To seek views on YP's aspirations, exploring how they viewed their future, made	Qualitative  Semi-structured interviews	N: 29  Gender: Not specified  Age (yrs):16-18	Aspirations were associated with identity formation, hard work, social hierarchies, respect, and status. YP experienced and interpreted their aspirations as part of an evaluative

		sense of opportunity and social mobility.	Analysis: Not specified	Ethnicity: 25 per cent of students identified as 'White British', the majority reported to come from minoritised groups. (Pakistani, Bangladeshi, and Afro-Caribbean).	narrative about who they are and the person they wish to become.
Berry and McDaniel (2020)	Manchester , Grantham, London	To explore YP's attitudes towards labour market precarity and industrial relations.	Qualitative  Semi-structured  Focus Groups  Analysed  Using Deductive	N: 32  Gender: Not specified  Age (yrs): (18-25)  Ethnicity: Not specified	There was a generally negative outlook amongst young workers on the wider economic context, appeared to be driven by a combination of the financial crises of 2008, the uncertainty caused by the Brexit vote, increasing costs of living, the unattainable housing market, stagnant wages, and cuts to public spending. While YP experienced significant challenges in the labour

			Thematic Analysis		market, and there was a strong sense that while they liked the idea of trade unionism and believed in the power of politics to transform economic lives, they did not turn to trade unions for support and opportunities for collective bargaining.
Allen and Hollingworth (2013)	Greater London, Nottingham Stoke on Trent	To investigate the perceptions of YP residing in predominantly working-class and socioeconomically disadvantaged areas regarding employment opportunities in the creative industries, with a focus on accessibility.	Qualitative  Individual and group interviews  Analysed Using Discursive Thematic Analysis	N: 28  Gender: Not specified  Age (yrs): 14-16  Ethnicity: Not specified	The intersection of social class and geographic location was found to play a complex role in influencing the aspirations and potential for upward mobility of YP in the knowledge-based economy. In particular, students in Nottingham and London displayed more prevalent and specific aspirations related to the creative sector. YP's perceptions of their place in the world and the potential for mobility were shaped by localized dynamics encompassing material

					circumstances, social interactions, and imagined possibilities.
Sinclair, McKendrick and Scott (2010):	Glasgow	To explore the attitudes towards education and employment among YP in a deprived area.	Quantitative Survey Analysis: Multivariate analyses	N: 307 Gender: Not specified Age (yrs): 13-18 Ethnicity: Not specified	Despite many disadvantages, most were found to be ambitious and had high aspirations and expectations for their future; they were neither discouraged nor cynical about the opportunity gap they were confronted with.
Frostick, Phillips, Renton and Moore (2015)	London	To examine the future aspirations of YP with low-socio-economic-status from across inner-city London.	Quantitative Survey Analysed using multiple Imputation.	N: 1214 Gender: 49.5 % male; 50.5 % female Age (yrs): (11–16) and Ethnicity: White British (22 %) Black African (21 %)	Aspiration levels displayed variations across different ethnicities, genders, family backgrounds, and school and peer relationships. The influence of reported income levels, indicated by family affluence, was significant only in relation to aspirations for higher education. White British YP reported lower aspirations in education and occupation compared to other ethnic



				black Caribbean (9 %), Indian/Pakistani/Bangladesh i/Other Asian (24 %) Mixed ethnicity (9 %), and 15 % defining themselves as Other.	groups, while black African YP expressed the highest educational aspirations. Perceived parental support for education demonstrated the strongest positive correlation with aspirations. Furthermore, aspirations were found to be negatively associated with perceptions of the school and peer environment.
Law, Finney and Swann (2014)	Leeds	To explore the relationships between aspects of identity, namely age (young) and race (black) and educational and career aspirations.	Mixed Method  Large cross-national quantitative survey, qualitative community based fieldwork	N: 10  Gender: Male  Age (yrs): 15  Ethnicity: Black (Caribbean-African)	This study demonstrated the driving search for personal autonomy and agency by young black men, which translated to high levels of education and career aspirations.

			Analysis: Not specified		
Archer, DeWitt and Wong (2013):	England	To explore YP's aspirations and what influences these.	Mixed Method  Quantitative online survey Interviews with parents  Analysed Using Theoretically Informed analysis	N: 9000 (survey) Age: 10-14 Ethnicity: White: 74.9% Asian: 8.9% Black: 7.5% Chinese/Far Eastern: 1.4% Mixed/other: 7.8%  N: 170 (interviews) 78 parents,  Age: 12-13	This study demonstrated how aspirations were formed by structural forces such as social class, gender and ethnicity and how different domains of influence, such as home/family, school, leisure and TV, tended to form different types of aspirations.
Croll and Attwood (2013)	England	To examine the relationship between social background,	Mixed Methods	N: 21,000  Gender: 13/14 up until 19/20	The study demonstrated that differences in school-level attainment associated with the social background are the most significant

		attainment, and university participation.	Longitudinal Panel Survey Semi-structured interviews  Analysed using regression.	Age: 14-15  Ethnicity: Not specified	explanation for social background disparities in higher education attendance. However, attainment did not account for a small fraction of the participation gap. Another finding was that early plans to partake in higher education were highly predictive of actual participation.
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### 1.12.2 Summary of the Literature

Despite not taking PAR, CWB or Newham as their research focus, the above studies provided insights concerning YP's economic aspirations in the UK. The review identified four themes across the 13 studies.

#### 1.12.2.1 *Hard work:*

Hard work and closely associated terms such as focus, diligence, persistence, and determination emerged across all studies. Franceschelli and Keating (2018) linked youth optimism with their deep-seated belief that enough hard work would lead to the actualisation of aspirations and prosperity. Similar sentiments emerged in other studies that if one tried enough, one could achieve anything (Croll, 2008).

#### 1.12.2.2 *High aspirations:*

The review revealed that YP had high aspirations despite the various disadvantages and structural inequalities they face (Archer et al., 2013; Baker, 2016; Croll, 2008; Frostick et al., 2015; Sinclair et al., 2010). Croll and Attwood (2013) demonstrated high aspirations to be a strong predictor of higher education aspirations. Baker (2016) found that high aspirations were associated with economic success, security, respectability, and status, and not having high aspirations was stigmatised. There was variation across ethnicities; white British people reported lower aspirations than any other ethnic group, and black African people reported the highest educational aspirations (Frostick et al., 2015; Law et al., 2014a). Similarly, minoritised and racialised youth reported higher levels of optimism (Keating & Melis, 2022).

#### 1.12.2.3 *Structural Forces:*

A number of studies evidenced that YP's choices were limited and constrained by structural forces. Gutman & Schoon (2011) found that lower socio-economic status coupled with lower prior achievement led to uncertainty in career aspirations. However, they also found that when other resources and support systems, such as parental educational expectations, school motivation, perceptions of academic ability

and valuable career advice, were in place, YP tended to be high achievers despite their socio-economic background. Croll & Attwood (2013) further highlighted the significance of socio-economic status, finding that YP from professional and managerial backgrounds are more than twice as likely to go to university than those whose parents had manual occupations. Conversely, Keating and Melis (2022) found that the socio-economic factors presented a more multifaceted perspective. Firstly, they found that parental occupation did not demonstrate statistical significance. Secondly, contrary to their expectations, YP with higher levels of cultural capital (such as having books at home) exhibited lower levels of youth optimism.

While YP largely internalised precarious labour market conditions, competition to find work and heightened precarity in the job market were also identified as structural forces that were deemed impossible to change in the study carried out by Berry and McDaniel (2020).

The analysis by Allen & Hollingworth (2013) added the role of spatial context to the role of school and family in shaping aspirations. By investigating the dispositional positioning of YP in three urban locales, they demonstrated that localised sets of material, social and imagined relations are central to creating YP's sense of place in the world and their mobility possibilities.

Law et al. (2014) drew attention to the persistent patterns of hostility, segregation, and inequality within the educational settings in the UK for young black men. Three-quarters reported having experienced unfair treatment compared to others. They were twice as likely to feel the way sanctions were distributed among pupils was an issue. Furthermore, young black men were reported to be aware of the external environment of negative, hostile racial stereotyping and how these may influence their futures. YP's longing to escape being othered was strongly voiced, with some articulating narratives of emancipation and liberation from differential and discriminatory treatment.

Finally, Archer et al. (2013) contributed evidence for gendered, classed and racialised patterns within students' aspirations.

#### 1.12.2.4 *Individualism:*

The literature pointed to a process whereby structural inequalities were translated into individual problems. Although structural forces were acknowledged, the macro-level structural forces within which difficulties are shaped were often overlooked. YP's responses and solutions to such problems were individualistic e.g., personal development and adapting to their competitive environment, rather than collective, e.g., trade unionism (Berry & McDaniel, 2020). It is possible to interpret such a theme with the wider trend and context of individualisation within the neo-liberal capitalism that has been influencing the UK.

#### 1.12.3 Critique of the Literature

Within the literature review, the studies predominantly adopted mixed methods or quantitative approaches, often including large-scale surveys. While such large-scale data revealed broad patterns and trends and allowed more generalisability of findings to larger populations, it is possible to critique them as having limited ability to explore individual perspectives, resulting in limited depth. Furthermore, some studies (Croll, 2008; Guttman & Schoon, 2012) involved longitudinal surveys that are susceptible to time-related confounders, bound to change over time and can influence outcomes being measured, particularly when a topic such as this, where socio-economic and political context can have a considerable influence on how YP experience the economy, economic forces, and relations.

The literature review also featured small-scale focus group studies, such as Berry & McDaniel (2020). While they do not tend to lend themselves to claims or findings with precise or measurable external validity, they allow in-dept exploration, gaining insight into people's opinions, attitudes, and perceptions and allowed capturing group dynamics and interactions, responding to, and building on each other's ideas (Willig, 2013).

All data used in the existing literature was limited, as it predates the pandemic and cannot take into account the unique circumstances of the current socio-economic and political context that were listed in chapter 1.2, for example, Brexit, COVID-19, the cost-of-living crisis and austerity 2.0. Further, while some focused on racialised

YP (Law et al., 2014), others acknowledged the lack of representation of YP who experience disadvantages and are from a less privileged family background (Gutman et al., 2011). However, none of the studies explicitly focused on excluded and marginalised groups of YP through criminal justice system involvement.

Participation in research can vary along a spectrum, ranging from non-participation to full partnership. All studies adopted a traditional research process with little to no participatory elements. The studies did not aim to be participatory except for one study (Franceschelli & Keating, 2018), which used a small-scale participatory method as part of their project. Within others, YP were considered subjects of research rather than active players involved in conducting the research. Youth PAR, which aims for full partnership, has been argued to offer several advantages, such as recognising the unique perspectives and capabilities of YP, ensuring that research topics and questions are relevant to the lived experiences of YP, inviting them to become active agents of change in their communities and beyond (Foster-Fishman et al., 2010).

While some studies did not report the ethnicity of participants (Croll, 2008; Berry & McDaniel, 2020), most did, and some studies created two categories: “White British” and “ethnic minorities” (Allen & Hollingworth, 2013; Baker, 2016) or even though one study specified different ethnicities, they coded ethnicity in the analysis as (1) White versus (0) other ethnic groups (Gutman et al., 2011). This approach and use of BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) homogenise different groups together by virtue of non-whiteness, losing their varying experiences. It also perpetuates the gaze of whiteness as the default and the norm, which the researcher looks through.

Only a few studies were carried out in socially and economically deprived areas (Allen & Hollingworth, 2013; Sinclair et al., 2010; Frostick et al., 2015) Socio-geographically, Baker’s (2016) study appeared significant as it was conducted in East London and its participants came from highly disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Socio-economically, only one study focused on a socially disadvantaged area (Sinclair et al., 2010).

Finally, while some studies explained their findings through analyses of economic models of which YP are part of, no studies have considered the relationships YP have with economic models, initiatives or strategies that would affect them.

#### 1.12.4 Research Gap

As the literature review revealed, there is little research that addresses the complex interactions of various social identities and factors that shape young individuals' experiences regarding their economic aspirations. Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989) recognizes that individuals hold multiple identities (such as race, gender, sexuality, class and more) which intersect to create unique experiences and challenges. There is a research gap concerning the experiences of youth who are often racialised and minoritised, both residing in an economically deprived urban area and marginalised through involvement with the CJS, a youth group that will be the focus of this study. Furthermore, no research has been found that examines such a group's perspectives on a new economic model, such as CWB. By concentrating on this specific demographic, this research aims to understand the intersectionality of factors such as age, race, geography, criminal justice involvement, and socio-economic conditions.

There is also a lack of in-depth, qualitative PAR exploring the voices of youth, saying in their own words what they feel and think about the impact of socioeconomic issues on their future. Thus, the current project appears to be the first study that focuses on YP who are racialised, marginalised and minoritised and experience social and material disadvantage, incorporating elements of PAR in the context of the CWB initiative, which has been suggested as a possible way of practising community psychology (Zlotowitz & Burton, 2022).

### **1.13 Current Research**

#### 1.13.1 Study Rationale and Aim

Since introducing their CWB strategy to tackle the economic, social, and environmental injustices within the Borough, Newham Council has set up multiple programs to support YP in accessing a variety of education and skills pathways to improve employment outcomes and help them build promising futures (Community Wealth Building – Newham Council, n.d.). While such initiatives can have well-meaning intentions, they may make assumptions about and decisions for YP while potentially excluding their voices from such processes. The economy is an aspect of



life that YP are vastly impacted by, whether through poverty, lack of employment opportunities or inequality- and yet one from which they are often largely excluded. Furthermore, as one of the core principles of CWB is the need to fully involve everyone in the community and facilitate participation in democratic citizenship, which lends itself to PAR, this study aims to shift the lens away from the decision-makers within the council towards marginalised and excluded YP in Newham to understand their relationship to the economy and explore how they view their future.

### 1.13.2 Clinical Relevance

The socio-political and economic context described above is crucial for excluded and marginalised YP as they face more significant strains on their educational and employment prospects, which can impact their well-being.

Many theories and frameworks have considered the crucial role contextual factors and environment play in one's well-being. The ecological systems theory is one well-known framework that conceptualised distress through inter-working multi-layered mutually influencing systems, moving from the intra-psychic to ever broader contexts. It drew attention to macro-level influences, including the economy (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). There are other approaches in clinical psychology, as discussed above, including but not limited to community and liberation psychology, which locate distress firmly in broader contexts, recognising that economic and social conditions shape our intra-psyche (Smail, 2005). Thus, they recommend actively engaging in macro-level issues, which can lead to positive psychological outcomes (Smail, 1994).

Moreover, terms such as 'activist-practitioner' (Zlotowitz, 2013) have raised awareness of a new way of working for clinical psychologists, which requires stepping out of the therapy room, driving changes at a macro level, tackling socio-political-economic issues that dictate lives and consequently affect the overall mental health of the population.

### 1.13.3 Research Questions

To address the aims, two primary research questions are;

- 1) What does the economy mean to YP? How do they relate to it, and how does it impact their lives?
- 2) What resources do YP draw upon when imagining and shaping their lives?

#### 1.13.4 Why am I doing this research?

Liberation and community psychology are aligned with my values as I feel a strong affinity towards communities who experience inequality, disadvantage, and oppression due to my own experiences as an immigrant, queer, white-passing woman living in the UK, coming from a country with ongoing human rights violations, including imprisonment of anyone criticising its dictator and corrupted government (Corke et al., 2013). My appreciation and concern for the impact of the economy on collective well-being increased when the currency in my home country had a nose-diving in value over the last ten years. The annual consumer price index of inflation skyrocketed 176.0 %, leaving more than two-thirds of its population struggling to pay basics such as rent and food, fuelling a surge in debt and, consequently, poor mental health (ENAG, 2022). I have witnessed how the soaring inflation and collapsing currency ruined the livelihoods of my family, friends, and community.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 Overview**

This qualitative design research has adopted a PAR approach, choosing a focus group as the data collection method and thematic analysis as the analytical approach to the data. This chapter introduces the PAR approach and presents the rationale for using it. It outlines the philosophical assumptions that underlie how knowledge is understood in this research. It describes the rationale for the choice of design, data collection method, and analytical approach. Finally, it discusses ethical considerations before providing a detailed account of the methodological procedure in various phases in line with PAR.

### **2.2 Why Participatory Action Research?**

While PAR practices trace back to the 1940s (Lewin, 1946), Freire's body of work in the 1970s is primarily viewed as the vision that heavily influenced contemporary PAR, particularly his concept of 'conscientização', through which oppressed groups gain a deeper understanding of the forces impacting their lives and then leverage this newfound knowledge to move towards political action (Freire, 1972). Since then, PAR has continued to be shaped by various theories and methods utilised by researchers across different disciplines, arising from a wide range of geographical, political, and epistemological stances. The extensive scope of philosophies, processes, and applications of PAR has resulted in many defining it as a comprehensive approach toward social change rather than just a simple research method or theory (Lykes & Mallona, 2008)

While a host of different approaches could have been applied to answer the research questions, PAR was chosen for several reasons. Firstly, as discussed above in 1.6., it is consistent with community and liberation psychology, both of which this current study is underpinned by. Secondly, this research project aims to raise the consciousness of the marginalised YP about the ways in which they are positioned in the political-economic system by encouraging a critical gaze on the systems and institutions. Finally, PAR has been chosen due to its focus on power, aiming to

disrupt hierarchical relationships between researchers and 'researched' (Wadsworth, 1998). It is crucial to attend to issues and relations of power in a project like this when collaborating with a community that experiences material, racial and social disadvantage, and discrimination.

### **2.3 Philosophical Assumptions**

The ontological and epistemological assumptions shaped by the research questions should be considered before deciding on methodology (Willig, 2013). Ontology is the area of philosophy that deals with fundamental questions about 'reality' as in what is there to know. Epistemology is the area of philosophy concerned with the philosophy of knowledge and how we acquire it, including questions about what and how much we can know about 'reality' (Burr, 2003). Both ontological and epistemological positions can be placed on a continuum ranging from "naive realism" to "extreme relativism" (Harper, 2011), describing the degree to which data is believed to reflect reality. In this section, while I outline the philosophical assumptions of this research study, I also draw attention to the links between my methodology and the underlying values that inform this research, as maintaining internal consistency among these components is essential (Carter & Little, 2007).

Both community and liberation psychology approaches to research hold critical and compatible positions regarding the origins, limits, and potential of knowledge. Martín-Baró (1994) proposed that knowledge about the world can be acquired through discovering its limitations and possibilities when actively trying to change it. Similarly, community psychology also calls for actively engaging with the world (Kagan et al., 2011). It critiques notions of objectivity and proposes that our understanding of the world is mediated by our subjectivity (Hanlin et al., 2008). It explicitly holds values of social action, social justice, and liberation, emphasising the importance of value-driven community research. It encourages researchers to reflect on their values, social position, and the dynamics of their collaboration with others involved in the research process. In PAR, knowledge is viewed as collaboratively produced with co-researchers and participants and seen as context-specific and may connect to wider socio-political issues (Carter & Little, 2007).

### 2.3.1 Critical Realism

This research project takes a critical realist stance, one of the postpositivist approaches often positioned between positivism/objectivism and constructivism/relativism (Clarke, 2008). Critical realism is the marriage between ontological realism and epistemological constructivism (Maxwell, 2012) in that it steers away from a strong relativist stance, acknowledging the existence of material reality while viewing knowledge as subjective and socially mediated (Parker, 1998). Therefore, while this research project holds a constructionist scepticism towards claims to an 'absolute truth', it is also guided by the notion that people's accounts of their experiences have some real material links to the realities of their lives.

Critical Realism is compatible with Community and Liberation Psychology as they acknowledge constraints on the ability of individuals and communities to exercise agency within the context of structural forces; they recognise that there is still a possibility within those constraints to have agency in changing the wider socio-political environment, a potential for liberation and emancipation. It is well-suited with PAR as it draws heavily on Freire's (1972) epistemology that rejects both the view that conscientização is a copy of external reality and the self-centred argument that the world is a creation of conscientização (Baum et al., 2006). PAR highlights that there is a socially constructed reality within which researchers and participants can have multiple interpretations of a single phenomenon (Greenwood & Levin, 2007).

### 2.3.2 Problematizing the notion of 'giving voice'

Qualitative research is increasingly being championed for "giving voice" to individuals or groups who are often under-acknowledged, marginalised, and disenfranchised. Various examples of such research can be found across many fields, including feminist studies (Belford & Lahiri-Roy, 2018), disability studies (Goodley et al., 2017) and race studies (Louis et al., 2016). Similarly, there is a growing surge in efforts to give YP a voice on issues that directly affect them in research and broadly in society (Spencer et al., 2020). However, 'giving voice' or doing 'emancipatory' research (both in general and with YP) has been critiqued by many, highlighting that it is often fraught with issues of power and interpretation. One significant issue with this is homogenising the experiences of marginalized groups, assuming that there is a

singular, authentic experience that represents the entire group, ignoring the diversity and individuality within that group. When such research is perceived as a more 'authentic' way to capture YP's lived realities (Spencer et al., 2020), it can risk downplaying the complex relations of power that shape the researcher's intentions and processes. Attention has to be paid to how dominant discourses impact not only how YP's voices are situated, accessed and understood but also how they shape what YP are 'enabled' to say, as well as how the primary research hears and understands the meanings of what is said and not said (Spyrou, 2016). Within the critical realist position, where facts are not value-neutral and do not speak for themselves; instead, research findings are given meaning and interpreted through the researchers' lenses. Therefore, this research acknowledges that the knowledge produced here is not a pure representation of the 'true' lived realities, views and opinions of the young co-researchers and participants; they are translated predominantly through my (as the primary researcher) and the other collaborators' subjective and theoretical standpoints although we have strived to be aware of and limit the influence of our biases. Our own (professional, classed, gendered, and raced) subject positions and the wider contexts within this research took place all shaped the research encounters and meanings attached to them (Denzin, 2000).

### 2.3.3 Power

Understanding, acknowledging, and addressing power is a critical component of PAR. One way of understanding how power operates is through recognizing the relational aspect of power, which involves avoiding oversimplifications and encouraging a deeper exploration of the nuances in power dynamics and relations. In keeping with this, this research project attends to power relationally and contextually, recognising that the same act can be oppressive or empowering depending on the context (Holland et al., 2010). It also does not claim to relinquish all power but seeks to work towards noticing and sharing power and control where possible (Alcoff, 1991). Furthermore, it does not claim to abdicate all expertise. Instead, it aims to exchange knowledge between the outsider primary researcher (who is not from the community) and collaborators and insider co-researcher and participants (Montero, 2008), acknowledging different types of expertise (lived experiences vs academic research knowledge). Arnstein (1969), who conceptualised

'Arnstein's ladder' to point to a hierarchy of levels of citizen participation in decision-making processes, ranging from non-participation to citizen control, cautioned researchers and practitioners long ago that participation may not accomplish shared power and can further risk manipulation. This research project acknowledges that PAR projects constitute a form of power and can reproduce the very inequalities they seek to challenge and risk perpetuating the very system they oppose (Gallacher & Gallagher, 2008); in doing so, they can risk speaking for participants if issues of power are not regularly attended to reflexively. Therefore, issues of power were woven through this project, which is detailed in the procedure.

## **2.4 Design**

As this research project focused on YP's experiences and perspectives of their realities, it has adopted a qualitative design which allows in-depth exploration and is concerned with meaning and how people make sense of their experiences (Willig, 2008). Compared with quantitative methodologies, qualitative methods are considered to create more space for participants to express their ideas and respond in their own words (Barker et al., 2002). Stewart (2000) proposed that qualitative research has much to offer community psychology in that both emphasise diversity, the importance of context, and collaborative research relationships.

The focus group was selected as the data collection method, as group processes can play a crucial role in exchanging knowledge, shared learning, facilitating change, and moving towards action, therefore widely used in PAR projects (Chui, 2003). Freire (1972) argued for the benefit of working in groups to gain a more complex understanding of experiences and the social structures in which people were situated while viewing language as a living mechanism that gains meaning through action, particularly dialogue.

## **2.5 Analysis**

The analytic method's suitability with the research's overall epistemological position is crucial (Willig, 2013). Thematic Analysis (TA) is an approach widely used within various epistemological approaches and across different methods and facilitates the identification of patterns in the data that link to significant themes concerning the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006). It was selected due to its simple, direct,

flexible, and adaptable qualities. It is well matched with “weak” constructionist tenets such as critical realism (Joffe, 2011) and viewed as accessible to conduct collaboratively and flexibly, and it is frequently used in PAR projects (Kindon et al., 2007). Furthermore, it is concerned with meaning-making, thus, connects well with the notion that knowledge is co-produced through PAR. It is relatively easy to learn, which seemed crucial in helping create some balance in power inequalities between the co-researchers and I, given our varying degrees of education in research methods. Considering other methods of analysis, interpretative phenomenological analysis or discourse analysis did not meet the aims of the as the study was neither interested in individual phenomenological experience nor in the participants’ language.

TA involves identifying themes that capture key aspects of the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006) instead of selecting themes based simply on their frequency in the data. Furthermore, the chosen themes should be examined against the entire dataset and reflect its content rather than be limited to the researcher’s preferences (Joffe, 2011). An inductive approach was carried out to identify patterns within the data so that themes were driven by and strongly linked to the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The analysis is an iterative and ongoing part of the PAR cycle, further highlighting validity, reliability, rigour, and interpretation (Fine et al., 2004).

## **2.6 Ethical Considerations**

### **2.6.1 Ethical Approval**

Before the recruitment process began, ethical approval was granted from the University of East London ethics committee (APPENDIX B1 and B2), which was found sufficient by the host youth organisation, Newham Youth Offending Team (YOT). I will discuss below why YOT was chosen and the issues with identification.

### **2.6.2 Relevant to PAR**

Due to its non-linear and change-oriented nature, PAR may present more ethical dilemmas that are hard to predict at the outset than other forms of research. While



the ethics process relies on researchers designing research in its entirety before a single participant is recruited, assuming that research can be entirely pre-planned and will progress in a relatively predictable and linear fashion, PAR projects depend on social responsiveness to the ever-changing needs and perspective of participants (Kindon et al., 2007). PAR practitioners have suggested that ethical dilemmas encountered in participation are best understood and worked through in a process-oriented way through its cyclical process of action, research, and reflection (Kindon et al., 2007), detailed in the procedure.

There were two roles in this PAR project; YP who participated in the planning and data collection phases, who will be referred to as 'participants' throughout, and YP who took active researcher roles in planning the research, led, and participated in the data collection phase and involved in the joint analysis, and dissemination of findings, who will be referred as 'co-researchers' throughout this report.

### 2.6.3 Confidentiality and Anonymity

Parker (2005) argues that while anonymising participants' identities might be the easiest option, it is not necessarily always the most ethical one, as this might deny the very voice in the research that might originally have been claimed as its aim. He further critiques the general assumption in research that participants do not want to be named. Firstly, this may not be true for all, and secondly, such an assumption further perpetuates the notion that those researched are fragile beings requiring to be protected by others (McLaughlin, 2003). Informed by this, transparency was employed to ensure that YP understood the limits of confidentiality and anonymity and engaged in ongoing discussions and decisions about these issues. The limitations of confidentiality were made clear before they became involved in the project and were reiterated throughout. Co-researchers were made aware of further issues of confidentiality and anonymity should they like to be named as authors of any written material at the point of dissemination.

It was difficult to disguise the identity of the youth organisation because this project focused on the importance of the locality and characteristics of Newham as a Borough from the outset. Furthermore, YP's contact with the criminal justice system was a vital piece of contextual information that provided a deeper and fuller

understanding of the data rather than simply background information. To counteract this issue, YP's defining characteristics were further disguised by not giving exact ages and specifying ethnicities.

#### 2.6.4 Informed Consent

This research project has adopted an ongoing reflexive consent process in which participants' understandings were continuously checked (Petrie et al., 2006). During focus groups, there is a possibility that group consent can override individual consent, with YP feeling pressure to participate. Therefore, it required paying attention to the implications and role of the group in the consent process (Khanlou & Peter, 2005). YP above 16 were encouraged but not obliged to inform their parents/guardians. Copies of information sheets for participants (Appendix C), for co-researchers (Appendix D), and for parents/guardians/carers (Appendix E) were given to YP, and consent forms (Appendix F) were signed before the data collection began.

#### 2.6.5 Discomfort or Harm

Precautions were taken to minimize the potential for discomfort or harm during the project. YOT staff and I checked in with YP (participants and co-researchers) to gather feedback regarding any challenges they might have encountered during the study. We remained attentive to identifying signs of discomfort or distress. Additionally, I was aware of local and national organizations that could provide specialised or ongoing support if YP required such assistance.

Ground rules were co-created to ensure all members experienced the process as a 'safe enough space' with clear boundaries (Appendix G).

#### 2.6.6 Risk & Safeguarding

The potential risks were carefully assessed from the beginning and were mitigated through open and continuous discussions, feedback from DoS (Director of Studies), field supervisor, collaborators, YOT, and co-researchers. Ground rules were

collaboratively developed during the initial session and used for reference throughout the project (Appendix G).

Furthermore, YOT had additional safeguarding policies in place, including the appointment of a designated staff member as a point of contact who attended all meetings with participants and co-researchers to ensure organizational safety measures were upheld.

### 2.6.7 Remuneration

Remuneration is an essential consideration in PAR for several ethical and practical reasons. Ethically, it is one way of promoting equity and distributing power (Bradbury-Jones & Taylor, 2015), given the power imbalances between the primary researcher and the co-researchers and participants, particularly the economic injustices experienced by YP in Newham (Pevalin, 2007). It is also one tangible way of recognising and valuing the time and expertise that YP bring to the research project, which can help sow seeds for a collaborative and reciprocal relationship between the primary researcher and YP from the beginning.

Practically, co-researchers needed to give significant time to the project. Additionally, payment may have meant that participants who may not have taken part otherwise took part.

Participants were paid £15 per hour in gift vouchers. Other researchers have also reported that gift vouchers were often preferred in other studies (Rice & Broome, 2004). Co-researchers signed an employment contract with the funding organisation People's Economy (See Appendix H). They were paid £20 per hour. I held the budget across the project, and YOT was informed of all payments.

### 2.6.8 Power

While it is often an elusive and opaque concept, power is a critical underpinning component in PAR. Keeping a reflective journal (see example extracts in Appendix I) and sharing these reflections with co-researchers, collaborators, DoS, and field supervisor in regular reflection meetings helped me attend to issues and relations of

power and recognise and acknowledge the ways in which my assumptions, thoughts, and feelings may have influenced the process and research.

## 2.7 Procedure

The procedure is described here as distinct phases to provide a clear framework and is presented below in Table 3. However, the cyclical and multifaceted processes of PAR, which include critical ingredients of contact, collaboration, developing trust, preparation, support, training, discussion, and reflection, have been present in parallel throughout the research project.

Table 3

0	1	2	3	4	5				
Phase 1: Consultative Stage	Phase 2: Shaping the Project			Phase 3: Data Collection					
<b>Activities</b>									
Introductory Drop-in Chats									
Recruitment									
Co-researchers	Recruitment of Co-researchers			Meetings with Co researchers					
				Tyron Patrick	Patrick Marcus	Patrick Marcus	Patrick Marcus	Patrick Marcus	
	Planning Meetings			Focus Groups					
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Collaborators	People's Economy, YOT	YOT	People's Economy YOT Franklyn	YOT Franklyn	YOT	YOT	YOT	YOT	YOT Franklyn
Young People (Co-researchers and Participants)	Patrick Asif Kane Paul Amir Marcus	Patrick Asif Paul Kane	Patrick Asif Marcus Paul Tyron Amir Marcus Kane	Patrick Asif Marcus Paul Tyron Kane	Amir Paul Patrick Tyron Marcus	Patrick Amir Paul Tyron Marcus Kane	Patrick Amir Paul Tyron Marcus Kane	Patrick Paul Marcus Kane	Patrick Amir Paul Tyron Marcus Kane
Month									
6			7	8		9 →			
Phase 4: Joint Analysis			Phase 5: Write Up	Phase 6 Joint Dissemination		Phase 7 Action			
Meeting 1	Meeting 2	Meeting 3		Meeting 1	Meeting 2	To be confirmed			
Patrick Marcus	Patrick Marcus	Patrick Marcus		Patrick	Scheduled for June				

## 2.7.1 Phase 1: Consultative Stage

### 2.7.1.1 *Consultations*

This research project started with a broad interest in the impact of the economy on well-being and CWB as an alternative economic model in which community psychology can be practised, as recommended by Zlotowitz & Burton (2022). However, the focus of the research developed and evolved through consultations and the PAR process throughout the project.

The ethical regulations meant that a research proposal was completed before an ethics application, preventing YP input at the consultative phase. While direct involvement of young people in the initial stages of refining the research topic and question was not possible due to the ethics guidelines, a number of stakeholders, who can provide valuable insights and perspectives that can help shape the direction and focus of the research, were identified through mapping out who may be interested in this research project.

Early consultations took place with key stakeholders in the Borough of Newham and other relevant groups, including Newham's Public Health Director, key people who directly worked on the CWB initiative in the Newham council, organisations such as the Community Centre for Local Economic Strategies, Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service Newham, People's Economy (a charity that works with communities across the UK experiencing economic injustice), and MAC UK (a charity working to transform the health, social and economic inequalities of excluded groups). These discussions included the economic and social priorities, issues and challenge the Borough is facing, implementation of CWB, how to make CWB youth friendly, ways of collaboration with organisations, the research focus, who to contact as gatekeepers, key aspects to consider when making contact and gaining entry in the community, exchanging perspectives, ideas, and strategies.

Through this consultative stage, the Newham Council expressed specific interest in discovering how YP viewed their economic future in the context of their CWB initiative, which shaped the project's focus and informed the research questions.

### *2.7.1.2 Securing Funding*

In order to pay sufficient grants to pay participants and co-researchers, several funding applications were made for various grants and funds. The project successfully secured a small amount of funding (£2,500) to support the project from the charity called People's Economy ([www.peopleseconomyuk.org](http://www.peopleseconomyuk.org)) as they were interested in supporting participatory research exploring YP's views of the economy and CWB initiatives.

### *2.7.1.3 Contacting Youth Organisations and Collaborators*

About 40 youth organisations in Newham were contacted via email initially, which resulted in several follow-up phone conversations and virtual meetings. An organisation from the pool of interested organisations was selected based on several factors. These involved interest and willingness to participate in the research project and having the resources, location, and staff available for support. Attention was paid to choosing a group of YP whose voice often is missing from the literature and the public discourse as they are often excluded from spaces.

A youth justice service was selected due to having already had a regular participation group (where YP discussed how to improve the service) and working with racialised and marginalised YP with ongoing experiences of exclusion, discrimination, and social and economic exclusion disadvantage. YOT works with any young person between the ages of 13-18 who comes into contact with the Criminal Justice Service in Newham.

My field supervisor put me in contact with various potential collaborators. Collaborators at the final stage involved a staff team from the funding organisation People's Economy and a community-based activist, artist, and writer with expertise in youth work in East London. The collaborators helped organise the planning sessions and attended a number of focus group sessions and reflection meetings, offering valuable feedback and thoughts on the project. Their feedback was incorporated into the reflective diary (Appendix I).

## 2.7.2 Phase 2: Initial Set Up

### 2.7.2.1 *Recruitment: Introductory Drop-in Chats*

Following the meetings with team managers, the research project was advertised by the organisation through a poster (Appendix L). A key worker was identified in YOT who listed those interested in participating. Inclusion criteria included YP aged 13-25 who were part of YOT and communicated in English.

I met with those interested in the project in person or via telephone at the YOT premises. These conversations involved the purpose and various stages of the project, what PAR is, and remuneration.

Information sheets (Appendix C and D), co-researcher job description and person specification information sheets (Appendix K), co-researcher contracts (Appendix H) and consent forms (Appendix F) were made available to anyone interested in the project.

Initially, there was an intention to keep the group open to other YP in the community and hope that there would be peer referrals where YP bring friends from the community (see Casale et al., 2019); to reach out to YP who may not have been invited otherwise. While the YP were enthusiastic about peer referrals, it was not possible due to several safeguarding, practical and ethical issues. One main practical issue was that YOT premises are not allowed to be used and entered by other YP. An alternative location was considered; however, some YP's exclusions of certain areas made finding a site that worked for everyone challenging. Moreover, YOT needed to present a list of YP to the police on site to avoid bringing YP who may have had conflict with each other previously per their safeguarding policy, which posed an ethical issue.

### 2.7.2.2 *Shaping the Project: Planning Meetings*

This phase of the project was dedicated to getting to know each other, building relationships, and developing trust in the group, which are key ingredients of PAR (Kagan, 2012). Ideally, projects that are rooted in PAR, community psychology and liberation praxis require a slow process whereby outsiders spend time ‘hanging out’ (Casale et al., 2019) with the community and great care is taken to how ‘outsiders’/ researchers enter and are received by the community. While this phase was shortened due to the constraints of the timelines of a doctoral thesis, the introductory phase was still given time and attention and seen as vital to the ethical standing of the project.

This phase involved meeting together over food, crucial in building relationships in PARs projects (Kagan, 2012). Kagan (2012) argued that PAR projects require primary researchers’ willingness to be open and flexible and share parts of their lives with others. While traditional forms of research, where researchers seek information from others and refrain from sharing parts of themselves, PAR demands participation, not just from the community but also from the primary researcher, who may be an outsider. Informed by this, I shared parts of myself, including my background, culture, views, and interests, both voluntarily and when the YP wished to find out while attending to professional and ethical boundaries (Combs & Freedman, 2002).

Suspicion and lack of trust towards others, researchers, and institutions can be a learned attitude developed as a survival technique due to the experiences of marginalisation, oppression, and exclusion by institutions and the like (Patel, 2022). For example, ‘paranoia’ can be a response to institutionalised racism (Sue et al., 2008). Therefore, it was decided that the planning stage would not be recorded, allowing YP to first find out about us before committing to the project. The collaborators and I employed transparency, availability, consistency and sharing parts of ourselves as well as appreciation and gratitude for the YP’s time, efforts, and openness throughout the process.

The collaborators and I took more of an active role in planning the session, deciding the focus of the sessions and topics discussed before the co-researchers were



recruited. Once the co-researchers were recruited (by session 3), and relationships developed between group members, discussions over collaboration and shared ownership took place, and co-researchers grew more confident to lead the subsequent sessions and were actively involved in the decision-making. The length of the sessions was decided together as a group and varied between an hour and an hour and a half.

### Session 1

This session was the first introductory meeting aimed at getting to know each other. Thus, it was attended by all collaborators, all YP interested in the project and YOT staff and involved introductions, and an ice breaker (“one thing you like, one thing you do not like about ‘the ends’ [neighbourhood]), which sparked discussions about life in Newham. A conversation was had about how YP feel when they hear the word ‘economy’ and what it means.

### Session 2

This meeting again aimed at continuing to get to know each other and further exploring interests within the group. It involved playing a game to explore personal passions and interests and learn about the common identity interests of the participants. It was adapted from a traditional getting-to-know-you exercise (Morsillo & Fisher, 2007). It involved asking participants questions based on “Do you feel passionate about a particular activity?” It started with hobbies like sports and cooking and moved onto wider societal subjects like local community, climate change, housing, economy, and politics. Participants moved on a scale from 0 to 100 depending on how much they felt passionate, concerned about, or interested in the topic. This exercise helped us discover the issues YP felt passionate about.

### Session 3

The session aimed to introduce the CWB strategy and its application and implementation within Newham. It was led by People’s Economy due to their expertise in economic models. It involved watching a video on the scale of income inequality in the UK and the economic situation in Newham, which included key

statistics. While it was mainly educational, time was also spent hearing the YP's thoughts, insights and perspectives on the information presented.

#### Session 4

This session aimed to discuss issues and relations of power (as discussed above in 2.3.3) to make them explicit to the YP through utilising the Social GRRRAAACCEEESSS framework (gender, geography, race, religion, age, ability, appearance, culture, class, education, employment, ethnicity, spirituality, sexuality, sexual orientation) (shortened as *graces*) that promotes curiosity in examining similarities and differences as well as issues of power and oppression (Burnham, 1992; Roper-Hall, 1998). We hoped for it to open possibilities to reflect on power and its the impact on the research and our working relationships, which is central to PAR.

We discussed which *graces* felt important to us and for our identity. Various similarities and differences were highlighted within the group, which allowed connecting with others or finding new things about other views, positions, and backgrounds. Class, race, ethnicity, religion, ability, education, and culture were discussed, followed by how these relate to power and inequalities.

This session also aimed at introducing research and PAR specifically. We first discussed existing ideas and beliefs about research, such as who does research and who tends to be the subjects of research studies. We watched a video on PAR and discussed its main ideas.

When we discussed the project's focus, YP expressed little to no interest in CWB; suggested shifting the project's focus to other areas of the economy that aligned with their interests. It felt essential to cater to their preferences to ensure meaningful collaboration, and this followed YP generating some research questions (Appendix J).

#### 2.7.2.3 *Recruitment of Co-researchers*

Throughout the planning stage, there were many conversations about co-researcher roles and responsibilities before, during and after the sessions. Three YP came forward with their expressions of interest, and two were recruited as one did not feel comfortable signing the employment contract. Once they were appointed, co-

researchers and I met before each focus group meeting to plan the sessions (in total, five times).

### 2.7.3 Phase 3: Data Collection

Data collection took place over five meetings. These sessions were led by co-researchers who grew in confidence over time, employing timekeeping, asking further questions, offering clarifications, and ensuring everyone had equal time to speak.

Although eight YP were involved in the planning phase, only six participants participated in the data collection. They were all male, resided in Newham and were between the ages (14-18). Their ethnicities included White British (1), Mixed (1) and Black British (5). They were all in employment, education or training.

The sessions were conversational in style, with topics opening up new avenues rather than a more didactic style of questions and answers. YP formulated further interesting and important research questions during the data collection phase, which were added to the research questions (Appendix J).

### 2.7.4 Phase 4: Process of Joint Analysis

While there are many PAR projects that co-researcher led the analysis, there are others where co-researchers did not want to be part of the analysis phase expressing that they found it to be a 'boring endeavour' (Houghton, 2015, p.239). Cullen and Walsh (2019) argued that researchers should consult with youth and follow their cues to determine when and how they will participate. Co-researchers in this study expressed more interest in participating in the dissemination and action phases; thus, the analysis sessions were limited to three meetings, saving the budget for the subsequent phases. The co-researchers' preference to take part in other phases, coupled with time pressures, meant that the analysis was not led by the co-researchers. Instead, they preferred contributing to parts of the analysis, which took over three meetings. The process of the joint analysis is detailed below.

The first meeting involved a training workshop in TA (Appendix M) in which we analysed some songs as a practice example and generated themes to prepare for the actual TA. The following two meetings included the above steps.

The analysis followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phased guidelines.

Step 1-familiarising yourself with the data: I first familiarised myself with the data by listening to audio records, further reading and re-reading the transcripts noting initial thoughts and immediate reflections.

Step 2-generating initial codes: Whilst holding the research questions in mind, I created a mind map of ideas and refined them into codes (APPENDIX N). I then clustered these codes into rough groupings to create a colour guide for the different codes. DoS then checked these rough groupings and provided feedback.

Step 3- searching for themes: I then presented these codes to co-researchers, and we spent time collating the codes into overarching themes, looking for codes that connected under a theme. We collaboratively generated a number of themes that captured relevant and significant aspects of their experiences in response to the research questions.

Step 4-reviewing themes: I discussed these themes with DoS, who provided further feedback.

Step 5-defining and renaming themes: Co-researchers and I came together as the last phase of co-analysis to review and analyse the data collectively. I presented already identified themes (pre-discussed with DoS) to co-researchers; we discussed each theme at length, checking whether pre-identified themes were captured in the conversations and renaming them when they did not.

Step 6- summarisation: It is discussed as Phase 5.

#### 2.7.5 Phase 5: Write-Up

I informed YP know about the write-up process. While they were interested in the final report, they were discouraged by its long and academic format. We agreed to report the findings in a more accessible way, which is detailed in Phase 6.

Spencer and Richie (2012) advocate that good quality qualitative research should include: contribution, which refers to the value and relevance of research evidence, credibility, which refers to the validity of data via multiple sources of interpretation; and rigour, which refers to methodological validity. These will be addressed when considering the quality of this research in the discussion chapter.

#### 2.7.6 Phase 6: Joint Dissemination Plans

At the time of the writing, co-researchers are being offered two writing workshops by People's Economy to facilitate the dissemination of the project, one of which has already occurred. These sessions aim to involve explorations and discussions about who the YP would like to speak to, why, who might benefit from this research, how it might impact their community, how they can effectively reach out to their audiences, and their final messages.

#### 2.7.7 Phase 7: Action: Future of the Project

Many PAR projects consider disseminating the findings through presentations or creative avenues. There is an educational function in raising the consciousness of different stakeholders, which can lead to resource mobilisation for change in systems and institutions. In line with the ethos of PAR, this research project aims to have laid the foundation and created space for further dialogue and action, which YP will take forward with the support of People's Economy.

Due to the timeline constraints of a doctoral thesis, it is not possible to capture the action phase of this project in this report.

### 3. RESULTS

In this chapter, I will present the results of the data analysis. The themes and sub-themes are represented below (Table 4). Coding information and thematic maps are included in Appendices M, N and O. To make extracts easier to read and understand, square brackets [] are used to add information, and round brackets and ellipsis (...) are used when a quote has been shortened to conserve space. Group discussion is shortened as GD. Where participants use slang terminology, explanations are given in square brackets.

Table 4

Global Themes	Sub-Themes
Growing up in Newham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fighting to survive: "Newham is made of wolves and sheep."</li> <li>• Safety as a young person: "Most people carry shanks".</li> <li>• Impact of the environment: "Your environment makes you"</li> </ul>
Education fails us	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School does not meet our needs: "School can limit you".</li> <li>• Exclusions as marginalising and alienating youth: "Exclusions do not work".</li> </ul>
Building a future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of opportunities: "There is only one good school in the borough".</li> <li>• Having to rely on the underground economy: "Crime is done because you need money".</li> <li>• Hard work and determination "You have to put in the hard work".</li> <li>• The need to be rich: "A million innit? At least"</li> </ul>
Unable to change bigger forces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The inequality gap: "The City of London is so close but so far".</li> <li>• Competitive Individualism: "Every man for himself"</li> </ul>

### 3.1 Growing Up in Newham

In this global theme, six participants described how growing up in Newham shaped their identity and how it further impacts their future. It incorporated different elements, which are headed as three sub-themes; Fighting to survive: "Newham is made of wolves and sheep"; Safety as a young person: "Most people carry shanks"; Impact of the environment: "Your environment makes you".

#### 3.1.1 Fighting to survive: "Newham is made of wolves and sheep."

In the extracts in this subtheme, the participants communicated about the ruthless competitiveness of the environment where they feel there is no option other than fighting to survive from a young age.

One aspect of this subtheme was survival.

You have to learn how to survive. (Paul, GD1, 70)

You don't get any calm... it is always a war... (Paul, GD1,98-99)

Newham is made of wolves and sheep bruv...Either you eat, or you get eaten... It is what it is... you have to play the game... (Paul, GD1,182-183)

Paul described experiences of a status of hierarchy where there is a strong sense of power and status, feeling that either one must dominate or will be dominated.

Another aspect of this subtheme was competition.

It is like a jungle. When you are waiting for a bus... people get in front of you.

"Bro... we are all going to get on the bus..." (Patrick, GD1, 302-303)

Patrick's everyday example pointed to a lack of order, harmony, and patience with one another, which can create a feeling of competitiveness and conflict.

For some, there was a choice: either to dominate or to be dominated.

You can't accept being someone's bitch... if you want to be a boss, you don't wanna let people chat down to you. That causes conflict like you guys were talking about it last time conflict...if you don't mind it and you can avoid it, then you can keep safe...(Marcus, GD1,72-73)

J described how young people found themselves in interactions and relations of power that caused conflicts. He articulated a sense that such play of power and status must be negotiated and navigated to protect oneself from danger.

Others were acutely aware of the seriousness of decisions made from a young age.

Fuck that type of fun... bruv... it is life and death... you can avoid the feds but not the karma...(Paul, GD1, 95-96)

Paul's response articulated a sense that actions could have potential consequences that one has to face.

Some stroke a balance of positivity and hope.

Even though we come from the slums whatever you wanna fucking call it.. There's always light.... Life goes from dark to light, you get fam...even though there's bullshit in Newham and there's always good as well... (Marcus, GD3, 1701-1703)

Marcus articulated that, against all odds and challenges experienced by YP, there is a way to move towards building a positive life for oneself.

### 3.1.2 Safety as a young person: "Most people carry shanks"

This sub-theme refers to the sense of safety as a young person in the area. Carrying shanks [knives] was considered a necessary and readily available form of protection.

Most people carry shanks innit like let's be real...(Amir, GD2, 778-779)

I'm not going to say why people carry weapons. .... In an area like this... come on bro... (Marcus, GD2, 767-768)

I feel like... see how you walk past 10 people a day at least 2 of them teenagers at least carry.... 2 in ten teenagers in Newham... that's a lot... (Amir, GD2, 786-787)

While Marcus implied that the area was the reason why YP carried weapons, Amir questioned its high prevalence.

The quotes below described the prominence of knives in day-to-day life.



I see a 15-year-old kid posting shanks on socials.... [social media] (Marcus, GD2,776)

You see in toilets yeah... in school. There will be weapons hidden...(Amir, GD2,790)

Further, while Marcus described that carrying and displaying knives is perceived as normal and broadcasted on social media, Amir pointed out the prevalence of weapons across different aspects of life for YP, including schooling.

One aspect of this subtheme was the life-changing consequences of carrying a knife.

That's the thing that you could make one fuck up when you're like 15-16 like you could get into a disagreement... and it is a 5 second decision. You shank someone...your life is ruined. (Paul, 762-763)

Paul spoke about the availability of a knife during a heated moment, where it may be challenging to weigh up information to make a decision and register the potential ramifications.

Another aspect of this subtheme was feeling a need for protection in an environment where jealousy about the material and luxurious goods felt prevalent.

There's a lot of jealousy ... in here, as soon as man sees ah you have Moncler....[luxurious fashion brand] he's rich, he is gonna come for you... let's be real. Man's gotta protect... (Amir, GD2, 779-781)

It is also possible to speculate about unsaid but implied underlying feelings of fear, anxiety, stress, and vulnerability in response to the environment.

Similarly, another aspect of this subtheme was a sense of danger.

Yeah, a lot of places are dangerous. I feel like Newham is one of the worst. I'm saying cuz it's just like a whole bunch of people that are in one closed off area.... that's what makes it a war zone in the first place... We got these people just fighting for the limited resources...(Tyron, GD3, 1489-1490)

Tyron spoke about the danger in the area, adding how material scarcity and unequal distribution of wealth contribute to the hostility.

Like I said, the environment is not well, obviously, if you're doing well as well, let's say you just made 10 grand and you bought £5000 Rolex. The next day that's going to be gone...you walked down the road. But then again... £5000 is not a lot... but you can be robbed for that.... (Patrick, GD3,1702-1705)

Patrick described the juxtaposition of poverty experienced in an area and one's personal success and wealth. Further, this can be an example of the displays of conspicuous consumption, where acquiring luxury goods is a public display of economic power.

Most YP described the challenges of being a young person in Newham due to having to navigate many daily risks and dangers.

I think if most guys haven't started selling drugs, they wouldn't be safe in their area. All they want is to be able to walk to the shop and if someone comes up to them, they're like, "oh yeah, I know this and that" and then guys like "oh I'll leave you alone" innit... if you were in the ends [neighbourhood] and someone comes up to you and if you don't know certain name otherwise, you're gonna get robbed so you have to know that person and that person has to validate you. (Paul, GD4,2407-2414)

Paul explained how it is necessary to belong to a group and engage in criminal activity to protect oneself from daily danger, implying there is nowhere else to go for protection and no one else to trust other than himself when in danger.

### 3.1.3 Impact of Environment: "Your environment makes you"

This sub-theme focused on the impact of the social and material environment on YP's future, which incorporated a number of different elements such as the influence of parents, wider family, peer relationships, schooling, role models, lack of opportunities and what YP are exposed to socially, economically and physically.

What do you think of the most important things that help in shaping the future?  
(Tyron, GD2, 1218)

I would say that it is environment.... (Kane, GD2,1219)

In what ways? (Tyron, GD2,1220)

A lot of ways like... poverty... opportunities? Political situation. (Kane, GD2, 1221)

Kane focused on the macro influences, political and economic structures and that govern the livelihoods and the future of YP.

I think... parents as well... parenting. (Marcus, GD2,1223)

Marcus added more of a micro-level influence on the child's development as well as their future.

The profound impact of geographical location, parenting style, peer relationships, and exposure to crime and violence was described in the below extract.

It actually depends on the parents like. Where they decide to birth you... Like how they decide to raise you, what way they raise you and it's not just the parents as well... who you decide to chill. Who you decide to make your role model. I've learned something from someone. You can't really change someone... because to change someone you gotta change the actual lifestyles... if you can't change someone's lifestyle, that's why I see... see that equality shit... That's bullshit... cause if you don't change their lifestyle... environment... you can't change how they see their life. You get... if you put someone in a lavish life. They are only going to know lavish... put someone around gang members... They're gonna mostly know how to rob, how to steal, how to do like that. Do you get... that's basics... Cause that's all they can learn... so, your own environment makes you...(Marcus, GD2, 1253-1271)

In this extract, Marcus viewed the significance and predetermined nature of the environment on the child's development, growth, and formation of personality as well as future prospects.

The extract below discussed some limits to parental influence, which raises questions about absence of parents during the week perhaps due to busy work schedules.

You have to realise as well... sometimes it's not up to the person themselves. Cause that's deeper... like... through secondary school. All you're doing is waking up... going to school and coming back. The time you only see your parents ... is

it on Saturday or Sunday? So most of your time spent is at school so it's about school and who you chill with because.... It's not always up to the parents, so it's up to the kid and their decision making. (Amir, GD2, 1280-1287)

We've all seen good kids turning into... (Patrick, GD2, 1290)

Amir spoke about the importance of individual choice as more time is spent at school, and peer relationships and pressure can become critical factors during formation years. Amir and Patrick particularly highlighted the importance of choices about friendships which may influence the growth of 'problem' behaviour.

The below extract spoke about the environment's influence and potential reasons why a young person might have come into contact with the criminal justice system.

So, your environment... Newham shaped you to be like that... (Patrick, GD3, 1577)

100%... We're not in YOT because we want to. Because we wanna get somewhere... you get.... We got morals fam... just our morals. (Marcus, 1578-1579)

Marcus described how their moral values can shape their future and their desire to move forward with their lives, perhaps implying that others may see them as immoral due to their contact with the criminal justice system.

The physical fabric of Newham, representing issues of deprivation and impoverishment, was discussed in the below extract as a barrier to building a promising future.

I'm saying that environment is so bad it's a barrier to us. Obviously, education. I've already said that it's not good.... There is only one good school in the area. I feel like even the parks... I think the only good park in Newham is the Keir Hardie one... (Patrick, GD3, 1694-1698)

Patrick further spoke about the risks in the area compared to affluent neighbourhoods while imagining how life could be different.

I feel like Newham itself as a barrier, you know what I mean? Like let's say...you grew up, no offence, but in some posh white area... if you're walking down with Rolex... your neighbours are gonna be plotting on you? Will they? Neighbours

ain't gonna care. They might not support your thing, but they're not gonna..  
(Patrick, GD3, 1702-1705)

A strong sense of hopelessness was described in the below extract.

I just don't wanna be here... even if they fix the area. People in it is not going to change... Nothing is going to really change...(Paul, GD3, 1399-1400)

There appeared to be little faith in positive changes in the physical area leading to fundamental changes and improvement in people's livelihoods. There was a sense of fatalistically resigning to this being an unchangeable reality.

Some imagined peace and welfare that were associated with prosperous communities.

I wanna place where it is not like the ends, you get.. like proper.... like countryside...like a nice house.... Calm like... nice neighbours that but it is not like neighbourhoods where the houses are connected to ... like they've got their own bits... and when they go to a private school...(Kane, GD3, 1433-1436)

What Kane described can point to the stress and poverty experienced in the area, hence a desire to leave was repeated. There was also a desire to send own future children to a private school, imagining providing a more privileged future for them.

Others felt responsible to lead the way for those coming after them.

We are going to have to pave the way, otherwise it's going to be the same thing ...do you get.... unless we control what our future children are exposed to ....do you get... Cause if they get exposed to what we was exposed to from a young age. Nothing is gonna change. (Amir, GD2, 1235-1238)

In this extract, environmental factors were experienced as predetermined.

### **3.2 Education fails us**

In this global theme, six participants spoke about education in largely negative terms, highlighting the harsh contexts of the several schools in the area while speaking candidly about inequalities, injustices, disparities, tensions, and conflicts. The participants mainly focused on the lack of funding, unmet educational needs, lack of skills-based education that would give them job prospects, and what purpose

exclusions served and maintained. They showed awareness of the vital significance of education in their present and future lives, careers, and livelihoods. The sub-themes included: School doesn't meet our needs: "School can limit you"; and Exclusions as marginalising and alienating youth: "Exclusions do not work".

### 3.2.1 The school does not meet our needs: "School can limit you".

In this subtheme, YP spoke of the mismatch between what they need and wish to learn and what the school offers instead. There was a consensus about what type of education was required, would meet their goals and further their future.

Think about this yeah you are barber... all that time you've gone to school, you could've put that into your craft... (Tyron, GD1, 4-5)

It's just that people can find what they want to do. Imagine yeah, barbering was a class... you could have been... I don't know about your circumstances, but you could have been in it from year 7... you could have known that's your thing.... instead, you're forced to do history and geography. (Patrick, 621-624)

like you love basketball, imagine school was a place you learnt basketball... (Kane, GD1,33)

Time spent in school was implied as wasted and seen as a missed opportunity to gain skills related to future employment prospects; vocational and skills-based rather than academic education was desired.

Another aspect of this subtheme was the perceived insignificance of education.

You see education.... I'll be so real it is bullshit.... I can go to prison and to come out as barber and make more money than someone who's had years of education.... (Paul, GD1, 14-16)

Education was perceived instrumentally as a means to an end, which becomes redundant if the same outcome could be achieved through different means.

Another aspect of this subtheme was the experience of overload with subjects in school.

They're going to be thinking shit.... I need to learn English, maths, science, whatever... You are just crowding their brain with information that they don't need when they can use that space for something that they do need. (Marcus, GD1, 24-27)

Marcus articulated a desire to access non-academic, individually tailored, flexible, creative modes of gaining useful qualifications in school instead of the 'one fits all' delivery. The fact that every student is required to learn the same academic subjects were seen as unhelpful for those who are not necessarily interested in academic skills or supported through the process.

The high cost of higher education was communicated in the below extract, and the ramifications of starting one's life with considerable debt which makes pursuing higher education unattractive.

School can limit you... you can be in education for 19 years... 90K or whatever how much you need to spend to get in... And once you finished your uni course, you wasted all that money... and you are in bare debt now.(Tyron, GD1, 42-43)

There was uncertainty about whether a university degree would be value for money and not seeing or knowing the exact and guaranteed advantages of higher education.

In the below extracts, Kane and Marcus expressed their frustration that university courses take a lot of investment but do not necessarily bring guaranteed financial security and prepare them for what lies ahead.

You just push yourself to get into uni... you are in debt now.. to make money then... there are lots of guys right now... they are in debt now.. and it teaches you nothing. (Marcus, GD1, 49-50)

Your job is not guaranteed even...(Kane, GD1,52)

You don't need uni to get rich... but yeah I'll be real... uni helps..(Marcus, GD1, 53)

Perhaps as an afterthought, Marcus considered the possibility of a return on investment in the university, perhaps through graduate entry jobs. Furthermore, Marcus suspected in the below extract that one's economic position contributes to

one's access to education, the overall experience of learning, and, consequently, building a future.

M: I don't know how my life would have been if I was born rich... Like going to school and learning things... it would've been completely different...(Marcus, GD2, 723-734)

### 3.2.2 Exclusions as marginalising and alienating youth: "The exclusions do not work".

Within this subtheme, YP communicated the oppressive, marginalising, alienating, and punishment-focused characteristics of school exclusions. They made direct and indirect references to the critical role of school in overall development and fulfilment of the student.

All participants shared experiences of temporary exclusions and some permanent exclusions.

You man all kicked out from school innit? I've been excluded so many times, but I wasn't kicked out. (Patrick, GD1, 128-129)

I was excluded 46 times, bruv.. (Paul, GD1, 130)

Exclusions do not work... I can't lie... did not work for me. (Tyron, GD5,2818)

They use exclusion as just the way of getting rid of a kid that they don't want to and can't be arsed to help. (Paul, GD5, 2823-2824)

Tyron and Paul articulated that exclusions are not fit for purpose; they are not an effective way of addressing 'behavioural' issues at school and because staff are not motivated to help.

Another aspect of this subtheme was the experiences of unfairness.

But you are being violated innit... (Paul, GD5, 2869)

More times they took the piss. (Kane, GD5, 2870)

I can't lie... most of the times it was the things like bare silly reasons.... (Tyron, GD5, 2871)



I've got excluded just for walking past the teacher. (Patrick, GD5, 2879)

More like... silly reasons...(Kane, GD5, 2882)

Patrick, Kane and Tyron expressed that they were excluded for minor reasons, while Patrick and Kane spoke about how exclusions are experienced as a violation.

Some wished that school did more in terms of supporting students.

If you see a kid that is struggling in school... all the kid wants to hear is an opportunity... if you give that kid an opportunity to change their lives... they are not going to get into trouble...opportunities are hard to come by these days...I'm saying that if the school is helping kids get gain skills that they want you to do. Instead of getting kicked out of school, tell them, we're not gonna kick you out of school. We are gonna help you. What do you want to do? Basketball and that you like doing that? Cool. That's your focus. And I'm gonna find a way to do this, this and that to help you. To help you stay focused on that, to get you right on the right path instead of excluding you and sending you home to bake and smoke weed. You know, you are just getting rid of the problem... (Marcus, GD5,2832-2848)

Marcus articulated what may be underneath 'problematic or disruptive behaviour', highlighting many reasons as to why a student may struggle to learn and behave. He spoke about the need for schools to provide safe spaces, preventative support and help for the most vulnerable and at-risk students to open up a dialogue about the complexities of students' struggles. Marcus envisaged learning and education in a wider picture that is not limited to teaching but also offering many more services and support to students to enable them not only to cope better with their studies and the demands of school but with their lives and the challenges that confront them.

Similarly, in the below extract, Tyron looked for more help, support, and guidance for students who struggle at school.

I feel like what Marcus said is correct. And I feel like they need to do more....Like, if you have a goal in life and they can see you are clearly not getting enough out of the lessons they're currently giving you, they could try to offer you more innit...But I feel like at the same time, there is still kind of a fair system because

it's not like you just get permanently excluded. Like, I'll be real... I've got excluded at least 40 times before I got kicked out. (Tyron, GD5, 2862-2868)

Furthermore, Tyron described that how many times he was temporarily excluded before being permanently excluded.

Some spoke about the details of injustice that they experienced.

She must have been racist innit.... she was walking so slow. So then I quickly just walk in front, and then she's like "excuse me". I looked at her "how weird" I'm thinking. Then she was like, "that's so rude". "How can you push past me?" And I said, "Miss, if I would have pushed past, you'd be on the floor". She then said, "I punched her". (...) The maddest thing is there's CCTV in the corridor. When they said you are excluded for punching the teacher...Ok I said to my head teacher... "can we watch the CCTV?" Please and said it in front of my mum (...) then he was like "don't tell me how to do my job" and I was like if you're excluding me just show me CCTV because obviously you're gonna believe the teacher, and then they just never did. I couldn't believe. Like I generally had done nothing. (Patrick, GD5, 2896-2922)

Patrick described a situation where he experienced racism and injustice. Further he described not being listened to and believed.

Some spoke about how experiences of racial bullying led to disruptive class behaviour.

When I was in primary school, I came to this country, and I couldn't speak English...they were chatting shit about me, so I used to fight them. I used to get into so much trouble in the reception. I couldn't be in the school for longer than 12:00 o'clock. I had to be half day. (Marcus, GD5, 2933-2936)

Same with me. (Tyron, GD5, 2937)

Some zoomed out of the student and looked at wider issues.

We all know a lot of people that they've got excluded. They had nothing to do. That's why they started showing. If you... if you have nothing to do. You're just going to pick up them bad habits. You might even just go robbing people. Yeah,

Cause you haven't got anything to do .... But if the education system is better ...  
(Patrick, GD2, 1225-1229)

Patrick articulated that excluded students may be at higher risk of engaging in behaviour including criminal activity and substance abuse. He described the trap of the criminal justice system, the conveyor belt to prison that can exist once a child is permanently excluded from school. He also implied that things could be different and potentially better if there was a better education system.

Patrick described further difficulties in accessing education in a prison system.

People end up in prison... and they are only allowed to do that 3 subjects. They only get 3GCSEs... What's all that about? What.. just because their behaviour is bad... they're not smart enough to do more than 3 GCSE? like you are trapped as soon as you failed school... They don't want to see you.... (Patrick, GD2, 1231-1234)

Patrick questioned the double punishment of the education system, the assumptions made about poor behaviour, and the lack of alternative routes for YP to exist more meaningfully in their attachments to formal education outside of school.

Others spoke about the aftermath of exclusions.

You get like, I promise you every time I got kicked out, I came back to school. I know every single man's done this, they came back to school ready to smoke someone or ready to start again or to even irritate the person that kicked you out.... even if you was the one who got violated, that's gonna be on their mind when they come back....(Marcus, GD5, 2849-2852)

This extract highlighted how exclusions could penalise students, resulting in further escalating and exacerbating the issue through humiliating.

### **3.3 Building a future**

In this global theme, six participants discussed the socio-economic barriers they face and how they, coupled with multiple environmental factors set them on a path to enter an illicit and underground economy to survive and thrive. Furthermore, participants envisioned a better future for themselves, which requires hard work and

determination. These elements are incorporated into 4 subheadings; Lack of Opportunities: "There is only one good school in the Borough"; Having to rely on underground economy: "Crime is done because you need money"; Hard work and determination: "You have to put in the work"; The need to be rich "A million innit? At least".

### 3.3.1 Lack of Opportunities: "There is only one good school in the Borough".

This subtheme pointed to the participants' experiences of opportunities or lack thereof, which hinder achieving their future goals and creating the life they want.

Lack of opportunities... There is only one good school in the Borough...

Brampton Manor...is good...(Patrick, GD1, 105-106)

Patrick highlighted the lack of high-quality education in the Borough, which means YP are missing out on academic opportunities. However, not everyone agreed with this.

Nahhh... I'll be real, I kind of disagree...I feel like there's not as much opportunities here as you would like, but I feel like you won't know unless you come from outside of the area....like growing up here the way most of us got booted out of school...but there's always opportunities that are given out to us, even like YOT. (Tyron, GD1, 118-125)

Tyron expressed a more positive outlook and appreciated the few opportunities presented to them within the borough, albeit limited.

Lack of financial resources was one aspect of this sub-theme.

If I've had money, I would have invested, I would have done other things instead.

Now I'm trying to climb.... (Tyron, GD1, 755-756)

Tyron imagined an alternative future and spoke about how the lack of financial resources has significantly impacted his ability to build his future.

When considering what helps YP's future, the value of education was highlighted.

Making better schools and learning environment. Yeah, I think that's pretty much the only way. (Patrick, GD1, 617-618)

Patrick envisioned a better future solely rooted in better education opportunities, which is lacking in the borough.

Some painted a picture of how hard things can get for YP.

People don't get that here ..... us men go home. Here you go... thank you for the food whatever.... depending on your situation and culture or whatever.... Some people dashed down their food that their children like eat .....some people even don't give their children food. Go figure it out yourself.... (Marcus, GD2, 1274-1277)

Marcus described some YP's struggles in accessing basic needs such as food and shelter and having to look after themselves financially and socially from a young age due to a lack of support from family.

### 3.3.2 Having to rely on the underground economy: "Crime is done because you need money"

This sub-theme spoke to the various criminogenic effects of poverty, making direct and indirect links between material and social disadvantage, and crime.

Most of us here... if we had money right now... we wouldn't have been here... Because it would have stopped us from doing crime... like most of the time, crime is done because you need money... in all honesty like that's what led you to other things when you don't have money you start thinking about other things bro...(Tyron, GD1, 695-699)

Tyron talked about the circumstances surrounding why YP may resort to crime to make money to meet basic needs, and consequently, escape poverty.

Tyron also acknowledged that reasons for committing crime involve numerous individual circumstances that vary widely.

Yeah, not saying certain men wouldn't still do crime... certain men are here for example, if we'd had bread.... we would not have been doing the things that we were doing to end up. (Tyron, GD1, 736-738)

Tyron described that YP on the breadline commit crime due to the immediate and urgent need for money and imagines what being lifted out of poverty might have meant for them.

More discussed reasons as to why one may commit crime.

People commit crime to get money. What other reason why they commit crime? When you need to fam... (Marcus, GD1, 487-488)

You really need to? Or when you want to? (Patrick, GD1, 489)

People do both. Like... Don't matter like some guys, sometimes you want a lick [money through theft], It might be that sometimes you might need because like you might have mad predicaments like... either rob this that's living good.. fuck him.. and I'm gonna eat another day and keep living my life... As long as there is poverty, there will be crime...(Marcus, GD1, 490-494)

Again, Marcus articulated how hunger, and desperation to meet basic needs were predominantly contributing factors to crime for YP. But Patrick questioned this.

Some likened drug selling to any 9-5 job.

When you have something you look forward towards... even if you are selling drugs... you get... I'll be real even if I remember... You wake up at this time, go home, sleep at this time like it was a job. (Marcus, GD2, 1321-1324)

You wake up at 8... like a proper job... Because that gets you money, but that is only good when you're not legally allowed to work...9:00 to 12:00 to 1:00 o'clock in the morning. (Paul, GD2, 1325-1328)

Marcus and Paul described the routine and mundane aspects of selling drugs, treating it like any job, requiring self-discipline, punctuality, and various organisation skills. Paul added that legal working age can also mean an underground economy is the only viable option.

Another aspect of this subtheme was the emotional bargaining and calculations of committing a crime.

Yeah, I don't care I'll be so real... I fucked over people's lives bro.....If you want money... you don't have it... you want to get it.... It comes with mad risks...And people who gotta lose bro. That's why the rich keeps getting richer...(Marcus, GD1, 312-316)

Exactly bro... (Tyron, GD1, 317)

Truth...(Amir, GD1, 318)

Marcus articulated the need for money out of desperation and the high risks associated with the route to obtain it, which may include violence or the knowledge that harm is done to a person. Marcus' calculation of loss and win, benefit, and damage of a dyad relationship, illustrated the very conflict between the rich and the poor, highlighting the soaring inequality. Tyron and Amir agreed with this sentiment. For Marcus, it was hard to care about a victim's feeling when in desperate situation.

You can't be caring about other people's feelings. You can't put that, you can't think... you can't waste time thinking about someone's feelings when the rest of their life is ahead of you... you get... That person should be thinking the exact same thing. Listen... The same way with business. I am sorry... You're holding me back; I have to cut you off. (Marcus, GD1, 319-322)

Marcus spoke to the ruthless and competitive conditions of life in a system that demands an individualist outlook and self-interest.

Some spoke about the vicious cycle of drug dealing.

Once you learn the trap game, you learn it bro. You carry on. When you get more money, more money, physically doing it more. Guys are trapped to get out of the trap... (Paul, GD2, 801-803)

"Trapping" and "trap" mean selling drugs in order to make money and support oneself. Paul articulated how hard it is to get out of drug dealing even if one wants to, and some may find themselves dealing drugs as an exit from the lifestyle.

Further, others described why one might start drug dealing.

You don't get trapped to try to look cool. You don't get trapped to look prestigious. You get trapped to make the money to fuck off and make it. (Marcus, GD3, 1782-1785)

Marcus expressed that the hype and prestige associated with drug dealing is not the reason one might be attracted to it; it is more of an economic decision and a potential exit.

Another aspect of this sub-theme was being recruited to sell drugs from a young age.

When you look at grooming someone you just see who wants it the most innit because there's so many kids out here trying to prove themselves. So you just look at who really wants to do it because what you see these days is kids saying, "I wanna shot I wanna start making money..." They put themselves in the position because they need money...(Tyron, G4, 2393-2396)

Tyron talked about how young people from a young age sees drug selling as an opportunity to escape poverty.

What may influence YP to start dealing drugs from a very young age was further discussed.

They get shown to the life ....and they're like I'm not an odd one out here, so I've gotta do something to fit in. Yeah, and. And the thing is, it has happened to me young when I was 11-12. It is what happens to youth younger than that sometimes.( Paul, GD,4, 2373-2376)

Paul shared his experiences of being groomed into drug selling and observations of other children being groomed from a very young age to build on their desire to fit in a group.

### 3.3.3 Hard work and determination: "You have to put in the work"

In this subtheme, the significance and value of hard work and determination were emphasised, and it was seen as central to, and necessary for, future success, lifting oneself out of poverty.

To become a professional footballer, you have to put in the work.... You have to work hard...(Tyron, GD1, 634)

Tyron said the below at a different point.

People working on the right things... for example... Barber...in the future we're gonna need barbers. We're gonna need an upgrade...hard work, innit? He works hard in that innit. People that are working towards the right things. That's how you build a whole better future for everyone. (Tyron, GD2, 1314-1318)



Tyron articulated his appreciation of hard work in building a future for oneself and one's community, acknowledging that any path to wealth will likely require hard work.

Some saw determination and not giving up early as the key to success.

Just determination, but too many guys quit too early... I feel like when you talk to older people... they'll tell you, I wish when I was younger, I just kept at it or stuck at it...it is determination... Staying true to who you are.. That's like the best advice. (Patrick, GD3, 1522-1526)

Patrick described the importance of persevering and continuing to work towards a goal or task even when faced with challenges, setbacks, or obstacles.

Others considered a number of steps involved in achieving success.

Mainly keeping your head up again and getting through it. That's what you really need.... Ambition and respect. But there's gonna be stages and it's going to be hard ....if you don't respect the fact that there's gonna be struggles and you're not going to get through it. So just ambition and respect. It is all you need in life...(Paul, GD,1585-1587)

Paul reckoned with the idea that success and building a future oneself often involve struggles.

A broader point was raised about the lack of freedom.

Everyone gets the option to break the cycle... like if you are really good. You can go to school now. Focus on your studies. You read...work hard... (Amir, GD1, 604-605)

Then you'll be trapped in a 9-5... (Patrick, GD1, 606)

I'd rather be trapped than be poor if you get what I am saying...(Amir, G1, 607)

There was ambivalence and uncertainty in Patrick's perspective that one is either trapped in poverty or in a full-time job, often associated with less flexibility and creativity while providing a steady income.

### 3.3.4 The need to be rich: "A million innit? At least"

This subtheme described a strong desire for a career which leads to material success. A way out of poverty was seen only possible as a big jump from where one is at towards making a fortune.

No no no... a million innit? At least...I can't die if I haven't become a millionaire. I have to say I was a millionaire at one point in my life. Not many people can do it. A lot of people say.... I have to probably one day. (Marcus, GD3, 1343-1345)

J: I'm trying to know how to be rich. That's all I know, and I want....(Marcus, GD2, 1214)

There was an acknowledgement that material success might not materialise for everyone. However, Marcus expressed a goal to become a millionaire. However, the routes to such a goal were not always clear.

Similarly, others echoed the ambition to make a fortune.

Owning three remote businesses and I am somewhere... doing shit in my computer... Well, could be tour could be on tour running three businesses remotely...but making tons and tons of money. (Kane, GD2, 1371-1373)

There appeared to be an interest from the participants in seemingly quicker ways of making money through less traditional methods or where there are fewer and rarer opportunities like basketballers and musicians.

Another aspect of this subtheme was the importance of generational wealth. Money was seen as the main solution to most problems, and there was an implication that it can help achieve all goals.

Build generational wealth innit... I wanna be able to make sure I come here that and change shit innit... make sure that my future family all of that... they don't have to do this bullshit coming to YOT. You know they have money. The goal is just to have wealth innit ...Good health, good money. (Tyron, GD3, 1349-1353)

Tyron described the wish to accumulate and transfer wealth to the next generations and the desire to create a better future for the future family.

### 3.4 Feeling unable to change bigger forces

Within this global theme, the overwhelming feeling all participants shared was their powerlessness in being able to affect societal, systemic, and structural changes that are often ingrained in the social, economic, and political systems and are difficult to overcome.

This global theme incorporates two sub-themes: The inequality gap: "The City of London is so close but so far"; and Competitive individualism: "Every man for himself".

#### 3.4.1 The inequality gap: "The City of London is so close but so far"

This subtheme communicated the inequality gap felt and experienced by YP through various aspects of their lives, including geography, education, employment, and overall quality of life.

Political actors and parties were understood to play an active role in creating an inequality gap and how political power was achieved and sustained.

If you look on a political perspective ..., they're expanding the gap between the rich and the poor innit... and there is no way of making it more equal if shit like that is still going on... (Kane, GD1, 658-661)

It is a conservative government as well. They are on the rich's side... They have rich people banking them... donating more money to them... (Amir, GD1, 662-662)

Some imagined the priorities of wealthy people.

The rich goes to private school... The rich cares about the rich...(Patrick, GD1, 676)

Patrick spoke about his perception of wealthy people as lacking concern and care for everyone in society and as focusing on their own financial interests over the well-being of others.

Furthermore, the difference between the rich and poor was described.

You know the world looks at you. It is right there in the City... some rich guy in there... Compare it, and that's how you can see the difference. That and we're staring at...(Paul, GD1, 259-261)

Paul spoke about the City of London, which is 5 miles from Newham and visible on the skyline as a global financial district, signifying insurmountable wealth and power, and the stark difference between the City of London and the area was felt and experienced by YP.

Others added how they felt about this disparity.

I can't lie... when you look at HSBC [a tall building in Canary Wharf]... You look at it.... ohh all of that is right there, but right here, look around and fuck all.  
(Tyron, GD1, 270-271)

The City of London is so close but so far. That's how I see it...(Amir, GD1, 275)

Tyron and Amir highlighted the juxtaposition of physical closeness and stark socio-economic distance where one can see the wealth from an impoverished area.

Some pointed out how comparison affects YP.

Social media influences Newham in a bad way because people get an idea of something that they're not, and people chase things that it's not theirs. If you see someone your age who has a £5000 watch. You might then think. Why have I not got a £5000 watch? What am I doing wrong? Then you might steal someone else's watch, get yourself arrested or get yourself killed. Like comparing yourself is a big problem, and then you've got people that put on that image...(Patrick, GD4, 2034-2042)

Patrick spoke to a dominant narrative in youth culture in social media that wealth and material possessions are seen as symbols of success and status. YP may feel pressure to achieve financial success to gain their peers' respect and admiration, often celebrating the lifestyles of the rich and famous, presenting a glamorous and aspirational view of wealth. Social media results in feelings of comparison, while an image might not necessarily accurately represent how a person lives.

Look at every MP and that, who got money in that...to be honest...Who are we to MPs and that the people that are above us... we are nothing to them...(Paul, GD1, 353-354)

Paul expressed perceiving MPs as disinterested and detached from the public they are supposed to serve while highlighting society's hierarchical and social scale where the marginalised and disadvantaged youth have no value or importance for the top section of the political elite. He also seemed to focus on what is more identifiable (i.e., MPs as symbols of power) rather than more hidden forces.

There was more discussion about where power lies.

Where is the rich? (Patrick, GD1, 520)

Hmm.Exactly ... the rich people are in disguise. If there was rich people, they're not going to show they're rich, are they? (Kane, GD1, 521-522)

Kane articulated the elusiveness of power and how difficult it is to pin down and determine precisely who has it and how it has been accumulated.

If you tax the rich more, if you touch them, they can just leave, go overseas and then that's less money in the country... like offshore... that's what Nando's [restaurant chain] does...(Amir, GD1, 553-555)

Amir described and reflected a dominant narrative of right-wing politics on why it is difficult or undesirable to raise taxes on the rich and feared consequences. It also spoke to the qualities of a neoliberal global market which allows large companies and wealthy individuals to have powers to locate in different countries to continue gaining profit while avoiding tax.

Some expressed ambivalence, wishing for equality but also wanting to be rich.

Listen now not everyone's gonna be a millionaire. Let's be real... You want everyone to be equal.... Everyone gets paid the same amount... but then again you want to be rich. Don't make no fucking sense... you are contradicting yourself, so people contradict what they say. Equality does not work. (Marcus, GD1, 591-596)

Marcus' understanding and imagination of equality was at odds with the current and experienced system; he spoke about his sense of the impossibility of such a system.

### 3.4.2 Competitive individualism "Every man for himself."

This sub-theme discussed the manifestation and impact of competitive individualism as a dominant force in their day-to-day lives.

These days Newham is just every man for himself, or everyone is in a pack innit...and everyone just like on this gang [meaning also groups] thing most of the time.... Yeah, there are some people who aren't like that. (Tyron, GD1, 178-180)

Tyron described a sense of isolation and disconnection from others within a competitive, individualistic society, which places a high value on individual success, often at the expense of collaboration or community involvement. However, he added that not everyone fits into this image of society; maybe more collectivist in the way they orientate themselves and perhaps can avoid the trap.

Competitive individualism was further described.

I think there is too much crime... people don't like to come together... everyone wants to be on top of someone else... too much pride... (Amir, GD1, 204-205)

There is too much competition. (Tyron, GD1, 206)

It is about who has more.. what you've got... ... if you got money... (Amir, GD1, 208)

Amir and Tyron discussed excessive competition, lack of collective action and hierarchical relationships, while Amir linked such power relations to wealth.

Further pessimism about societal change was expressed.

Well you can't make everyone happy... you have to do what works for you.. Someone has to be upset. (Amir, GD1, 363-364)

Yeah, but too many people are upset that's the problem. (Tyron, GD1, 365)

Here, M discussed the characteristics of competitive individualism within an unequal society where one must only focus on individual needs and welfare. This was not seen as a symptom of an economic model, but rather how things are. R described how the system only works for the few, not the many.

Some contemplated how to change the current system.

There is no point. If you keep trying to fix the economy..., your energy is wasted... you have to focus on yourself... and your family... don't worry about anyone else... (Amir, GD1, 341-347)

Amir expressed a sense of hopelessness, struggling to know and imagine what else was possible. Thus, he suggested a focus on the individual and the immediate circle. Furthermore, fatalistic sentiments were expressed by more.

None of us can change it... I am not gonna change it... none of us should really care about economy... (Paul, GD1, 348-349)

Me... myself... I can't change the bigger forces... (Marcus, GD1, 350)

Nobody's voice has recognition unless they got money. (Paul, GD1, 351)

Again, Paul and Marcus described the paralysis and learned helplessness of an individual and a strong sense of powerlessness as an individual who appears to lack viable means of resistance. Lack of power and control was seen as linked to financial resources.

When you rob someone... you don't see their face... you don't see their livelihoods...none of that... you take their money and you are like I've got Ps [money] now ... you don't care about their life... none of that... oh they can't pay their electricity... well you don't care... you got Ps now... (Marcus, GD1, 369-372)

Marcus described a process in which people may engage in dehumanising the victim as they cannot afford to care about them. This appears to come out of desperation and lack of choice.

This process was likened to MPs' relationship with the public they are supposed to serve, where there is no understanding and care towards the public during acts of corruption and wrongdoing.

Exactly same with MPs they don't care about us...(Tyron, GD1, 373)

Newham is the government's playground. It is not treated nice... (Patrick, GD1, 429)

MPs here may be symbols of politics and government.

Some spoke about the immediacy of needing to meet basic needs.

You live your own life... You're not thinking about. You think we're going to sit here think, ohh yeah, let's go....people...just let's go ... take them out... no one's gonna think that... some people are just preoccupied with their own lives, not like thinking of protesting...just too busy. (Marcus, GD1, 392-395)

Marcus articulated that people have no mental capacity to imagine themselves as a collective force when needing to meet basic needs daily in scarcity and the demands of modern lives. Hence, experiences of collective injustices and disadvantages do not necessarily lead to engagement in collective action.

It's just them against us innit, but everyone's separate and that's their rule of group so they take it off us as a group and split they then pickpocket everyone. (Tyron, GD1, 388-389)

Tyron showed distrust and anger towards the government; he further described the government using the divide and conquer rule, where disadvantaged groups are pitted against each other.

What you are saying innit... it is all about the individual... There's nothing in the government or in the community that can make a difference. The person themselves has got to make the difference... (Paul, GD1, 613-615)

There appeared to be learned pessimism about change and an excessive focus on individual salvation, as individualistic solutions were seen as the only way forward, while cooperation and collaboration within the community and collective action were dismissed as viable options.



## 4. DISCUSSION

### 4.0 Overview

This chapter summarises and grounds the results within existing literature in light of the research questions. A critical evaluation of PAR and a critical review from a methodological perspective are presented. Reflexivity and limitations are discussed. Finally, the implications and recommendations of this research is discussed, and areas for future research are then explored.

### 4.1 Research Aims, Questions, Findings and Previous Literature

This research moved its focus from CWB due to the lack of YP's interest in it. This shift, led by YP, may be a finding in and of itself, potentially raising questions about the accessibility, applicability, and acceptability of the current form of CWB amongst marginalised and excluded YP. There may be several reasons as to why it did not attract interest. It may have been too complex and abstract to grasp; it may not have translated to daily and practical examples enough; it may have lacked bottom-up approaches in its development, perhaps failing to involve the excluded groups in its formation and branding.

There may be some introductory stages and preconditions before the CWB initiative can be received and taken forward by YP, such as engaging YP in dialogue on economic issues in general. Inadvertently, by following the YP's lead, this project moved to a more pre-contemplation stage where YP engaged in issues such as economic injustice, inequality, routes to the underground and formal economy, all of which are aspects of the political economy, which could be the first step of engagement before the introduction of any economic models.

#### 4.1.1 What does the economy mean to young people? How do they relate to it, and how does it impact their lives?

##### 4.1.1.1 *Underground Economy*

In the current study, the underground economy appeared more salient to YP than the formal economy. They seemed to rely on it to survive the highly challenging economic conditions they found themselves in from a very young age. Factors such

as experiences of deprivation, poverty, and lack of opportunities coupled with the legal working age limit and legitimate routes unknown to YP to access economic welfare were described as leading to being locked out of segments of the labour market. Similar results have been reported in previous literature, such as poverty driving YP to engage in risk to secure their livelihoods (George, 2001; Leach, 2003). Furthermore, YP in the current study likened drug selling activities to a 9-5 job requiring similar skills and discipline, highlighting that it is more visible and accessible for them with immediate rewards. This aligns with many economists, who have long seen criminal activity as similar to paid employment in that it is time-intensive and provides an income (Witte & Witt, 2001)

The link between poverty and crime has long been investigated; while the connection is argued to be indirect, a strong relationship between dramatic increases in inequality, poverty and violent crime has been established (Kawachi et al., 1999; Kennedy et al., 1998; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2006). Mainly young men, whose conditions have worsened cumulatively and systemically over the last three decades, are driven to victimisation and crime by poverty (Kingston & Webster, 2015).

#### *4.1.1.2 Conspicuous Consumption*

One novel finding of this study that did not feature in the scoping review was how the YP saw possession of luxury goods as signs of status, wealth, and power. However, reasons for conspicuous consumption in the context of social and economic inequality have been previously investigated. Wilkinson and Pickett (2009) provided evidence for a strong link between consumer culture and income inequality, with high inequality elevating anxieties about social status. Hence, the wish to purchase luxurious brands may be understood as an attempt to signify higher social status, particularly given the YP's feelings of powerlessness and descriptions of a competitive individualist environment. An economist has called such behaviour 'luxury fever', where inequality increases, and the super-rich at the top spend more on luxury goods, the desire for such goods permeates through different income levels, leaving others to face difficulties in keeping up with this competition (Frank, 1999). This also aligns with the Social Rank Hypothesis; the wish to "keep up with the Joneses" is expressed partly in a higher interest in positional goods (Walasek et al., 2018), which aims to signal higher income and wealth. Furthermore, inequality

has been found to increase anxiety, competition, and consumerism (Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009). In the current study, such feelings of comparison were reported by the YP to be exacerbated by social media, which is consistent with previous literature (Duffett, 2017).

#### 4.1.1.3 *Inequality*

In the current study, YP described being acutely aware of the inequality gap between the wealthiest and the poorest in society, witnessing both the extreme deprivation and excessive wealth in close proximity. They expressed a firm belief in inequality either remaining as it is or worsening and strong scepticism and pessimism about the prospect of positive changes in the system. The emphasis on and prominence given to this pessimism is a novel finding, given how little inequality has featured in the previous literature concerning YP's economic realities. It has been hypothesised that many people may accept various forms of inequality when they are perceived as inevitable or inescapable (Laurin et al., 2010, 2013). System Justification Theory (SJT) (Jost & Banaji, 1994) is one way of explaining this kind of response. SJT proposes that people tend to rationalise and justify existing social systems that they are part of. This justification stems from a psychological need for stability, predictability, and a sense of order. Therefore, people believe that systems and institutions are legitimate, even if they seem unjust or unfair, and one does not personally benefit from them.

Another way of explaining this response is through the well-known phrase: "There is no alternative", which was used in a speech by Margaret Thatcher in 1980 who repeated on multiple occasions, arguing that there was no alternative to monetarism. It has since become known as TINA and has arguably penetrated the public understanding and further prevailed in the public imagination. Many have criticised it as a 'TINA delusion' (Fisher, 2009; Palley et al., 2023). In a similar vein, some scholars have described a current deficit in social imagination, proposing that many people struggle to picture a plausible and desirable society in the future (Mulgan et al., 2020).

#### 4.1.1.4 *The need to be rich*

The wish to become wealthy was rarely stated by the YP in previous studies within the scoping review; YP in one study were not concerned about material success and were drawn into meaningful jobs (Allen & Mendrick, 2013). Interestingly, YP's discussion in the current study of the strong desire to be rich in the context of feeling unable to change bigger forces can be tentatively hypothesised, again with the above theories and SJT (Jost & Banaji, 1994), that they see and experience the world as divided into rich and poor with no other position to hold in-between. It is possible that they think and feel that this world order cannot be changed and therefore see becoming rich as the best and only viable option.

#### 4.1.2 What resources do young people draw upon when imagining and shaping their lives?

##### 4.1.2.1 *Environment*

Unsurprisingly, a key feature of many of the sub-themes was the multi-level impact of YP's environment, from the most immediate setting (parental and family influence, peer relationships) to wider contexts, systems, and structures (school, neighbourhood, socio-economic conditions, and political systems) on their current and future lives. These findings are consistent with the existing literature (Franceschelli & Keating, 2018; Keating & Melis, 2022; Berry & McDaniel, 2020; Allen & Hollingworth, 2013).

Furthermore, previous literature has indicated that youth from high-poverty backgrounds are likelier to experience academic failure, school dropout, unemployment, and incarceration (Allen & Hollingworth, 2013; Duncan & Brooks-Gunn, 2000; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2009). This aligns with YP's descriptions of how their experiences of socio-economic disadvantages (limited access to opportunities and quality education) and living in a high-poverty, high-risk area prevents them from reaching their potential.

##### 4.1.2.2 *Education*

Another novel finding of this study was the YP's desire to be taught vocational skills that equipped them for the labour market. The highly challenging economic

conditions that YP found themselves in might have created an urgency to acquire the necessary skills to enter the job market instead of pursuing an often lengthy and expensive academic journey involving higher education fees. In the current study, YP felt ambivalent about higher education; on the one hand, they criticised the time-intensive and associated costs; on the other hand, they suspected that it helped people move forward with their future. This may perhaps particularly felt more recently, as the second highest number of UK 18-year-olds (at %41.5) reported to have applied to university or college (UCAS, 2023). This may mean that many more people will compete for similar jobs, perhaps pressuring YP to obtain a degree. Conversely, Callender and Kemp (2000) found that almost four-fifths of students reported that financial pressures discouraged further and higher education, with low-income students experiencing the most financial difficulties within the current student finance system.

In the current study, YP described school exclusions as oppressive, marginalising, alienating vulnerable students from education, and hindering the chances of their future economic prospects. The existing literature echoes this critical finding; those who were excluded were found to be twice as likely to be in the care; four times more likely to have grown up in poverty; seven times more likely to have a special educational need; ten times more likely to suffer recognised mental health problems; three times more likely to be Black Caribbean compared to white counterparts (DfE, 2018).

Experiences of racism in the context of exclusions were described in the current study. This is echoed by previous research that found that the disproportionate exclusion of Black students has been linked to several factors, including institutional racism and teachers' low expectations (Demie, 2019).

In the current study, YP reported having experienced unfair treatment in how sanctions were distributed, which appeared to shape their feelings about the school strongly and may further impact their educational aspirations and academic achievement. This finding is echoed by a large cross-national quantitative and qualitative study of ethnicity and schooling (Law et al., 2014b).

A recent longitudinal study documented the pervasive adverse impact of school exclusions on the long-term labour market and economic outcomes (Madia et al.,

2022). YP became NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) at 18/19; even those who entered the labour market earned lower than those who did not experience school exposure. Similarly, another study found that school exclusions leading to unemployment/underemployment, incarceration, and homelessness (Menzies & Baars, 2021).

This study's findings and previous studies lead to questions such as whether school exclusion is a social and political issue highlighting multifactorial disadvantages of vulnerable, excluded, and marginalised YP. Therefore, there is a need to focus on the inclusion of vulnerable students into schools rather than further excluding them from schools and society.

#### *4.1.2.3 Individualism*

The YP's experiences of competitive individualism have been echoed by other studies (Berry & McDaniel, 2020). A sense of powerlessness in response to structural factors, systems, and institutions appeared to have led YP to adopt individualistic approaches and solutions.

As evidenced in this and previous research (Franceschelli and Keating, 2018; Archer et al., 2013; Baker, 2016; Croll, 2008; Frostick et al., 2015; Sinclair et al., 2010), while individualised practices of 'hard work and determination' are seen as a way forward to actualising their high aspirations, YP did not precisely know the necessary steps to achieve them. One reason might be that, while the YP in the current study were all in training, education, or employment; they were young and fairly early in their working lives.

The YP in the current study were acutely aware of the structural constraints that pre-existed and acknowledged the significant and far-reaching impact of it on their lives; however YP gave prominence and value to hard work and individual ability to achieve goals, which interestingly inadvertently downplays the structural inequalities and barriers perhaps due to lack of options, as discussed above. Without access to certain sources and opportunities (housing, education), they still felt they were uniquely placed to forge their economic future.

The reliance on individual hard work may be understood through the dominant discourse of neoliberalism, which promotes notion that the free market provides a

just system in which individuals with talent and strong work ethic can overcome any challenges and attain significant success (Brown et al., 2011). One way of understanding this is through Gramsci's notion of cultural hegemony which refers to the dominance and influence exerted by the dominant social group over the beliefs, norms and ideologies of a society to maintain its power through suppressing alternative ideas. Therefore, the dominant group establishes its worldview as the norm, shape social narratives, maintain their privilege while marginalising and delegitimising alternative perspectives, therefore perpetuating inequality (Lears, 1985). The meritocracy model: 'if you work hard enough, you can achieve anything' is one articulation of such an idea (Ellis, 2017). As many studies of social mobility have demonstrated, only a small fraction of those born into the lower social class ranks will be able to climb the ladder, and very few born into society's highest strata will decline to its lowest points (McMurrer & Sawhill, 1998).

Finally, Festinger's (1957) theory of cognitive dissonance might also help understand how neoliberal ideas shape how YP make sense of their life prospects. YP described feeling trapped in their neighbourhood, in school, through drug selling, poverty, and neoliberal competition, all of which are defined and shaped by their environmental conditions. However, YP's cognitive beliefs about their future departed from their relatively less favourable lived realities. They appeared to adopt a self-focused approach to process dissonant information and experience, possibly leading to incongruence between their individualistic optimism and collective pessimism although they were not happy with the current state and environment.

## **4.2 Critical Review**

### **4.2.1 Limitations**

One main limitation is that the study was not equally participatory at every stage, for example, participation was stronger at the study's planning, data-gathering, and dissemination phases than at the problem-posing and co-analysis.

Another main limitation is the very small sample size, which may be compensated somewhat by the quality and richness of the quotes, documented experiences, and participatory elements of the project. The sample size of qualitative studies has long been debated; while Braun and Clarke (2021a) advise against setting a set number

of participants, Guest et al. (2006) suggested that it might be possible to identify some broad themes with six participants.

A decision was made not to collect more demographic data than was necessary for the research question, given the focus on transparency and building trust within a PAR project as well as to protect the confidentiality of participants. Such a decision may have limited the project's findings' generalisability.

Given the small sample size, there are limitations as to how much the results of this study can be applied to a larger population or other settings. The interpretation of YP's perspectives is grounded in time and context; hence, it will likely change over time as the socio-cultural context changes. Therefore, it is not proposed that the findings are 'horizontally' generalised, i.e., to other places or across time (Yardley, 2007). Instead, the study yielded 'vertical' generalisability; it amplified the voices of marginalised YP in the literature, contributing to the knowledge base (Johnson, 1997). However, as the study focused on a particular set of YP, i.e., all males residing in Newham and involved with the CJS, vertical generalisation should be tentatively applied. Conversely, the findings were consistent with previous studies, suggesting some grounds for transferability (Willig, 2013) in that specific aspects of the study might be transferable to other contexts, for example, with other excluded groups.

#### 4.2.2 Critical Evaluation of the PAR Aspects of the Project

Critical evaluation is a central tenet of PAR and part of its cyclical research, action, and reflection process. There were several tensions, complexities and challenges within this project. Having a critical and reflective lens throughout, I believe, facilitated conversations about the opportunities and barriers of the project, which are helpful to reflect on here.

##### 4.2.2.1 *Emancipation and Social Transformation through PAR*

As I previously discussed the problems associated with the notion of giving voice and 'emancipating others' in PAR projects in 2.3.2, while the collaborators and I saw emancipation and social transformation as by-products of the PAR process, we



visioned the emergence of empowerment organically between us all, refraining from positioning ourselves as emancipators/saviours. Our approach to this project and understanding of empowerment is beautifully articulated by Lily Walker, an Australian Aboriginal women's leader speaking to non-Aboriginal activists at a land rights protest: *"If you come here to help me, then you are wasting your time. But if you come here because your liberation is bound up in mine, then let us begin"* (Walker, as cited in Sinclair, n.d. p.3.). We were all part of the same process, and therefore, any experience of liberation was shared; to refer to Freire (1970), no one can liberate anyone else, nor themselves, but rather people in communion liberate each other. YOT collected feedback from YP independently, which could provide YP's thoughts on the project; "interesting", "informative", "engaging", "fun", and "integral" were some words used to describe their experiences of the project (Appendix S).

#### 4.2.2.2 *Challenges of PAR*

PAR is often described as a messy and complex undertaking (Maguire, 2006; McIntyre, 2008). Challenges of conducting a PAR project within a doctoral thesis context (Klocker, 2012) alongside the juxtaposition of academic demands (individualistic, outcome-focused, timeline-driven) and the fundamentals of PAR (collaborative, process-focused, time-intensive) (Cancian, 1993; Gibbon, 2002; Moore, 2006) have been previously discussed. Competing and conflicting demands between institutional and participatory ethics have also been discussed (Elwood, 2015), which I touched on in Chapter 2. I felt the tension between academia and the requirements of PAR, particularly in the initial stages when the PAR process proved less linear; I had to let go of certain expectations of how research 'should look' and decided to focus on the process rather than the outcome.

Time was a primary challenge in this project. As discussed in Chapter 2, only a limited time was allocated to building relationships with YP, and the ethical regulations meant that a research proposal was completed before an ethics application, which prevented input from YP. A strict timeline also created pressure, meaning each stage was kept short. For example, YP reported that they would have liked to receive training on all qualitative methods before collectively deciding on TA

as an analytical method. Further, their involvement with co-analysis was limited due to the project's time limit and pragmatic reasons.

Securing funding was another challenge as considerable time was spent bidding for grants, which delayed the ethics application and contacting youth organisations.

This project consulted key stakeholders and relevant organisations to tap into their expertise, resources, and knowledge, some of whom became collaborators. While this was invaluable to the project, the management of the project, meetings and co-ordination took a considerable amount of time and enhanced workload that had not been built into a doctoral thesis timeline.

The PAR approach is not without criticism; for example, McGuire (1993) pointed out the underrepresentation of women in PAR and the lack of incorporation of feminist theory. Therefore, we kept in mind crucial questions such as which groups are invited to this PAR project, why, and further, with what agenda. Therefore, this study paid attention to involving YP with multiple marginalised positions (young men who experience social and material disadvantage and involved with the CJS, often exclude from research and decision-making).

#### *4.2.2.3 Challenges of Context*

This research was carried out in a youth justice service (YJS) which, as a system, can create an environment whereby YP can experience that youth justice is done to them rather than with them due to various surveillance structures (Haines & Case, 2018). The tensions PAR practitioners face when implementing a bottom-up approach in a largely top-down and bureaucratically organised context have been discussed in the literature before, documenting that the existing power relations in institutional arrangements inevitably infiltrate PAR projects (Jacobs, 2006).

While Lohmeyer (2020) argues that issues relating to some social and institutional legacy and context may not be solvable and must be accepted as they are, Ospina et al. (2004) suggest that such issues can be worked through once relationships are built, and trust is developed, both of which can only be done with time.

The Criminal Justice Service (CJS) context meant that there were already established and even engrained dynamics between the YP (convicted of an offence,

serving order at YJS) and YOT. Unsurprisingly, YP, obliged to attend groups and sessions as part of their order at YJS, did not initially differentiate this research group from other groups, expecting to take a passive role and be led by and taught materials on different topics. This was explicitly acknowledged, and the differences between a YJS skills group and this project were reiterated. As the relationships developed, further discussions over collaboration and shared ownership took place. Over time, YP started to take on a different role, leading sessions and being involved in decision-making. One example was that the project took a different shape when YP stated that they were not interested in the CWB initiative as a new economic model.

On the one hand, the project benefited from positive relationships between YP and YOT staff. On the other hand, the legacy and context of CJS sometimes hindered the project's opportunities; as YP were all on order, they were at times understandably concerned about what would happen to their recordings. The participatory element of this project overcame this challenge as the co-researchers role gave access, transparency and reassurance regarding data management and protection.

One disappointing aspect of the project for YP was that they could not bring more participants into the research through peer referrals due to the reasons previously described in Chapter 2, as the experience of recruiting other YP into the study was one of their wishes in joining this project.

#### 4.2.2.4 *Power*

What I refer to as 'power' in this report is the reality that everyone's intersecting identities (such as race, gender, class, and lived experience, among other social identities, as well as historical context) place them in a social location in an inherently hierarchical manner (Anthias, 2012).

While Rappaport (1987) highlights the paradox of empowerment, Parker (2005) discusses the complex task of sharing power and argues that power cannot be relinquished or handed over. Further, some argue that there can never be an equal relationship between the primary researcher and the co-researchers (Lennie et al., 2003). We experienced this complexity when we navigated the setting of the group;

the YP demanded a certain amount of leadership as they had previous experiences of groups which were more didactic and focused on teaching skills and where there was clearer leadership. My understanding of my and the other collaborators' position in this research project was informed by Wadsworth's (2006) ideas in that we came to act as a facilitator, assisting an iterative, emergent inquiry that was continuous and responsive. Through this facilitation, it was heartening to watch the YP grow in confidence and come into their own as participants and co-researchers from their initial reluctance and hesitation to fully involve themselves in the project.

Regarding exchanging knowledge and expertise, the focus was on dialoguing rather than explaining (Freire, 1970). Through this, the collaborators and I focused on affirming the YP as experts regarding their lives and communities and having indispensable perspectives. We encouraged them that their knowledge, experiences, and insight remained legitimate; however it was expressed, which was perhaps a different relationship to one they were familiar with YOT, where they were taught different topics. We hoped to balance affirming their positions with exposing them to new knowledge and critical thinking skills that they may not have necessarily encountered in the traditional education system, such as criticisms of neoliberal capitalism, a new economic model CWB, scales and trends of the inequality in the UK. Such ideas and concepts were introduced for discussion points, and YP's opinions on these were gathered in the planning phase. Some were found interesting, while others were found irrelevant, and it was imperative to follow the YP's interests and what they found interesting.

When reflecting on the research process and the challenges faced, the collaborators and I were consistently mindful of relational power dynamics between the researchers, YOT and YP were evident, at times intensified by the pre-existing power relations. Social Graces (Burnham, 1992; 1993; Roper-Hall, 1998). was one way of naming, acknowledging, and addressing such dynamics in the room with YP. Another way was to keep making power explicit on the agenda for meetings. The fluidity of power was experienced, too, when talking about insider knowledge and language (YP helping me understand slang words) and when we talked about my English (as a non-native and second language) and their English (as a first or most confident language).

Finally, Cullen and Walsh (2019) cautioned researchers to think critically about remuneration. Campbell and Trotter (2007) questioned whether remuneration resulted in the exploitation of YP in their PAR study, leading to marginalising the disadvantaged YP further when they were NEET. While all YP in this current study were in employment, education, or training, remuneration still may have exacerbated the power imbalance, adding new tensions to our relationships as I held the budget for the project—decisions such as whether they would still be paid if they were ill—may have been cemented by the power differentials.

#### 4.2.3 Quality Assurance of the Analytical Method

As described in Chapter 2, this research study was evaluated using the three guiding principles of Spencer and Ritchie (2011), which are considered below.

##### 4.2.3.1 *Contribution:*

There is a lack of research which explores the economic aspirations of YP who experience marginalisation and material and social disadvantage, and more generally, there is little engagement with the economy within the clinical psychology sphere. Further, this project has incorporated elements of PAR in the context of a new economic model CWB initiative in Newham. While it has moved its focus from CWB to the impact and experiences of the economy on YP's lives, it aims to be a crucial step in encouraging further research into the impact of the economy on communities and CWB as new ways of engaging within the economy within the community psychology sphere.

Key findings such as YP's fraught experiences with the education system, reliance on the underground economy, focus on individualistic solutions and pessimism about positive system change all contribute to the literature on the ways in which excluded YP make sense of the economy and imagine their economic future.

##### 4.2.3.2 *Credibility:*

The method of data analysis was described in Chapter 2 to provide transparency as to how the results were analysed. It was ensured that all the participants were represented in the extracts. Nuance and examples of variation were actively sought. Consideration was given to why some themes did not fit, leading to further thoughts

and richer analysis. Further confinement was carried out to develop the themes and subthemes in supervision with DoS who checked the analysis, provided comments and feedback. Co-researchers reviewed findings at different points, with opportunities to feedback, correct or challenge my interpretations which increased the trustworthiness of the research (Willig, 2008). YP actively participating in research through 'data collection' and partaking in analysis, albeit limited in this project due to time pressures, has been highlighted to increase the research's validity for the communities it serves (Ozer, 2016). Section 4.2. discussed how the themes and subthemes fit together into a wider narrative of YP's experiences of the economy.

#### *4.2.3.3 Rigour:*

It has been questioned whether the aspects of participation, democracy and co-ownership in PAR reduce the rigour of the methods used (Walker, 1993). Hence this section is even more pertinent to the current study.

The procedure of TA was studied by reading literature and consulting with the DoS for guidance. The process is documented in the appendices; a coded transcript extract (Appendix R), thematic mind map for organizing codes (Appendix, intermediate and final theme maps (Appendix N). A reflective journal was maintained throughout the data collection and analysis (Appendix I). Additionally, reflexivity was explored from a personal and epistemological standpoint in the section below.

#### *4.2.3.4 Reflexivity:*

The decision of methodology and epistemological positions was based on their perceived suitability for addressing the research questions; however, it is possible that these choices inadvertently imposed constraints on the findings. Alternatively, discourse analysis may have been a helpful alternative method of analysis, given the importance of social and historical contexts in this study or Foucauldian discourse analysis given the emphasis on power relations (Parker, 2006). Further, epistemologically, a social constructionist stance may have offered a different approach to the findings.

Research positionality varies between “insider” and “outsider” status. Herr and Anderson (2005a) outlined a continuum of positionality as a guideline for those undertaking PAR for a doctoral thesis. This study located itself as “outsiders in collaboration with insiders” along this continuum. As an outsider primary researcher, it is crucial to consider personal reflexivity to explore and acknowledge the underlying emotional, social, and cultural assumptions in dialogic processes of the self and others. As discussed in Chapter 2, my cultural assumptions and expectations frame and construct the presentation of voices. Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989) is a framework that can be used to understand the effect of overlapping and intersecting layers of identities one can have and can experience disadvantage and discrimination. I am a white-passing woman (considered as white in some contexts, not in others), and I was brought up in a working-class household but moved to a middle-class position by the pay and status related to the profession of clinical psychology and immigrated from a non-Western country that has been experiencing steadily downward trajectory across the last decade and full-blown economic depression with the pandemic (Kubilay,2022). Herr and Anderson (2005) argue that every researcher occupies multiple intersections in that researchers may occupy positions where they are included as outsiders, while simultaneously, in some dimensions, they may identify as insiders. While I held different outsider positions; in terms of race, age, gender, and class, it is possible to argue that I held some insider positions; marginalisation through an immigrant status and oppression through personal and vicarious experiences of economic hardship.

### **4.3 Implications**

This research project was inspired by Zlotowitz and Burton’s (2022) call for community psychologists and others to explore and understand how economic relations structure and affect the livelihood of communities. It attempted to undertake an inclusive local economy strategy, CWB, as an area that could be incorporated within a community psychology practice by inviting excluded, marginalised, and disadvantaged YP to become actors who influence the development and implementation of CWB. This was recommended by Zlotowitz and Burton (2022) as one way of engaging in a macro-level influence; the political economy. While the project moved its focus from the CWB initiative, it still hopes to feed into the CWB

initiative in Newham. Firstly, it could be explored why YP were not interested in the CWB initiative, and secondly, the findings reveal insights into how excluded and marginalised YP related to the economy. It aims to feed these results back to the decision-makers through the action phase so that local economic initiatives such as CWB are led by community reflection and action and embed themselves in local knowledge, context, and relationships.

At the time of writing, this project is currently in its dissemination phase, followed by the action phase that will involve deciding on the implications of this study with the YP. It is possible that there may be different implications and recommendations that may emerge throughout this process.

While some of the implications below are generic in that they are well-established, and increasingly publicised, they are also suggested directions supported by this study. However, some implications are more specific to this study, particularly concerning CWB.

#### 4.3.1 For Clinical Psychologists

##### 4.3.1.1 *Research Implications*

This research demonstrates PAR projects' compatibility with clinical psychology practice. Further, when YP's views are respected and listened to, given choices, offered meaningful roles, remunerated for their work, and supported throughout, they are committed and dedicated to conducting research.

Based on the findings, potential directions for PAR projects may focus on research questions such as

- What other factors may contribute to the ways in which YP experience the economy, economic relations, and forces?
- How could CWB be more accessible to YP, and how could it be further adapted and developed to attract the interests of YP?
- Why conspicuous consumption and competitive individualism are salient for YP?
- What alternative ways of understanding the economy are available for YP?



- What can lead to more hope and optimism for YP about their economic future in the current economic-political climate?

#### 4.3.1.2 *Clinical Implications*

Clinical psychologists should concentrate on formulating difficulties beyond individual practice and consider socio-economic factors that affect the livelihoods of many individuals and communities as a vital part of formulation through using tools such as Power Mapping (Hagan & Smail, 1997), Societal Case Formulation (Burton, 2008), Power Threat Meaning Framework (Johnstone & Boyle, 2018), and the Ecological Systems Level Analysis (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Clinical psychologists should engage in the economy in clinical practice in similar ways that they engage with trauma through trauma-informed practice (Harris & Fallot, 2001). Poverty-informed, or anti-poverty practice (Davis & Wainwright, 2006; Krumer-Nevo, 2016), rooted in social work, requires the understanding that living in poverty is not just a piece of background information in people's lives. A more active approach to alleviating poverty and its impact has recently been implemented by a community psychology-informed charity that prevents youth violence through creativity, Art Against Knives ([www.artagainstknives.com](http://www.artagainstknives.com)).

Clinical psychologists should consider community, liberation psychology frameworks, and PAR principles to incorporate social action into their work with YP (Holland, 1992). Some examples of such work include MAC-UK ([www.mac-uk.org.uk](http://www.mac-uk.org.uk)), which aims to transform policy; with and for excluded YP (Allen, 2013; Zlotowitz et al., 2010; Zlotowitz et al., 2016), which supports them into employment as well as directly employing them, allowing YP to step into meaningful roles in policy-change and social action.

Clinical psychologists should advocate for their clients when they experience disadvantage and oppression; for example, one way of advocating for YP who experience school exclusions could be questioning unfair treatment by schools if working with schools and directing YP towards grassroots movements such as No More Exclusions ([www.nomoreexclusions.com](http://www.nomoreexclusions.com)), a black-led and community-based

abolitionist grassroots coalition movement, that centres the voices of YP who have experienced oppressive education and exclusion.

#### 4.3.1.3 *Professional Implications*

This research project hopes to demonstrate the importance of clinical psychologists working across disciplinary, organisation and sector boundaries, developing partnerships with grass-root movements, organisations, and charities, joining the relevant movements, learning from, and supporting each other in the struggle for a more just, equal, and sustainable society (Kagan, 2007; Burton, 2015; Zlotowitz & Burton, 2022).

Clinical psychologists should consider different ways to mobilise psychological knowledge about the impact of economic policy on communities. A successful example of this is the campaign by Psychologists Against Austerity (Psychologists Against Austerity, 2015). Building on this work, the current cost of living crisis could be explored, and the impact of it on well-being could be publicised.

The above recommendations that engage with the surrounding organisational and political systems of a client also point to implications for training courses and professional bodies who should consider putting tailored and appropriate training, supervision, support, and structures in place to support clinical psychologists working at these levels (Browne et al., 2020).

#### 4.3.2 For Decision-Makers

In the context of this research, decision-makers primarily involve local authorities, schools, CJS and many more.

This research highlights the need to involve excluded YP at every stage of CWB implementation through PAR or other participatory and deliberative procedures such as Citizen's Assembly (Macq & Jacquet, 2023) or co-production models such as The Ladder of Co-Production, NCAG (2021) or other ways of being lead for YP and YP through liberation and community psychology approaches.

This research demonstrates the need for schools to build relationships and learn from grassroots organisations and youth-led movements. It also further illustrates the need to dedicate more funding and resources to schools so that they can offer individually tailored support to vulnerable students.

#### **4.4 Concluding Remarks**

Where mounting economic pressures and escalating inequalities cast far-reaching consequences for many individuals and communities, this research project emerged in response to a call to action for clinical psychologists to extend their purview beyond the individual and engage with macro forces such as the economy by entering into a dialogue with a group of YP who experience racial, social and material disadvantages yet are often relegated to the margins of economic discourses. The findings revealed that YP's experiences of the economy are through poverty, limited opportunities, educational barriers, and rising inequalities. These factors spoke to the complexities of navigating an economic terrain that often seems stacked against them. The findings also offered a lens into the multi-layered dynamics that YP navigate when experiencing the economy, its structures, and relations. These included a strong interest in conspicuous consumption as a sign of status, a desire to achieve great material success, and often adopting highly individualistic solutions in response to structural and systemic barriers.

By working alongside YP through listening to them, giving choices, offering meaningful roles, remunerating for their work, and understanding nuanced experiences, we stand better poised to advocate for equitable systems and ultimately shape an economic landscape that is more inclusive, democratic, sustainable, and responsive to the diverse realities of those it impacts.

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## APPENDICIES

### Appendix A: Literature Review Search Criteria

Date conducted	September 2022
Key search terms	("youth" or "adolescents" or "YP" or "teen" or "young adults") AND ("economic" or "socio-economic" or "economy" or "financial") AND ("aspirations" or "goals" or "hopes" or "desires") AND ("United Kingdom" or "UK" or "England" or "Britain" or "Scotland" or "Northern Ireland" or "Wales").
Database searched	PsycINFO, Academic Search Complete, British Education Index, ERIC, and CINAHL
Inclusion Criteria	Economic aspirations of youth in the UK
Exclusion Criteria	Excluding studies published outside the dates between 01/01/2002 and 31/12/2022.



## Appendix B1: Application for Research Ethics Approval



### UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON School of Psychology

### APPLICATION FOR RESEARCH ETHICS APPROVAL FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS (Updated October 2021)

FOR BSc RESEARCH;  
MSc/MA RESEARCH;  
PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE RESEARCH IN CLINICAL, COUNSELLING & EDUCATIONAL  
PSYCHOLOGY

### Section 1 – Guidance on Completing the Application Form (please read carefully)

1.1	Before completing this application, please familiarise yourself with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ British Psychological Society's Code of Ethics and Conduct</li><li>▪ UEL's Code of Practice for Research Ethics</li><li>▪ UEL's Research Data Management Policy</li><li>▪ UEL's Data Backup Policy</li></ul>
1.2	Email your supervisor the completed application and all attachments as ONE WORD DOCUMENT. Your supervisor will look over your application and provide feedback.
1.3	When your application demonstrates a sound ethical protocol, your supervisor will submit it for review.
1.4	Your supervisor will let you know the outcome of your application. Recruitment and data collection must <b>NOT</b> commence until your ethics application has been approved, along with other approvals that may be necessary (see section 7).
1.5	Research in the NHS: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ If your research involves patients or service users of the NHS, their relatives or carers, as well as those in receipt of services provided under contract to the NHS, you will need to apply for HRA approval/NHS permission (through IRAS). You DO NOT need to apply to the School of Psychology for ethical clearance.</li><li>▪ Useful websites: <a href="https://www.myresearchproject.org.uk/Signin.aspx">https://www.myresearchproject.org.uk/Signin.aspx</a> <a href="https://www.hra.nhs.uk/approvals-amendments/what-approvals-do-i-need/hra-approval/">https://www.hra.nhs.uk/approvals-amendments/what-approvals-do-i-need/hra-approval/</a></li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If recruitment involves NHS staff via the NHS, an application will need to be submitted to the HRA in order to obtain R&amp;D approval. This is in addition to separate approval via the R&amp;D department of the NHS Trust involved in the research. UEL ethical approval will also be required.</li> <li>▪ HRA/R&amp;D approval is not required for research when NHS employees are not recruited directly through NHS lines of communication (UEL ethical approval is required). This means that NHS staff can participate in research without HRA approval when a student recruits via their own social/professional networks or through a professional body such as the BPS, for example.</li> <li>▪ The School strongly discourages BSc and MSc/MA students from designing research that requires HRA approval for research involving the NHS, as this can be a very demanding and lengthy process.</li> </ul>
1.6	<p>If you require Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) clearance (see section 6), please request a DBS clearance form from the Hub, complete it fully, and return it to <a href="mailto:applicantchecks@uel.ac.uk">applicantchecks@uel.ac.uk</a>. Once the form has been approved, you will be registered with GBG Online Disclosures and a registration email will be sent to you. Guidance for completing the online form is provided on the GBG website: <a href="https://fadv.onlinedisclosures.co.uk/Authentication/Login">https://fadv.onlinedisclosures.co.uk/Authentication/Login</a></p> <p>You may also find the following website to be a useful resource: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service</a></p>
1.7	<p>Checklist, the following attachments should be included if appropriate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Study advertisement</li> <li>▪ Participant Information Sheet (PIS)</li> <li>▪ Participant Consent Form</li> <li>▪ Participant Debrief Sheet</li> <li>▪ Risk Assessment Form/Country-Specific Risk Assessment Form (see section 5)</li> <li>▪ Permission from an external organisation (see section 7)</li> <li>▪ Original and/or pre-existing questionnaire(s) and test(s) you intend to use</li> <li>▪ Interview guide for qualitative studies</li> <li>▪ Visual material(s) you intend showing participants</li> </ul>

## Section 2 – Your Details

2.1	<b>Your name:</b>	<b>Cansu Ozenc</b>
2.2	<b>Your supervisor's name:</b>	<b>Prof Dave Harper</b>
2.3	<b>Name(s) of additional UEL supervisors:</b>	<b>Dr Sally Zlotowitz</b>
		3rd supervisor (if applicable)
2.4	<b>Title of your programme:</b>	<b>Professional Doctorate in Clinical Psychology</b>
2.5	<b>UEL assignment submission date:</b>	<b>01/05/2023</b>
		Re-sit date (if applicable)

## Section 3 – Project Details

Please give as much detail as necessary for a reviewer to be able to fully understand the nature and purpose of your research.

3.1	<b>Study title:</b> <u>Please note</u> - If your study requires registration, the title inserted here must be <u>the same</u> as that on PhD Manager	<b>A Participatory Action Research; Exploring the Economic Aspirations of Youth Within the Context Of The Community Wealth Building Initiative In Newham</b>
3.2	<b>Summary of study background and aims (using lay language):</b>	<p>This research proposal aims to explore the economic aspirations of youth within the context of a democratic local economic strategy, the Community Wealth Building (CWB) initiative in Newham.</p> <p>CWB is a local economic development strategy focused on building sustainable, democratic, and inclusive local economies. It is about creating a shift in the balance of power in determining the economic future of local communities. (Guinan &amp; O’neill, 2019).</p> <p>CWB is explored as a possible example of how Community Psychology can operate at a macro level, engaging more meaningfully with the political economy.</p> <p>Since launching their CWB strategy, Newham Council has made a number of commitments and set up multiple initiatives to support YP in accessing a variety of education and skills pathways to improve employment outcomes.</p> <p>While such initiatives can have the best intentions, they make assumptions about, and decisions for, YP while excluding their voices from such processes.</p> <p>One of the core principles of CWB is the need to fully involve everyone in the community and facilitate participation in democratic citizenship. Hence this research aims to shift the lens away from the decision-makers within the council towards the YP in Newham to understand how they themselves view their future.</p> <p>There is a need to listen to what YP say about their circumstances, experiences, skills, resources, values, goals, and barriers. This sort of inquiry lends itself to Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR), which naturally fits with a community psychology practice, as their roots come from similar influences, holding shared values of democratic participation, self-determination, social justice, and social action (Ochocka et al., 2002).</p>
3.3	<b>Research question(s):</b>	<p>PAR is a non-linear process; thus, research questions are borne out of the process and cannot be pre-determined at the outset due to its collaborative nature (Greenwood et al., 2016). In keeping with this, the below research</p>

		<p>questions are presented for the purposes of this ethics application. However, they are kept intentionally broad to leave space for young co-researchers to make choices about the research focus. What does the economy mean to YP? How do they relate to it? How does it impact their life? What resources do YP draw upon in imagining and shaping their lives?</p>
3.4	<p><b>Research design:</b></p>	<p>As this research is interested in YP’s experiences and perspectives, it will adopt a qualitative design to allow in-depth exploration. Data will be collected via focus groups and possibly interviews. Thematic Analysis will be used to analyse the data</p>
3.5	<p><b>Participants:</b> Include all relevant information including inclusion and exclusion criteria</p>	<p>The term “youth” is viewed as a fluid category rather than a fixed age group, highlighting the period of transitioning from childhood to adulthood (UNESCO, 2017). Participants will be required to be living in Newham and aged 13-25, as this age range is commonly referred as “youth” in health and social care contexts. I will not exclude young people who might have been receiving support from mental health services or disabled young people and will explicitly welcome them to apply to take part. I will exclude young people who would not be able to give informed consent such as young people in severe emotional distress, which may impact on their ability to understand what would be required of them and the consequences of their involvement. There will be two categories of participants: Co-researchers (who will attend several meetings and be involved in the design, conduct and analysis of the study); and ordinary participants (young people from whom the data will be collected via attendance at focus group meetings).</p>
3.6	<p><b>Recruitment strategy:</b> Provide as much detail as possible and include a backup plan if relevant</p>	<p>Co-researchers as well as participants will be recruited via sources such as youth organisations based in Newham. Recruitment will primarily take place in Youth Zones in Newham as well as other youth organisations. At the recruitment stage, it will be made clear that being part of this research would be purely voluntary. If YP are interested in participating, this role will be collaboratively established through an initial meeting with myself, YP and parent/guardian, if appropriate, ensuring informed consent is carefully considered through information sheets and ‘co-researcher’ agreements, which will be regularly reviewed. As a back-up plan, if it is not possible to recruit co-researchers</p>

		or ordinary participants, then the researcher will seek to recruit youth workers in Newham.	
3.7	<b>Measures, materials or equipment:</b> Provide detailed information, e.g., for measures, include scoring instructions, psychometric properties, if freely available, permissions required, etc.	<b>Audio recording, transcribing equipment, and a password-protected computer.</b>	
3.8	<b>Data collection:</b> Provide information on how data will be collected from the point of consent to debrief	Data will be collected via audio-recordings of focus groups, interviews, meetings as well as data analysis will be audio-recorded. All co-researchers will sign a confidentiality agreement.	
3.9	<b>Will you be engaging in deception?</b>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	If yes, what will participants be told about the nature of the research, and how/when will you inform them about its real nature?		
3.10	<b>Will participants be reimbursed?</b>	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
	If yes, please detail why it is necessary.	There are both ethical and practical reasons for wishing to pay the young people for their time. There are a number of power imbalances between researcher and young people, given the economic injustices experienced by young people in Newham (one of the most deprived areas in the UK with one of the highest rates of poverty and income inequality of all London boroughs). Practically, co-researchers will need to give significant time to the project (helping to design and conduct the study and analyse the data). In addition, a small payment may mean that ordinary participants will be more likely to volunteer their time for a focus group. We have been successful in securing a small amount of funding to support this element of the project from the charity Economy ( <a href="http://weare.ecnmy.org/">http://weare.ecnmy.org/</a> ) as they are interested in supporting a study exploring young people's views of the economy. It is proposed that Economy will pay the young people directly rather than via UEL.	
	How much will you offer? <u>Please note</u> - This must be in the form of vouchers, <u>not cash</u> .	Ordinary participants will be paid £11.05 per hour (min. London living wage. Co-researchers to be paid £20 per hour. The budget will be held by ecnmy, they will organise payments.	
3.11	<b>Data analysis:</b>	Data will be analysed using Thematic Analysis. This will be conducted in collaboration between the researchers and Co-Researchers (who will sign confidentiality agreements)	

## Section 4 – Confidentiality, Security and Data Retention

It is vital that data are handled carefully, particularly the details about participants. For information in this area, please see the UEL guidance on data protection, and also the UK government guide to data protection regulations.

If a Research Data Management Plan (RDMP) has been completed and reviewed, information from this document can be inserted here.

4.1	<b>Will the participants be anonymised at source?</b>	<b>YES</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>NO</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	If yes, please provide details of how the data will be anonymised.		
4.2	<b>Are participants' responses anonymised or are an anonymised sample?</b>	<b>YES</b> <input type="checkbox"/> X	<b>NO</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
	If yes, please provide details of how data will be anonymised (e.g., all identifying information will be removed during transcription, pseudonyms used, etc.).	As the researcher and co-researchers will have been present in the Focus Groups, the participants will not be anonymous. However, when transcribing the Focus Group discussions the researcher will anonymise the transcripts (e.g. replacing names with pseudonyms etc).	
4.3	<b>How will you ensure participant details will be kept confidential?</b>	Information about participants and content of data will be kept confidential and anonymous. Ordinary participants will be anonymised in the transcripts and presentation of extracts in the thesis and other outputs. However, co-researchers will be given the opportunity to de-anonymise themselves in any dissemination activities in order to give them credit for their work.	
4.4	<b>How will data be securely stored and backed up during the research?</b> Please include details of how you will manage access, sharing and security	Audio recordings will be transferred to the researcher's UEL personal storage (one drive), encrypted, and will be backed up to the researcher's H:Drive. They will then be deleted from the Dictaphone. The audio recordings will be deleted following passing the viva.	
4.5	<b>Who will have access to the data and in what form?</b> (e.g., raw data, anonymised data)	The Research Team (the researcher, Prof Dave Harper & Dr Sally Zlotowitz & Young Co-researchers) and the examiners will have access to the anonymised Focus Group extracts	
4.6	<b>Which data are of long-term value and will be retained?</b> (e.g., anonymised interview transcripts, anonymised databases)	The anonymised transcripts may be stored on the Prof Dave Harper's secure UEL server for up to five years for dissemination purposes.	

4.7	<b>What is the long-term retention plan for this data?</b>	5 years	
4.8	<b>Will anonymised data be made available for use in future research by other researchers?</b>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	If yes, have participants been informed of this?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
4.9	<b>Will personal contact details be retained to contact participants in the future for other research studies?</b>	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	If yes, have participants been informed of this?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>

## Section 5 – Risk Assessment

If you have serious concerns about the safety of a participant, or others, during the course of your research please speak with your supervisor as soon as possible. If there is any unexpected occurrence while you are collecting your data (e.g., a participant or the researcher injures themselves), please report this to your supervisor as soon as possible.

5.1	<b>Are there any potential physical or psychological risks to participants related to taking part?</b> (e.g., potential adverse effects, pain, discomfort, emotional distress, intrusion, etc.)	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
	If yes, what are these, and how will they be minimised?			
5.2	<b>Are there any potential physical or psychological risks to you as a researcher?</b>	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	
	If yes, what are these, and how will they be minimised?			
5.3	<b>If you answered yes to either 5.1 and/or 5.2, you will need to complete and include a General Risk Assessment (GRA) form (signed by your supervisor). Please confirm that you have attached a GRA form as an appendix:</b>	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		
5.4	<b>If necessary, have appropriate support services been identified in material provided to participants?</b>	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
5.5	<b>Does the research take place outside the UEL campus?</b>	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	

	If yes, where?	<b>Youth-related organisations in East London</b>	
5.6	<b>Does the research take place outside the UK?</b>	<b>YES</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>NO</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	If yes, where?	Please state the country and other relevant details	
	If yes, in addition to the General Risk Assessment form, a Country-Specific Risk Assessment form must also be completed and included (available in the Ethics folder in the Psychology Noticeboard). Please confirm a Country-Specific Risk Assessment form has been attached as an appendix. <u>Please note</u> - A Country-Specific Risk Assessment form is not needed if the research is online only (e.g., Qualtrics survey), regardless of the location of the researcher or the participants.	<b>YES</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	
5.7	<b>Additional guidance:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For assistance in completing the risk assessment, please use the AIG Travel Guard website to ascertain risk levels. Click on 'sign in' and then 'register here' using policy # 0015865161. Please also consult the Foreign Office travel advice website for further guidance.</li> <li>For on campus students, once the ethics application has been approved by a reviewer, all risk assessments for research abroad must then be signed by the Director of Impact and Innovation, Professor Ian Tucker (who may escalate it up to the Vice Chancellor).</li> <li>For distance learning students conducting research abroad in the country where they currently reside, a risk assessment must also be carried out. To minimise risk, it is recommended that such students only conduct data collection online. If the project is deemed low risk, then it is not necessary for the risk assessment to be signed by the Director of Impact and Innovation. However, if not deemed low risk, it must be signed by the Director of Impact and Innovation (or potentially the Vice Chancellor).</li> <li>Undergraduate and M-level students are not explicitly prohibited from conducting research abroad. However, it is discouraged because of the inexperience of the students and the time constraints they have to complete their degree.</li> </ul>		

## Section 6 – Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Clearance

6.1	<b>Does your research involve working with children (aged 16 or under) or vulnerable adults (*see below for definition)?</b> If yes, you will require Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) or equivalent (for those residing in countries	<b>YES</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>NO</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
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	outside of the UK) clearance to conduct the research project		
	<p>* You are required to have DBS or equivalent clearance if your participant group involves:</p> <p>(1) Children and young people who are 16 years of age or under, or</p> <p>(2) ‘Vulnerable’ people aged 16 and over with particular psychiatric diagnoses, cognitive difficulties, receiving domestic care, in nursing homes, in palliative care, living in institutions or sheltered accommodation, or involved in the criminal justice system, for example. Vulnerable people are understood to be persons who are not necessarily able to freely consent to participating in your research, or who may find it difficult to withhold consent. If in doubt about the extent of the vulnerability of your intended participant group, speak with your supervisor. Methods that maximise the understanding and ability of vulnerable people to give consent should be used whenever possible.</p>		
6.2	<b>Do you have DBS or equivalent (for those residing in countries outside of the UK) clearance to conduct the research project?</b>	<b>YES</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>NO</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
6.3	<b>Is your DBS or equivalent (for those residing in countries outside of the UK) clearance valid for the duration of the research project?</b>	<b>YES</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>NO</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
6.4	<b>If you have current DBS clearance, please provide your DBS certificate number:</b>	001703116041	
	If residing outside of the UK, please detail the type of clearance and/or provide certificate number.	Please provide details of the type of clearance, including any identification information such as a certificate number	
6.5	<p><b>Additional guidance:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If participants are aged 16 or under, you will need two separate information sheets, consent forms, and debrief forms (one for the participant, and one for their parent/guardian).</li> <li>▪ For younger participants, their information sheets, consent form, and debrief form need to be written in age-appropriate language.</li> </ul>		

## Section 7 – Other Permissions

7.1	<b>Does the research involve other organisations (e.g., a school, charity, workplace, local authority, care home, etc.)?</b>	<b>YES</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>NO</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	If yes, please provide their details.	<p><b>Permission has been granted by Newham Youth Justice Service (see appendix J). In addition, the researcher is currently discussing the project with a number of other youth-related organisations and, if written permission is</b></p>	

		<b>granted, the researcher will recruit via those organisations too</b>
	If yes, written permission is needed from such organisations (i.e., if they are helping you with recruitment and/or data collection, if you are collecting data on their premises, or if you are using any material owned by the institution/organisation). Please confirm that you have attached written permission as an appendix.	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7.2	<p><b><u>Additional guidance:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Before the research commences, once your ethics application has been approved, please ensure that you provide the organisation with a copy of the final, approved ethics application or approval letter. Please then prepare a version of the consent form for the organisation themselves to sign. You can adapt it by replacing words such as ‘my’ or ‘I’ with ‘our organisation’ or with the title of the organisation. This organisational consent form must be signed before the research can commence.</li> <li>If the organisation has their own ethics committee and review process, a SREC application and approval is still required. Ethics approval from SREC can be gained before approval from another research ethics committee is obtained. However, recruitment and data collection are NOT to commence until your research has been approved by the School and other ethics committee/s.</li> </ul>	

## Section 8 – Declarations

8.1	<b>Declaration by student. I confirm that I have discussed the ethics and feasibility of this research proposal with my supervisor:</b>	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8.2	<b>Student's name:</b> (Typed name acts as a signature)	<b>Cansu Ozenc</b>
8.3	<b>Student's number:</b>	<b>2075224</b>
8.4	<b>Date:</b>	<b>27/07/2022</b>
<b><i>Supervisor's declaration of support is given upon their electronic submission of the application</i></b>		

## Appendix B2: Ethics Review Decision Letter



University of  
East London

### School of Psychology Ethics Committee

## NOTICE OF ETHICS REVIEW DECISION LETTER

For research involving human participants

BSc/MSc/MA/Professional Doctorates in Clinical, Counselling and Educational Psychology

**Reviewer:** Please complete sections in **blue** | **Student:** Please complete/read sections in **orange**

### Details

<b>Reviewer:</b>	Elias Mouchlianitis
<b>Supervisor:</b>	David Harper
<b>Student:</b>	Cansu Ozenc
<b>Course:</b>	Prof Doc Clinical Psychology
<b>Title of proposed study:</b>	A Participatory Action Research; Exploring the Economic Aspirations of Youth within the context of the Community Wealth Building Initiative in Newham

### Checklist

(Optional)

	YES	NO	N/A
Concerns regarding study aims (e.g., ethically/morally questionable, unsuitable topic area for level of study, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Detailed account of participants, including inclusion and exclusion criteria	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concerns regarding participants/target sample	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Detailed account of recruitment strategy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concerns regarding recruitment strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

All relevant study materials attached (e.g., freely available questionnaires, interview schedules, tests, etc.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Study materials (e.g., questionnaires, tests, etc.) are appropriate for target sample	<input type="checkbox"/> x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clear and detailed outline of data collection	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Data collection appropriate for target sample	<input type="checkbox"/> x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If deception being used, rationale provided, and appropriate steps followed to communicate study aims at a later point	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If data collection is not anonymous, appropriate steps taken at later stages to ensure participant anonymity (e.g., data analysis, dissemination, etc.) – anonymisation, pseudonymisation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concerns regarding data storage (e.g., location, type of data, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concerns regarding data sharing (e.g., who will have access and how)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Concerns regarding data retention (e.g., unspecified length of time, unclear why data will be retained/who will have access/where stored)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If required, General Risk Assessment form attached	<input type="checkbox"/> x	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any physical/psychological risks/burdens to participants have been sufficiently considered and appropriate attempts will be made to minimise	x <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Any physical/psychological risks to the researcher have been sufficiently considered and appropriate attempts will be made to minimise	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If required, Country-Specific Risk Assessment form attached	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If required, a DBS or equivalent certificate number/information provided	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If required, permissions from recruiting organisations attached (e.g., school, charity organisation, etc.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
All relevant information included in the participant information sheet (PIS)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information in the PIS is study specific	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Language used in the PIS is appropriate for the target audience	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
All issues specific to the study are covered in the consent form	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Language used in the consent form is appropriate for the target audience	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
All necessary information included in the participant debrief sheet	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Language used in the debrief sheet is appropriate for the target audience	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Study advertisement included	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Content of study advertisement is appropriate (e.g., researcher's personal contact details are not shared, appropriate language/visual material used, etc.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Decision options

<b>APPROVED</b>	Ethics approval for the above-named research study has been granted from the date of approval (see end of this notice), to the date it is submitted for assessment.
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<p><b>APPROVED - BUT MINOR AMENDMENTS ARE REQUIRED <u>BEFORE</u> THE RESEARCH COMMENCES</b></p>	<p>In this circumstance, the student must confirm with their supervisor that all minor amendments have been made <b><u>before</u></b> the research commences. Students are to do this by filling in the confirmation box at the end of this form once all amendments have been attended to and emailing a copy of this decision notice to the supervisor. The supervisor will then forward the student’s confirmation to the School for its records.</p> <p><b>Minor amendments guidance:</b> typically involve clarifying/amending information presented to participants (e.g., in the PIS, instructions), further detailing of how data will be securely handled/stored, and/or ensuring consistency in information presented across materials.</p>
<p><b>NOT APPROVED - MAJOR AMENDMENTS AND RE-SUBMISSION REQUIRED</b></p>	<p>In this circumstance, a revised ethics application <b><u>must</u></b> be submitted and approved <b><u>before</u></b> any research takes place. The revised application will be reviewed by the same reviewer. If in doubt, students should ask their supervisor for support in revising their ethics application.</p> <p><b>Major amendments guidance:</b> typically insufficient information has been provided, insufficient consideration given to several key aspects, there are serious concerns regarding any aspect of the project, and/or serious concerns in the candidate’s ability to ethically, safely and sensitively execute the study.</p>

## Decision on the above-named proposed research study

Please indicate the decision:	APPROVED
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### Minor amendments

Please clearly detail the amendments the student is required to make
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### Major amendments

Please clearly detail the amendments the student is required to make
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## Assessment of risk to researcher

<b>Has an adequate risk assessment been offered in the application form?</b>	<b>YES</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>NO</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
If no, please request resubmission with an <u>adequate risk assessment</u> .		

**If the proposed research could expose the researcher to any kind of emotional, physical or health and safety hazard, please rate the degree of risk:**

<b>HIGH</b>	Please <b>do not approve a high-risk</b> application. Travel to countries/provinces/areas deemed to be high risk should not be permitted and an application not be approved on this basis. If unsure, please refer to the Chair of Ethics.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>MEDIUM</b>	Approve but include appropriate recommendations in the below box.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>LOW</b>	Approve and if necessary, include any recommendations in the below box.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Reviewer recommendations in relation to risk (if any):</b>	Please insert any recommendations	

## Reviewer's signature

<b>Reviewer:</b> (Typed name to act as signature)	Elias Mouchlianitis
<b>Date:</b>	28/08/2022

*This reviewer has assessed the ethics application for the named research study on behalf of the School of Psychology Ethics Committee*

### RESEARCHER PLEASE NOTE

For the researcher and participants involved in the above-named study to be covered by UEL's Insurance, prior ethics approval from the School of Psychology (acting on behalf of the UEL Ethics Committee), and confirmation from students where minor amendments were required, must be obtained before any research takes place.

For a copy of UEL's Personal Accident & Travel Insurance Policy, please see the Ethics Folder in the Psychology Noticeboard.

## Confirmation of minor amendments

(Student to complete)

**I have noted and made all the required minor amendments, as stated above, before starting my research and collecting data**

<b>Student name:</b> (Typed name to act as signature)	Please type your full name
<b>Student number:</b>	Please type your student number
<b>Date:</b>	Click or tap to enter a date

*Please submit a copy of this decision letter to your supervisor with this box completed if minor amendments to your ethics application are required*

## **Appendix C: Information Sheet for Participants**



### **PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET**

#### **Participatory Action Research: Economic and Future Goals of Young People in Newham**

**Contact person: Cansu Ozenc (she/her)**

**Email:** [u2075224@uel.ac.uk](mailto:u2075224@uel.ac.uk)

You are being invited to take part in research exploring economic and future goals of Young People in Newham. Before you decide whether to take part or not, please carefully read through the following information which outlines what your participation would involve. Feel free to talk with others about the study (e.g., friends, family, etc.) before making your decision. If anything is unclear or you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above email.

#### **The researcher:**

My name is Cansu. I am training to be a psychologist at the University of East London (UEL). As part of my studies, I am conducting the research that you are being invited to participate in.

#### **What is the purpose of the research?**

The aim of the study is to explore what hopes young people in Newham have about the economy. I would like to find out what young people in Newham think about their circumstances, experiences, skills, resources, values, goals, and barriers for their future.



### **Why have I been invited to take part?**

I am inviting you to take part in this research as you are between 13- and 25-years old residing in Newham.

### **What will I be asked to do if I agree to take part?**

I am inviting you to join a Focus Group with other young people for one or, possibly more, meetings. I will be involving young people as much as possible. Although I have some questions in mind, we will decide together what the focus will be. Some topics that might be explored for example are;

- What does 'economy' mean to you?
- How do you relate to it? How does it impact your life?
- What resources are important for you in imagining and shaping your life for the future?

The research is not designed to cause you any harm, discomfort, or distress. We will try to make sure that the researcher groups are a safe space. There will be information about how to get support if you feel uncomfortable at any time. You are also free to leave the project at any time – you do not have to give a reason.

### **What if I don't want my parent/guardian/carer to know?**

We would like your parent/guardian/carer's permission for you to take part in the project.

This is because they are responsible for ensuring your safety and assisting you in making important decisions. We understand that you may not feel comfortable about seeking consent from your parent/guardian/carer to participate in the project. If you are aged 16 or over, your parents or legal guardians do not need to consent to you taking part. We would still advise you to ask permission from your parent/guardian/carer but if you really do not feel comfortable with doing this and you are aged 16 or over, you would still be able to take part.

### **Do both my parents have to agree?**

You just need consent from one adult who is responsible for you.

### **Will the project be accessible for disabled people?**

We encourage disabled young people to take part. Please let us know if you have any specific access needs as soon as possible. We will do our best to make sure the project is accessible to all disabled people.

**Where will the project take place?**

Youth Justice Service, 192 Cumberland Road, Plaistow, London, E13 8LT

**What happens to the things I share? Will they be kept private?**

Everything you share in the group will remain strictly confidential. Only the researcher(s) involved in the study will have access to anything that identifies you (e.g. your name). You have a right to withdraw from this project within three weeks of the last Focus Group. I will audio-record the Focus Groups and type up what was said but any names of people or places or anything else that might identify you or others will be changed. The audio files and the anonymised transcripts of the meetings will be stored securely on the university's computer system in a password-protected folder. After I have passed my thesis, I will delete the audio recordings. The anonymised transcripts will be retained for five years in case we want to publish the research. When the final research is shared in my thesis and any publications, I will include some quotes from the Focus Groups, but they will not include any information (e.g. names of people or places) that might identify anyone. Some co-researchers might want to be publicly recognised for all their hard work and they might wish to be named in any presentations or written publications. As a result, you will be given the option for your real name be used. However, you do not need to do this and can remain anonymous.

For the purposes of data protection, the University of East London is the Data Controller for the personal information processed as part of this research project. The University processes this information under the 'public task' condition contained in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Where the University processes particularly sensitive data (known as 'special category data' in the GDPR), it does so because the processing is necessary for archiving purposes in the public interest, or scientific and historical research purposes or statistical purposes. The University will ensure that the personal data it processes is held securely and processed in accordance with the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. For more information about how the University processes personal data please see

[www.uel.ac.uk/about/about-uel/governance/information-assurance/data-protection](http://www.uel.ac.uk/about/about-uel/governance/information-assurance/data-protection)

### **Will I get anything for taking part?**

You will be paid £15.00 per hour for taking part in the study. The charity *People's Economy* (<http://weare.ecnmy.org/>) have kindly agreed to support the study by paying the young people who participate as they are very interested in their views about the economy. Some staff from the charity may sit in on some meetings but we will ask them to sign an agreement to keep anything they hear private and confidential.

### **Do I have to take part?**

You do not have to take part in this study and should not feel under any pressure to do so. You are free to change your mind at any time and leave the study. If you choose to leave the study, you may do so without disadvantage to yourself and you do not need to give a reason. If you wish to leave, please let me know **within three weeks** of the last Focus Group. After this time the analysis will have begun, and it will be too difficult to remove individual contributions from the group discussions. Even if quotes are used, they will be anonymised.

### **What will happen to the results of the research?**

The research will be written up as a thesis which will be marked at the university. Once it has passed it will be publicly available on a publication's website at UEL. Findings will also be disseminated to a range of audiences (e.g., academics, clinicians, public, etc.) through journal articles, conference presentations, talks, magazine articles, blogs. Again, no-one will be identifiable in any quotes unless they have told us they wish to be named.

After the study is over, my supervisor (Professor David Harper) will store the anonymised transcripts for a maximum of 5 years to allow time to write the research up for publication. After then the transcripts will be deleted.

### **Who has reviewed the research?**

My research has been approved by the School of Psychology Ethics Committee. This means that the Committee's evaluation of this ethics application has been guided by the standards of research ethics set by the British Psychological Society.

**Who can I contact if I have any questions/concerns?**

Please feel free to ask me any questions. If you are happy to continue you will be asked to sign a consent form before you can take part. Your mum, dad, or guardian will also be encouraged to sign a consent form. Please hold on to this invitation letter in case you want to look at it again in the future. If you have any questions or concerns about how the study has been carried out, please contact:

Cansu Ozenc email: [u2075224@uel.ac.uk](mailto:u2075224@uel.ac.uk)

If you have any questions or concerns about how the research has been conducted, please contact my research supervisor Professor David Harper. School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ.

Email: [d.harper@uel.ac.uk](mailto:d.harper@uel.ac.uk)

**or**

Chair of School Ethics Committee: Dr Trishna Patel, School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ.

(Email: [t.patel@uel.ac.uk](mailto:t.patel@uel.ac.uk))

**Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.**

## Appendix D: Information Sheet for Co-researchers



### CO-RESEARCHER INFORMATION SHEET

#### **Participatory Action Research: Economic and Future Goals of Young People in Newham**

**Contact person: Cansu Ozenc (she/her)**

**Email:** u2075224@uel.ac.uk

You are being invited to take part in research exploring economic and future goals of Young People in Newham. Before you decide whether to take part or not, please carefully read through the following information which outlines what your participation would involve. Feel free to talk with others about the study (e.g., friends, family, etc.) before making your decision. If anything is unclear or you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me on the above email.

#### **The researcher:**

My name is Cansu. I am training to be a psychologist at the University of East London (UEL). As part of my studies, I am conducting the research that you are being invited to participate in.

#### **What is the purpose of the research?**

The aim of my study is to explore what hopes young people in Newham have about the economy. I would like to find out what young people think about their circumstances, experiences, skills, resources, values, goals, and barriers for their future.

#### **Why have I been invited to take part?**

I am inviting you to take part in this research as you are between 13- and 25-years old residing in Newham.

#### **What will I be asked to do if I agree to take part?**

As I would like to involve young people as much as possible in the study, I am inviting you to be a Co-Researcher with me on the study. This means you would be involved in planning

the study, helping to facilitate Focus Groups of young people, and helping to analyse the information we have collected from the Focus Group discussions. Although I have some questions in mind, we will decide together what the focus will be. Some topics that might be explored for example are;

- What does 'economy' mean to you?
- How do you relate to it? How does it impact your life?
- What resources are important for you in imagining and shaping your life for the future?

There will be regular support meetings to support you to be a researcher. After you have collected all the information you need for the research, there will be a one- or two-day workshop where the information will be collected together and summarised. As a group we will decide what you think are the most important findings. The findings can be presented as a song, a document, a video recording, etc. – this will be up to you and the other researchers to decide.

The research is not designed to cause you any harm, discomfort, or distress. We will try to make sure that the research groups are a safe space. There will be information about how to get support if you feel uncomfortable at any time. You are also free to leave the project at any time – you do not have to give a reason.

### **What if I don't want my parent/guardian/carer to know?**

We would like your parent/guardian/carer's permission for you to take part in the project. This is because they are responsible for keeping you safe and helping you to make important decisions. You might not feel comfortable asking your parent/guardian/carer's consent for you to take part in the project. If you are aged 16 or over, your parents or legal guardians do not need to consent to you taking part. We would still advise you to ask their permission but if you really do not feel comfortable with doing this and you are aged 16 or over, you would still be able to take part.

### **Do both my parents have to agree?**

You just need consent from one adult who is responsible for you.

### **Will the project be accessible for disabled people?**

We encourage disabled young people to take part. Please let us know if you have any specific access needs as soon as possible. We will do our best to make sure the project is accessible to all disabled people.

### **Where will the project take place?**

Youth Justice Service, 192 Cumberland Road, Plaistow, London, E13 8LT

### **What happens to the things I share? Will they be kept private?**

Everything you share in the group will remain strictly confidential. Only the researcher(s) involved in the study will have access to anything that identifies you (e.g. your name). You

have a right to withdraw from this project within three weeks of the last Focus Group. I will audio-record the Focus Groups and type up what was said but any names of people or places or anything else that might identify you or others will be changed. The audio files and the anonymised transcripts of the meetings will be stored securely on the university's computer system in a password-protected folder. After I have passed my thesis, I will delete the audio recordings. The anonymised transcripts will be retained for five years in case we want to publish the research. When the final research is shared in my thesis and any publications, I will include some quotes from the Focus Groups, but they will not include any information (e.g. names of people or places) that might identify anyone. Some co-researchers might want to be publicly recognised for all their hard work and they might wish to be named in any presentations or written publications. As a result, you will be given the option for your real name be used. However, you do not need to do this and can remain anonymous.

*For the purposes of data protection, the University of East London is the Data Controller for the personal information processed as part of this research project. The University processes this information under the 'public task' condition contained in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Where the University processes particularly sensitive data (known as 'special category data' in the GDPR), it does so because the processing is necessary for archiving purposes in the public interest, or scientific and historical research purposes or statistical purposes. The University will ensure that the personal data it processes is held securely and processed in accordance with the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. For more information about how the University processes personal data please see [www.uel.ac.uk/about/about-uel/governance/information-assurance/data-protection](http://www.uel.ac.uk/about/about-uel/governance/information-assurance/data-protection)*

### **Will I get anything for taking part?**

You will be paid £20.00 per hour for taking part in the study. The charity **Economy** (<http://weare.ecnmy.org/>) have kindly agreed to support the study by paying the young people who participate as they are very interested in their views about the economy. Some staff from the charity may sit in on some meetings but we will ask them to sign an agreement to keep anything they hear private and confidential.

### **Do I have to take part?**

You do not have to take part in this study and should not feel under any pressure to do so. You are free to change your mind at any time and leave the study. If you choose to leave the study, you may do so without disadvantage to yourself and you do not need to give a reason. If you wish to leave, please let me know **within three weeks** of the last Focus Group. After this time the analysis will have begun, and it will be too difficult to remove individual contributions from the group discussions. Even if quotes are used, they will be anonymised.

### **What will happen to the results of the research?**

The research will be written up as a thesis which will be marked at the university. Once it has passed it will be publicly available on a publications website at UEL. Findings will also be disseminated to a range of audiences (e.g., academics, clinicians, public, etc.) through journal articles, conference presentations, talks, magazine articles, blogs. Again, no-one will be identifiable in any quotes unless they have told us they wish to be named.

Anonymised research data will be securely stored by Prof. Dave Harper for a maximum of 5 years, following which all data will be deleted.

**Who has reviewed the research?**

My research has been approved by the School of Psychology Ethics Committee. This means that the Committee's evaluation of this ethics application has been guided by the standards of research ethics set by the British Psychological Society.

**Who can I contact if I have any questions/concerns?**

Please feel free to ask me any questions. If you are happy to continue you will be asked to sign a consent form before you can take part. Your mum, dad, or guardian will also be encouraged to sign a consent form. Please hold on to this invitation letter in case you want to look at it again in the future. If you have any questions or concerns about how the study has been carried out, please contact:

Cansu Ozenc email: [u2075224@uel.ac.uk](mailto:u2075224@uel.ac.uk).

If you have any questions or concerns about how the research has been conducted, please contact my research supervisor Prof Dave Harper. School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ,  
Email: [d.harper@uel.ac.uk](mailto:d.harper@uel.ac.uk)

**or**

Chair of School Ethics Committee: Dr Trishna Patel, School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ.  
(Email: [t.patel@uel.ac.uk](mailto:t.patel@uel.ac.uk))

**Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.**



## Appendix E: Information Sheet for Parents/Guardians/Carers



### UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON

School of Psychology

Stratford Campus Water Lane

London E15 4LZ

Name: Cansu Ozenc (She/Her), Trainee Clinical Psychologist

### Consent for My Child to Participate in a Research Study

This is to give you information that you need to consider in deciding whether you agree to your child taking part in a research study. Your child has also been giving a copy of this information and you need to agree for them to take part.

The study is being conducted as part of my Professional Doctorate in Clinical Psychology at the University of East London.

**Project Title:** A Participatory Action Research; Exploring the Economic Aspirations of Youth within the context of the Community Wealth Building Initiative in Newham

### What will the project involve?

The aim of my study is to explore what hopes young people in Newham have about the economy. I would like to find out what young people in Newham think about their circumstances, experiences, skills, resources, values, goals, and barriers for their future. I am inviting young people to take part in a study in either of the following ways:

**As a Co-Researcher:** Co-Researchers will be involved in planning the study, helping to facilitate Focus Groups of young people and helping to analyse the information we have collected from the Focus Group discussions. They will attend a number of meetings and will receive some training in research.

**As an ordinary participant:** Ordinary participants will be invited to at least one Focus Group, a small meeting with other young people.

Although I have some questions in mind, the researchers will decide together with young people what the focus will be.

Some topics that might be explored for example are.

- What does 'economy' mean to you?
- How do you relate to it? How does it impact your life?
- What resources are important for you in imagining and shaping your life for the future?

While many researchers focus on studying young people, it is relatively uncommon for young people themselves to conduct research. However, in this case, your child will have the opportunity to actively participate in determining the topics to be investigated and express their views on what they consider important.

#### **Why am I being asked about this?**

When involving young people under the age of 16 in research, it is necessary to obtain consent from their parent or legal guardian before their participation. This requirement exists because parents or legal guardians hold the responsibility of ensuring their child's safety and assisting them in making significant decisions.

For young people aged 16 years and over, parental or guardian's consent is not required however we encourage people involved to discuss and inform their parents about taking part.

#### **Do both parents have to agree?**

Only one parent or legal guardian has to agree to a young person under 16 years of age taking part, though if possible it would be good for everyone to agree together. The important point is that an adult who has parental responsibility agrees to the young person under 16 years of age taking part, whether this is their mum, dad or another adult who has parental responsibility for them.

#### **What happens to the things my child shares? Will they be kept private?**

I will be audio-recording the meetings, but everything said in the groups will remain confidential. When I type up (i.e., transcribe) what was said in the meetings I will change the names of any people or places mentioned so that the transcripts will be anonymised, and it will not be possible to identify anyone from them. The audio files and the anonymised transcripts of the meetings will be stored securely on the university's computer system in a password-protected folder. After I have passed my thesis, I will delete the audio recordings. The anonymised transcripts will be retained for five years in case we want to publish the research. When the final research is shared in my thesis and any publications, I will include some quotes from the Focus Groups, but they will not include any information (e.g. names of people or places) that might identify anyone.

Some co-researchers might want to be publicly recognised for all their hard work and they might wish to be named in any presentations or written publications. As a result, they can decide to ask for their real name to be used. However, they do not need to do this and can remain anonymous. You can discuss the pros and cons of this with your child and they can also change their mind over the course of the study. We will assume everyone wishes to remain anonymous unless they inform us that they wish to be named and we will check this again with the participants and co-researchers at the end of the study.

*For the purposes of data protection, the University of East London is the Data Controller for the personal information processed as part of this research project. The University processes this information under the 'public task' condition contained in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Where the University processes particularly sensitive data (known as 'special category data' in the GDPR), it does so because the processing is necessary for archiving purposes in the public interest, or scientific and historical research purposes or statistical purposes. The University will ensure that the personal data it processes is held securely and processed in accordance with the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. For more information about how the University processes personal data please see [www.uel.ac.uk/about/about-uel/governance/information-assurance/data-protection](http://www.uel.ac.uk/about/about-uel/governance/information-assurance/data-protection)*

### **Will they get anything for taking part?**

Your child will be paid for taking part in this study. An ordinary participant will receive £15.00 per hour and a co-researcher will receive £20.00 per hour as a recognition of the extra work they will be doing. The charity **Economy** (<http://weare.ecnmy.org/>) have kindly agreed to support the study by paying the young people who participate as they are very interested in their views about the economy. Some staff from the charity may sit in on some meetings but we will ask them to sign an agreement to keep anything they hear private and confidential.

### **Do they have to take part?**

Your child does not have to take part in this study and should not feel under any pressure to do so. You are also under no obligation to agree to them taking part. Both you and your child are free to change your mind at any time and withdraw them from the study without giving a reason.

If your child wishes to leave the study please let me know **within three weeks** of the last Focus Group. After this time the analysis will have begun and it will be too difficult to remove individual contributions from the group discussions because some discussions that other young people have also been involved in may only make sense when what they have contributed is included. However, where possible this will be avoided and any information that is used will be summarised. Even if quotes are used they will be anonymised.

### **What will happen to the results of the research?**

The research will be written up as a thesis which will be marked at the university. Once it has passed it will be publicly available on a publications website at UEL. Findings will also be disseminated to a range of audiences (e.g., academics, clinicians, public, etc.) through

journal articles, conference presentations, talks, magazine articles, blogs. Again, no-one will be identifiable in any quotes unless they have told us they wish to be named.

After the study is over, my supervisor (Professor David Harper) will store the anonymised transcripts for a maximum of 5 years to allow time to write the research up for publication. After then the transcripts will be deleted.

### **Who has reviewed the research?**

My research has been approved by the School of Psychology Ethics Committee. This means that the Committee's evaluation of this ethics application has been guided by the standards of research ethics set by the British Psychological Society.

### **Who can I contact if I have any questions/concerns?**

Please feel free to ask me any questions. If you are happy to continue you will be asked to sign a consent form before you can take part. Please hold on to this invitation letter in case you want to look at it again in the future. If you have any questions or concerns about how the study has been carried out, please contact:

Cansu Ozenc email: [u2075224@uel.ac.uk](mailto:u2075224@uel.ac.uk)

If you have any questions or concerns about how the research has been conducted, please contact my research supervisor Professor David Harper. School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ.

Email: [d.harper@uel.ac.uk](mailto:d.harper@uel.ac.uk)

**or**

Chair of School Ethics Committee: Dr Trishna Patel, School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ.

(Email: [t.patel@uel.ac.uk](mailto:t.patel@uel.ac.uk)) Thank you for considering whether to agree for your child to take part in this project.

Yours sincerely,  
Cansu Ozenc Trainee Clinical Psychologist

## Appendix F: Consent Forms



### CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

**Participatory Action Research: Economic and Future Goals of Young People in Newham**

**Contact person: Cansu Ozenc (she/her)**

**Email: u2075224@uel.ac.uk**

	<b>Please initial</b>
I confirm that I have read the participant information sheet dated 13/10/2022 (version A) for the above study and that I have been given a copy to keep.	
I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.	
I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time, without explanation or disadvantage.	
I understand that if I withdraw during the study within three weeks of the Focus Group that my data will not be used.	
I understand that the interview will be recorded using an audio-recording device (e.g. Dictaphone).	
I understand that my personal information and data, including audio recordings from the research will be securely stored and remain confidential. Only the research team will have access to this information, to which I give my permission.	
It has been explained to me what will happen to the data once the research has been completed.	
I understand that short, anonymised quotes from groups may be used in material such as conference presentations, reports, articles in academic	

journals resulting from the study and that these will not personally identify me.	
I would like to receive a summary of the research findings once the study has been completed and am willing to provide contact details for this to be sent to.	
I understand that staff from the Charity <i>Economy</i> may be present at some of the meetings but that they will sign an agreement to keep what they hear confidential.	
I agree to take part in the above study.	

Participant's Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

.....

Participant's Signature

.....

Researcher's Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

.....

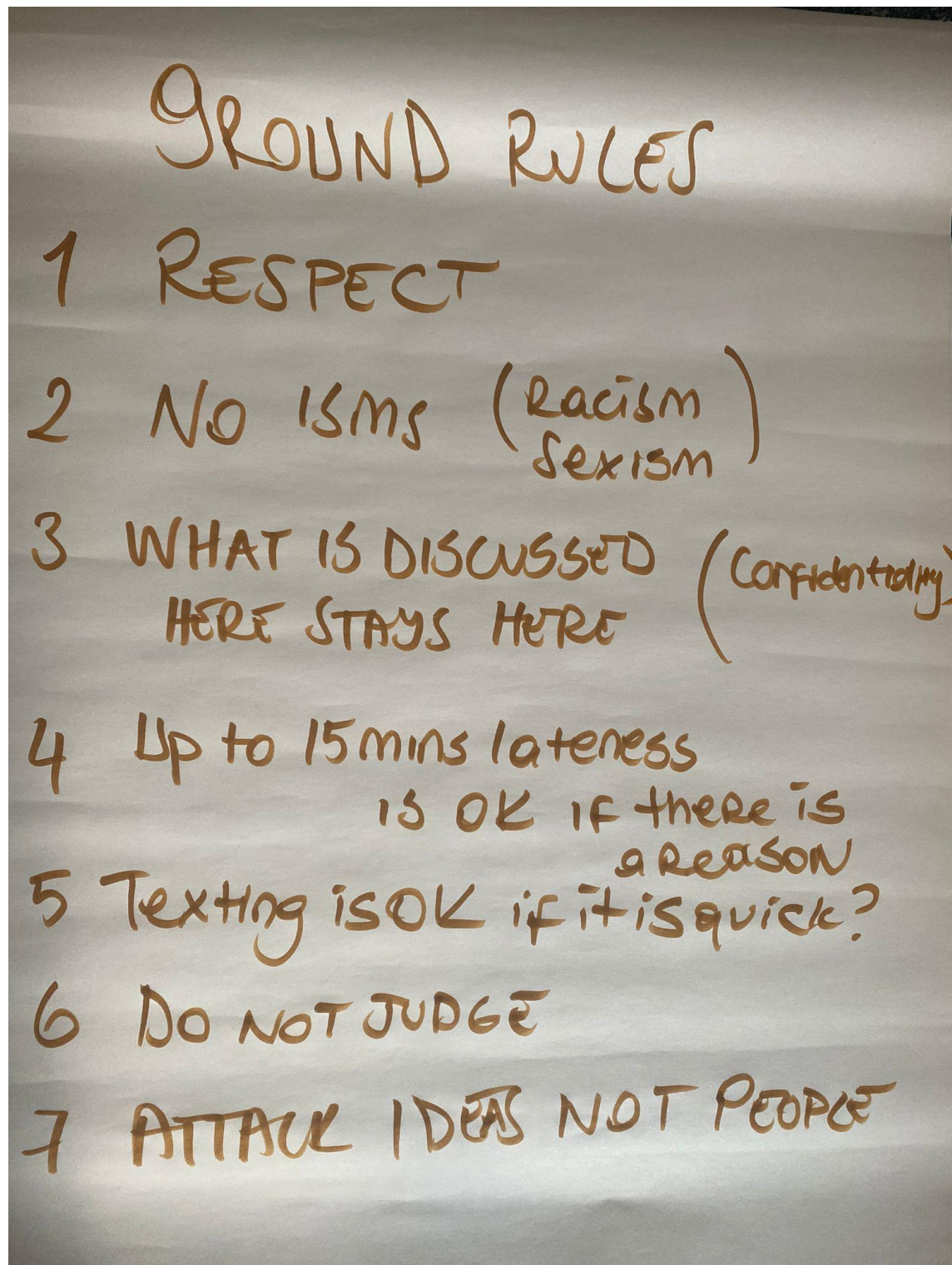
Researcher's Signature

.....

Date

.....

## Appendix G: Ground Rules



## Appendix H: Co-researcher Employment Contract with People's Economy



### Employment Contract

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#### Job Description and Responsibilities

- Take part in group meetings and planning sessions to help shape the research project
- Work with the group to generate research questions
- Help plan and facilitate creative/focus groups with other young people
- Receive training in Research Methods
- Help analyse the information we have collected from the creative/focus group discussions
- Have the opportunity to develop creative ways to influence people in power
- Work with other young people to understand the economy and drive economic changes in your community
- Present findings to a wider audience

#### What qualities or skills required for the young co-researcher role?

- You will be passionate about making a difference.
- Creative, thoughtful, relatable, and empathetic.
- Exceptional at establishing relationships with peers.
- Ability to work well as part of a team.
- You will have a desire to think creatively about addressing the issues surrounding youth and the economy
- An eagerness to learn and interest in developing yourself.
- Comfortable talking to different groups of people with an ability to capture & share opinions which may differ to your own.
- You can commit to the role, and the time demands
- Consistent and highly organised.
- 

**Rate of Pay:** £20 per hour

**Contract type :** Casual contract – there is no set number of hours to work each week.

#### 1. Employer

You are employed by

*Economy*

SPACE4



113-115 Fonthill Road  
London, N4 3HH

**2. Employee:**

**3. Job Title**

Your job title is co-researcher.

You are accountable to Cansu Ozenc (Researcher).

The duties which this job entails are set out in the job description attached above.

The job description may from time to time be amended by the employer and in addition to the duties set out you may be required to undertake additional or other duties as may be necessary, from time to time.

**4. Date of Commencement**

The date that your employment began was 1 December 2022.

**5. Place of Work**

Your usual place of work is Youth Justice Service, 192 Cumberland Road, Plaistow, London, E13 8LT

Although on occasions you may be required to work elsewhere.

**6. Remuneration**

Your hourly rate will be £20per hour.

You will be paid weekly, in arrears, by credit transfer into your bank or building society account.

**7. Hours of Work**

You will be required to work 1-2 hours each week.

**8. Data Protection**

Economy and its agents hold information relating to you which is subject to the Data Protection Act 1998. By signing this Contract you consent to them processing, both manually and by electronic means, your personal and sensitive personal data for the purposes of the administration and management of your employment.

**9. Rules, Policies and Procedures**

You must comply at all times with the project's rules policies and procedures as amended from time to time

I accept the terms and conditions of this employment as stated above.

Signed by Employee:

Date:

Signed by Employer:

Date

## Appendix I: Example Extracts from Reflective Journal

Good morning all

I hope everyone is well at the end of this week.

I wanted to update you about my participation in this project, which officially concluded last week. Thanks so much for getting me involved. I've found it really enjoyable and have been inspired by the young people. I've told Cansu that I remain on hand to remotely advise as far as I've capacity. I'm actually going to try to attend the YOS once more in the next couple of weeks, but if this is not possible, I'll certainly be around in the new year when it comes to collating/presenting the research.

Sorry for the length of what follows - just some of my reflections on the past two sessions I attended (10th and 17th November):

- The bond within the group strengthens each week - per what Cansu shared about one of the young people not expecting to live past their teenage years and recounting their traumatic educational experiences. It is apparent that the space we've cultivated feels safe enough for such sharing to come forth and that the sessions serve a therapeutic function for the young people to freely express themselves even beyond the immediate context of community wealth building
- Again, I've been impressed by the young people's curiosity and the breadth of their existing knowledge. They've formulated interesting and important research questions and rich discussions have begun to ensue from these. Since the tube strikes meant that there were only 3 young people in the group when we initially began to map out the research questions, I have no doubt that a better attended session would produce even more lines of inquiry, and that the length and scope of this project can be extended with more resources per discussions
- It's been heartening also to watch the young people grow in confidence and come into their own as participants and co-researchers. From their initial reluctance and hesitation, I believe the co-researcher position actually ended up being oversubscribed as there were some additional late expressions of interest. As much as the monetary incentive seemed to be focussed on by the young people as their motivating factor for stepping forward, I think their keenness is also a testament to their genuine engagement with the issues being explored and the opportunity there is in such participatory projects for young people to utilise their skills, embrace their value and find meaning

Hope all is well. Sending this feedback to keep you in the loop;

6 young people attended yesterday's session. 1 young person couldn't attend due to coursework. Again, huge thanks to Franklyn and Clare for being there and facilitating the session and Clare for all her hard work in explaining CWB and making it more digestible.

The session involved;

- Show video on inequality globally/in UK
- Spectrum line questions on Newham situation;
- What is CWB, and what is not? How does it work?

As always, we intended to cover more, but it felt important to spend time hearing young people's thoughts instead, so we could not get to every task we had planned- perhaps, as Franklyn suggested, we have to plan less for next time.

- There was a deep sense of hopelessness throughout- a really strong consensus that things are the way they are and cannot be changed.
- Most young people believed that the rich deserved to be rich- because they "worked really hard". When questioned about inherited wealth, some said "their grandparents worked really hard", or they were simply "lucky".
- The solution to poverty and inequality appeared to be individual rather than collective.
- No future could be imagined in Newham- "it is better to get out and leave".
- Lack of trust toward the Newham Council- "corruption" no point in speaking to them about what young people think or feel.
- There did not appear to be much interest in CWB or in imagining a different model.

This is how I experienced it and what stood out for me -please feel free to add your thoughts, reflections and comments, Franklyn and Clare!

Franklyn and I are meeting on Wednesday to plan session 4.

It was a really lively and powerful session- there was lots of interest in the topics discussed and lots of vulnerability from the young people, sharing their journeys, family lives, hardships and obstacles. I wondered whether the group being slightly smaller allowed a lot more opening up and sharing. I felt incredibly privileged and grateful for their openness.

We focused on three tasks;

-Social Graces (Placed cards with written each grace on the floor, and each of us picked the ones that stand out most for us, which ones felt important to us and for our identity and which ones were more invisible. An interesting discussion was had about how these may relate to power and inequalities. Various similarities & differences were highlighted within the group. Class, race, ethnicity, religion, ability, education, and culture were picked and discussed.

-We discussed existing ideas and beliefs about research- who does research, and who tend to be the subjects. Showed a video clip about a young American black woman talking about PAR- but on reflection, it was the wrong kind of video- and not very accessible. A learning point! The main idea of PAR was discussed and received well at the end, I think.

-The young people generated some research questions;

1. Where is the money (1.2 billion- Newham Council) being spent? Who makes the decisions currently - who should make them instead?
2. What brings people together? Why isn't there a community feeling in Newham?
3. What makes people moody?
4. How could we close the inequality gap, and how can we make things fairer without making some group of people upset?

Some themes and statements the young people brought up stood out for me;

- Feelings of unsafe in Newham "I never thought I would live past 17"
- How traumatic life experiences affect young people's engagement with school, lack of understanding from school about the impact of mental health on education, a knock-on effect on obtaining GCSEs, and further repercussions for future employment
- The need to have teachers who come from the same background, who can relate to them and understand them.
- Institutionalised racism within the criminal justice system

websites.

We have our last session on Thursday- we'll order KFC and Creams (the young people's choice after a lengthy discussion of each food place ☺) and celebrate the ending. Franklyn will join us too!

I am sad that it is ending as relationships feel deepened, and conversations are richened each week- it could have been a way longer project, and it is a real shame that there are time constraints within a thesis. We might invite the participants back to present if they are interested in the following stages or other activities. I look forward to discussing the next stages on Friday at 10 am. Hope everyone can make it. I know Fatima, you don't work on Fridays- thank you so much for your all hard work in the background.

The below questions were generated by the co-researchers and discussed in depth in sessions 7 and 8.

What kind of futures do young people imagine for themselves?

How do drugs influence young people in Newham?

How does social media influence young people in Newham?

The below themes came up.

- Being approached/'groomed'/recruited from a very young age to make money through illegal ways
- Having to join a group to protect oneself from danger as security and safety stem from who knows who
- Pris and cons of both legal vs illegal ways of making money, what does it mean when one gets wealthy in a poor neighbourhood? How is wealth perceived/accepted/denied? Gaining status & power through illegal ways- is it sustainable/worth it/too risky?
- Pris and cons of social media on youth. How do they relate to others in Newham as well as outside of the borough?
- Flash money/show-off culture on social media, how it affects young people
- Experiences of racism by different groups in Newham and use of various slurs, why they are slurs, who gets to decide what is a slur- particularly "p words" was discussed at length
- Pris/cons as well as cultural contexts of drug use. Some strongly believed it hindered one's chance to achieve one's future goals, others felt it saved their lives.

## Appendix J: Research Questions

- What is it like to be a young person in Newham?
- Compare being a young person today to their parents' generation?
- Where is the money (1.2 billion- Newham Council) being spent? Who makes the decisions currently - who should make them instead?
- What brings people together? Why isn't there a community feeling in Newham?
- What makes people moody (upset/competitive)?
- How could we close the inequality gap, and how can we make things fairer without making some group of people upset?
- What do you think and how do you feel about the future?
- What do you think are the most important things that help in shaping the future?
- Do we think young people are more likely to be groomed these days?
- Does music influence young people in Newham?
- What do you think of Newham as a borough?
- What does community mean to you?
- Who would you involve in your community?
- What are your experiences of barriers to, and support for, building your future?
- How much and to what extent do you feel that you have opportunities to build your future?
- What kind of futures do young people imagine for themselves?
- What is required of young people in the process of achieving these futures?

## Appendix K: Co-researcher Job Description and Person Specification

Do you care about the future goals and aspirations of young people in Newham?

We need your help taking the lead in developing and running a project that focuses on these issues!

No prior experience needed.

All you need is to be a young person (13-25) living in Newham.

You will be paid £ 15 per hour for taking part in a workshop.  
You will be paid £20 per hour if you become a co-researcher.

If you are interested, please contact Liwebi from YSJ or email [u2075224@uel.ac.uk](mailto:u2075224@uel.ac.uk)  
More information is available!

### Co- Researcher Job Description (2 positions)

- Are you a young person (13-25) residing in Newham?
- Do you care about the economic future of young people in Newham?
- Are you interested in being a co-researcher in developing and running a research project focusing on the economy and young people in Newham?
- This paid co-researcher role has been designed to give you the opportunity to co-lead a research project and build personal and professional skills.
- This role will be a chance for you to help develop a project to explore what hopes young people in Newham have about the economy.

---

### What is the purpose of the co-researcher role?

A lot of researchers research young people, but it is less common for young people to do the research themselves. You will have a say in what topics are explored and what you think is important.

---

## **What will I do?**

- Take part in group meetings and planning sessions to help shape the research project
- Work with the group to generate research questions
- Help plan and facilitate creative/focus groups with other young people
- Receive training in Research Methods
- Help analyse the information we have collected from the creative/focus group discussions
- Develop great communication and team working skills
- Have the opportunity to develop creative ways to influence people in power
- Work with other young people to understand the economy and drive economic changes in your community

## **What qualities or skills do I need?**

- You will be passionate about making a difference.
- Creative, thoughtful, relatable, and empathetic.
- Exceptional at establishing relationships with peers.
- Ability to work well as part of a team.
- You will have a desire to think creatively about addressing the issues surrounding youth and the economy
- An eagerness to learn and interest in developing yourself.
- Comfortable talking to different groups of people with an ability to capture & share opinions which may differ to your own.
- You can commit to the role, and the time demands
- Consistent and highly organised.

You must...

- Reside in Newham.
- Be aged between 13-25

Location: Youth Justice Service, 192 Cumberland Road, Plaistow, London, E13 8LT

Rate of Pay: - £20 per hour (Zero-hour contract or Vouchers)

Hours: Up to max 9 hours

Contact: Cansu and XXXX

## Appendix L: Poster

**HAVE YOUR SAY ON THE FUTURE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN NEWHAM!**

Do you care about the future goals and aspirations of young people in Newham?

We need your help taking the lead in developing and running a project that focuses on these issues!

No prior experience needed.

All you need is to be a young person (13-25) living in Newham.

You will be paid £15 per hour for taking part in a workshop.  
You will be paid £20 per hour if you become a co-researcher.

**If you are interested, please contact XXXX from YOT or email [u2075224@uel.ac.uk](mailto:u2075224@uel.ac.uk)  
More information is available!**

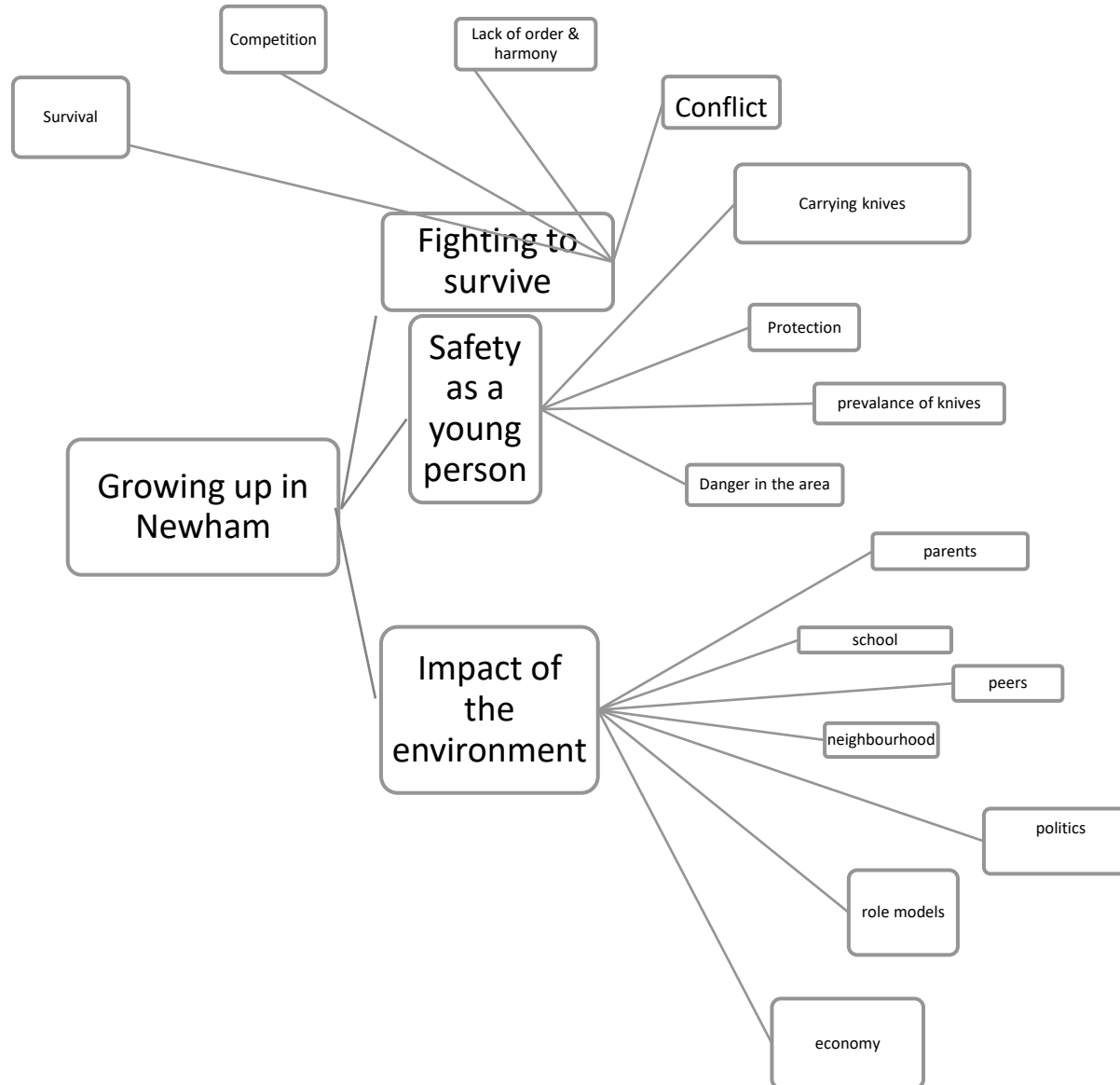


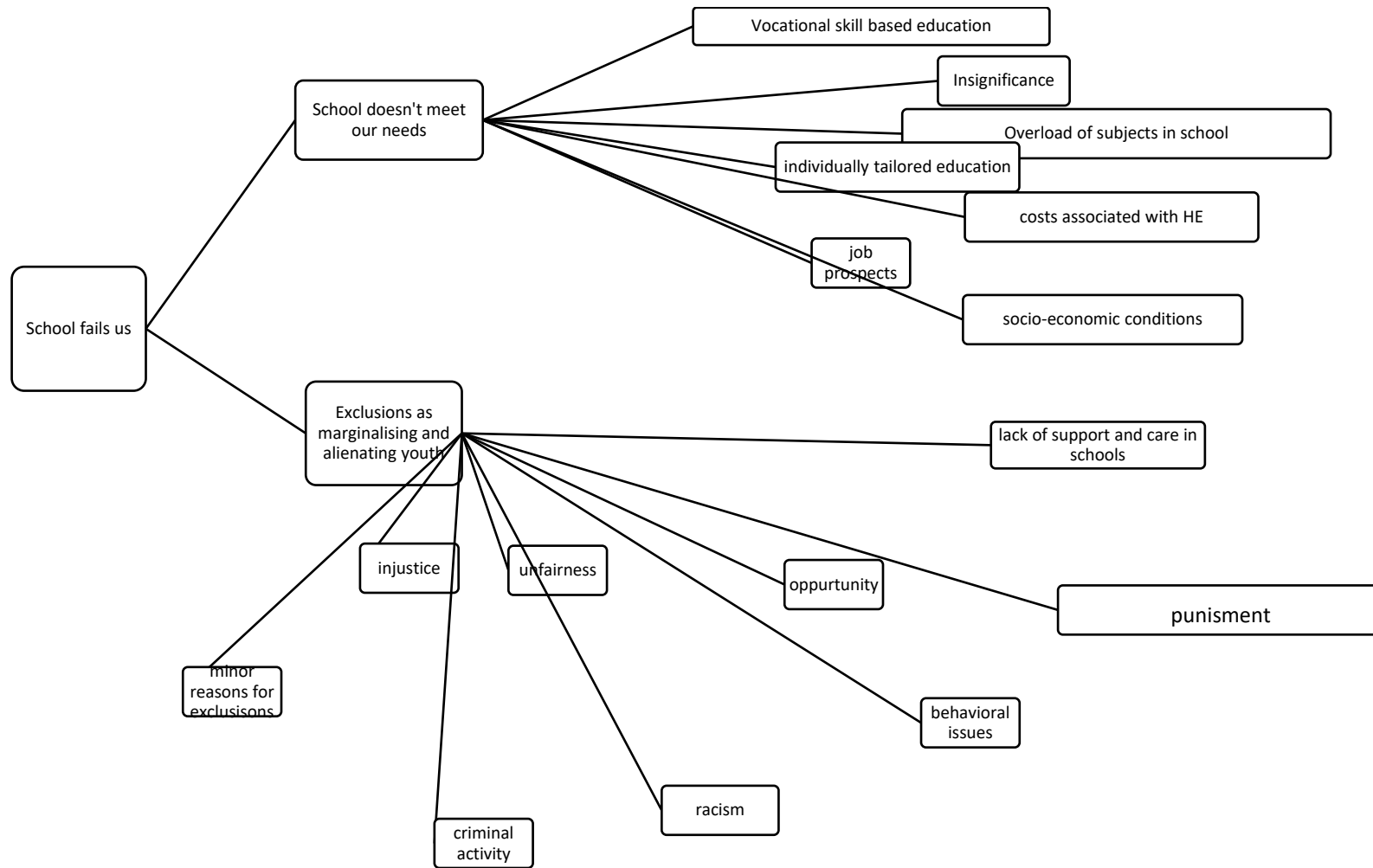


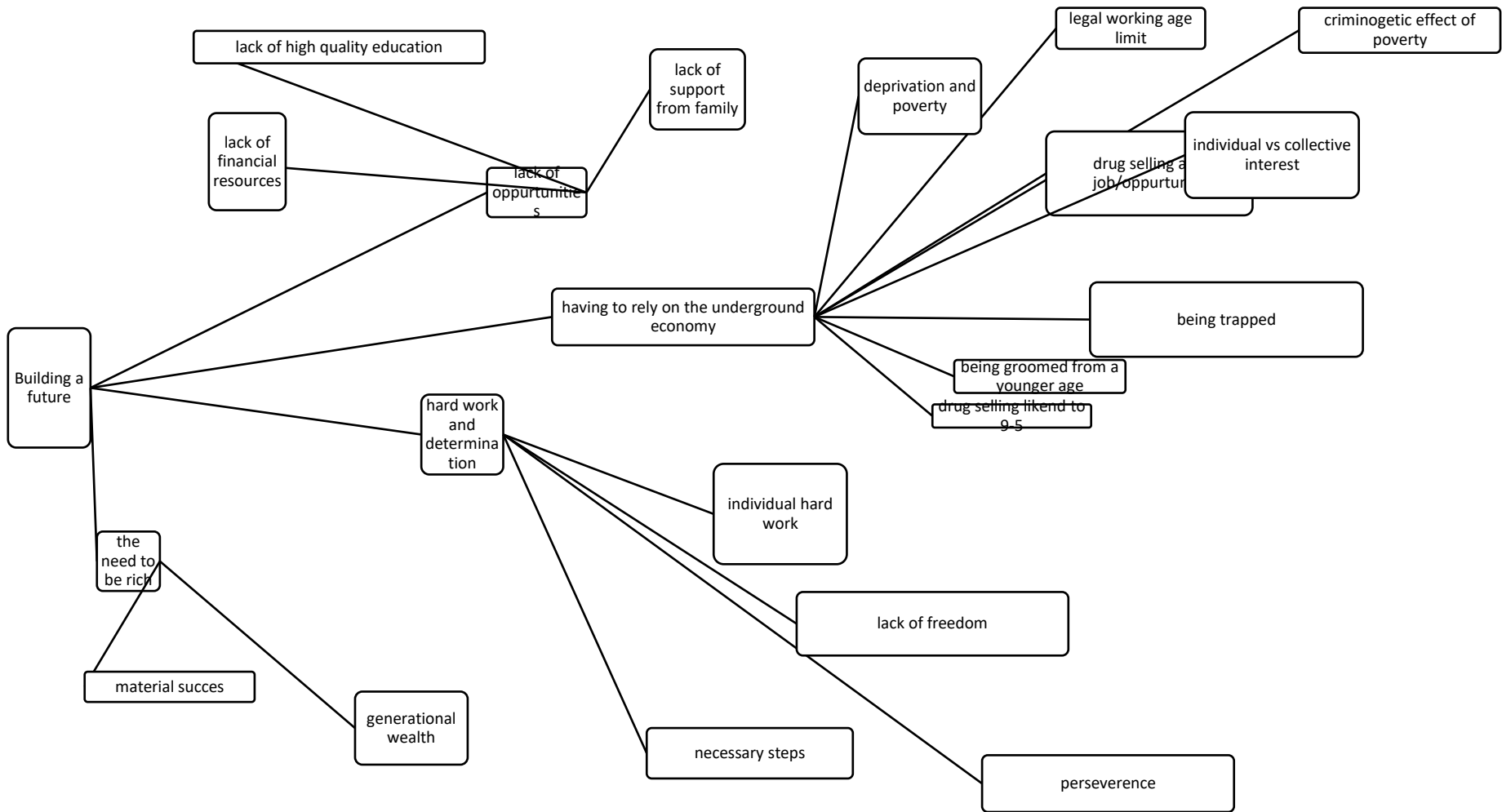
Appendix N: Mind Map of Initial Codes

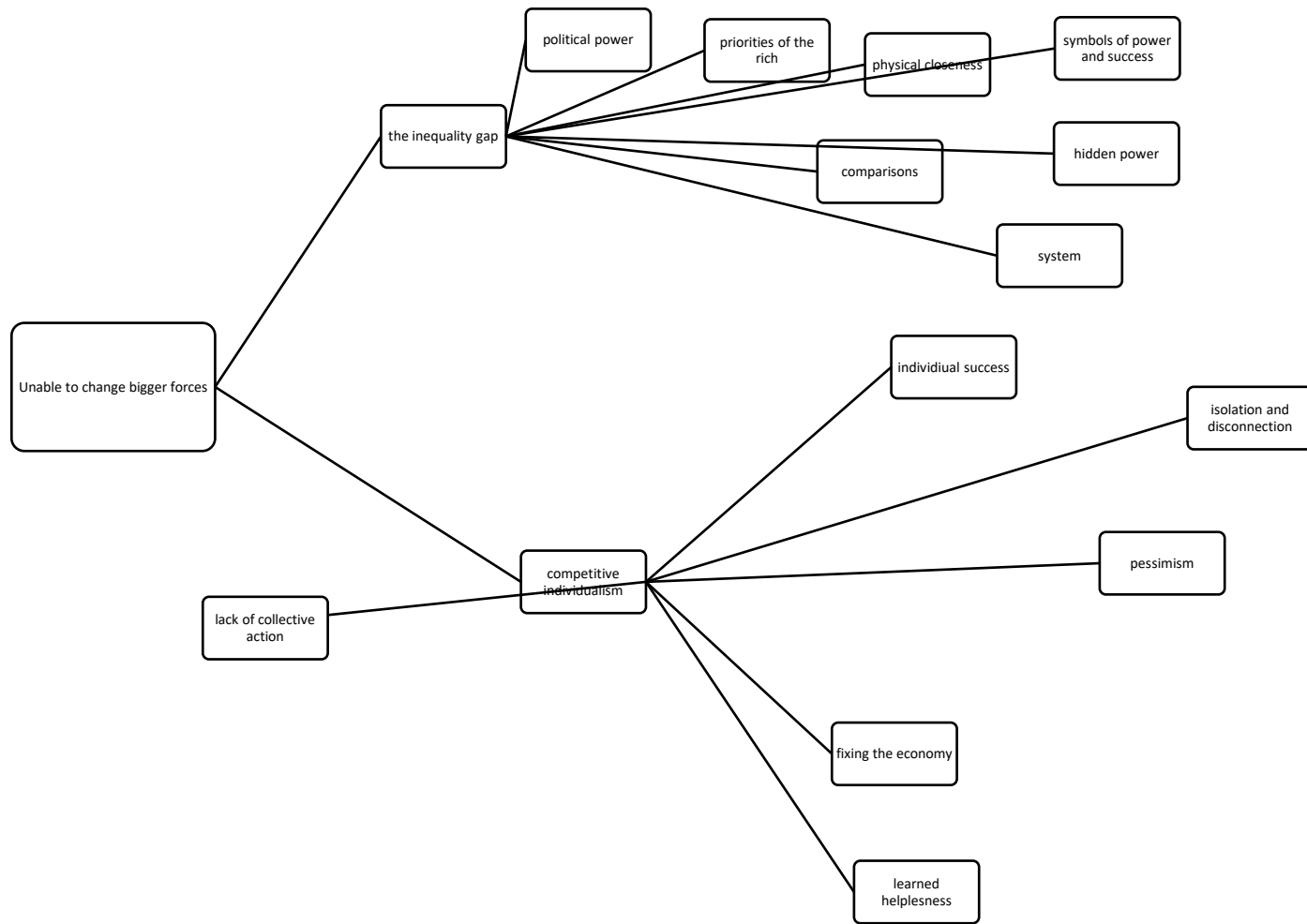


## Appendix O: Intermediate Thematic Mind Maps

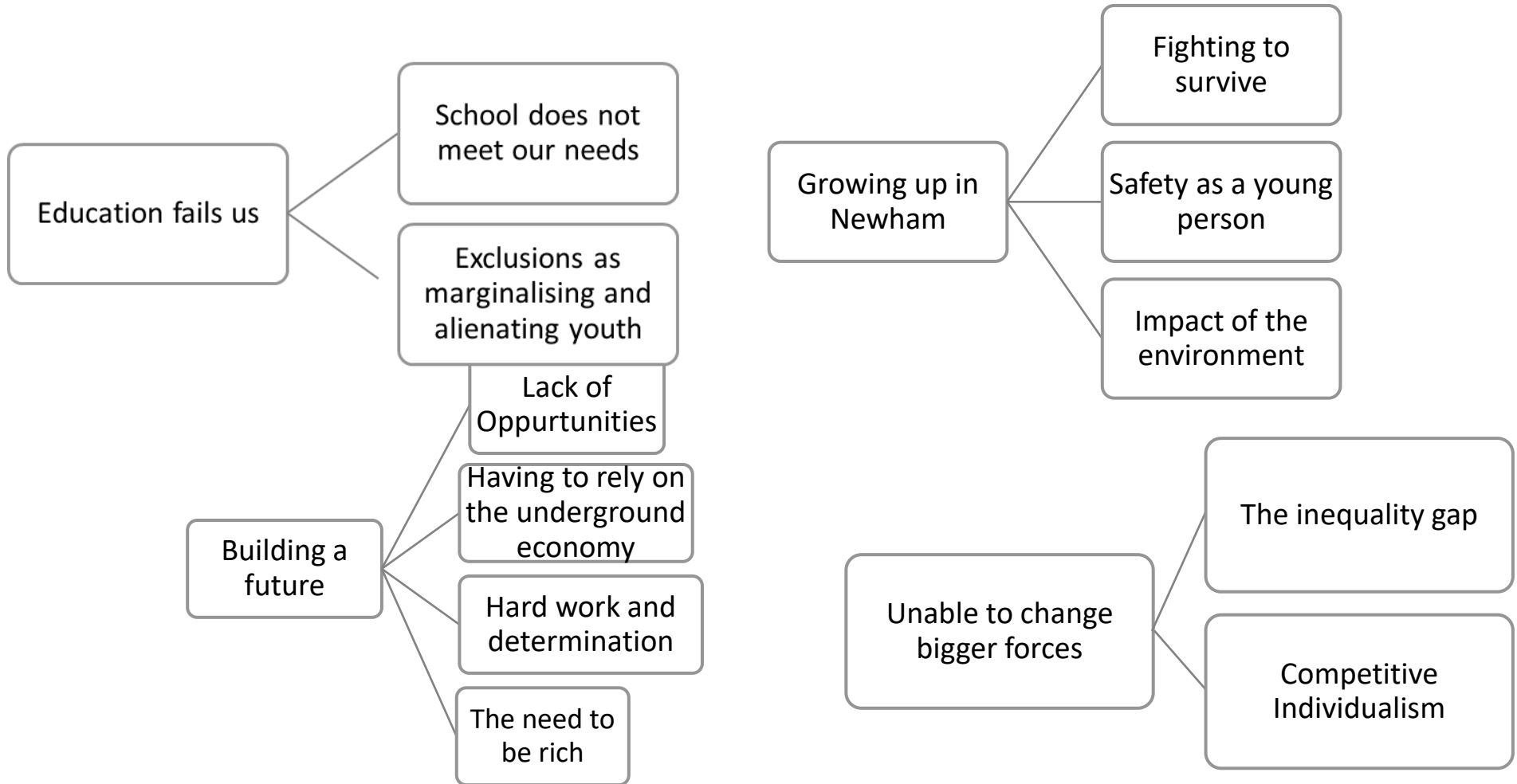








**Appendix P: Final Thematic Mind Map**



## Appendix Q: A Coded Transcript Example

P3: That's what I am saying, school can take you away from your whole purpose in life and from you... literally, it can... (*negatives of education*)

P2: But then again, for some people school could be perfect. (*useful for some*) Yes, if you've got that mindset, yeah. And if you've got and that's really what you need. Yeah, you're really good for that, cause some people are not good for school, but you're built for school. You can go along, that's why people some people go up. other people that let find their joy or whatever find what they like to do. They go up as well, they go where they like to do but school can limit you (*limitations of school*)

P3: school can limit you... you can be in education for 19 years... 90K or whatever (*costs associated*) how much you need to spend to get in.. And after that you once you finished your uni course, you wasted all that money... (*no return of investment*) and you are in bare debt now. (*economic burden*) And it's like sometimes you're not even doing exactly what you wanted to be in life, you are just being in something that's going to make you money...

P2: you just push yourself to get into uni... you are in debt now.. to make money then... there are lots of guys right now... they are in debt now.. and it teaches you nothing... (*costs vs benefits-economic burden no reward*)

P4: your job is not guaranteed even... (*no rewards*)

P2: you don't need uni to get rich... but yeah I'll be real... uni helps.. (*achieving material success through other ways?*)

P4: depending where you wanna go... (*different goals require different pathways?*)

P2: as I said, I am above... I don't need that... I don't need uni to make money... I've done my research and barbers get over a million if they wanted. (*wish for material success- no obvious rewards of educations*)

P3: What is it like to be a young person in Newham?

P2: It is a challenge... (*difficulties with the neighbourhood*)

P5: it is about survival innit? (*survival*)

P3: so what is life like here... give me more insight of being in Newham, what do you think of the roads, and the area... what do you think of the people in the area?

P5: it is shit.. (*physical fabric of newham*)

P6: it is depressing... really depressing... (*feelings associated with*)

P4: marvellous...

## Appendix R: Feedback from Young People

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 11, 2023 9:57 AM  
**To:** Cansu OZENC <u2075224@uel.ac.uk>; [REDACTED]@ecnmy.org; [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]newham.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]ecnmy.org>  
**Subject:** RE: Feedback from young people on project with Economy and University of East London

Hi All

Apologies for the delay,

Our feedback process is three questions  
Did you learn something new? 96% said yes  
Would you recommend the sessions to others? 100% Said yes  
What words would you use to describe the session?

The following words were used as feedback for the sessions

- Interesting
- Informative
- Good
- Engaging
- Lit
- Cool
- Calm
- Integral
- Class
- Fun
- Alright

I hope that helps


**Youth Justice Officer**  
**London Borough of Newham**



## Appendix S: General Risk Assessment Form

Guidance: A comprehensive guide to risk assessments and health and safety in general can be found in *UEL's health and safety handbook*. A comprehensive guide to risk assessment is also available on the *Health & Safety Executive's website*. An example risk assessment (for a wellbeing conference/event) is presented below, please replace text in RED with your own/study specific information. This form should consider both physical and/or psychological risks and how these can be minimised.

**DO NOT LEAVE ANY RED TEXT IN THE FINAL VERSION OF YOUR RISK ASSESSMENT FORM**

 <b>University of East London</b> <small>Pioneering Futures Since 1898</small>		<h1>UEL Risk Assessment Form</h1>	
<b>Name of Assessor:</b>	<b>Cansu Ozenc</b>	<b>Date of Assessment:</b>	<b>30 July 2022</b>
<b>Activity title:</b>	<b>Participatory Action Research with young people</b>	<b>Location of activity:</b>	<b>NHS and community venues in East London</b>
<b>Signed off by Manager: (Print Name)</b>	<b>David Harper</b>	<b>Date and time: (if applicable)</b>	

Please describe the activity/event in as much detail as possible (include nature of activity, estimated number of participants, etc.).  
 If the activity to be assessed is part of a fieldtrip or event please add an overview of this below:

In this study the researcher will be holding Focus Groups with young people in NHS and community venues in East London. As part of the research some young people will also act as Co-Researchers and there will be additional meetings with them before, during and after the Focus Groups in order to plan the study and to collaboratively analyse the findings

Overview of FIELD TRIP or EVENT:

Empty box for providing an overview of the field trip or event.

**Guide to risk ratings:**

a) Likelihood of Risk	b) Hazard Severity	c) Risk Rating (a x b = c)
1 = Low (Unlikely)	1 = Slight (Minor / less than 3 days off work)	1-2 = Minor (No further action required)
2 = Moderate (Quite likely)	2= Serious (Over 3 days off work)	3-4 = Medium (May require further control measures)
3 = High (Very likely or certain)	3 = Major (Over 7 days off work, specified injury or death)	6/9 = High (Further control measures essential)

**Hazards attached to the activity**

Hazards identified	Who is at risk?	Existing Controls	Likelihood	Severity	Residual Risk Rating (Likelihood x Severity)	Additional control measures required (if any)	Final risk rating
<b><i>Informed consent</i></b>	Young people	As the aims of Participatory Action Research are to involve young people as much as possible in the design of the study it is possible that the project will evolve and new elements may be added.	1	1	1	Any proposed new elements will be discussed with both co-researchers and ordinary participants as well as the research team and the researcher will check in at key stages of the study to ensure all involved are clear about their roles. Any changes will be discussed and agreed with the DoS and, if appropriate, an application to revise the ethical approval will be submitted to the Chair of the Ethics Committee using the standard form for this.	1

<b>Confidentiality/Anonymity</b>	<b>Co-Researchers</b>	All participants and co-researchers will be anonymised in the thesis but, as stated in the PIS and consent form, co-researchers may decide exercise to waive their anonymity when the study is subsequently disseminated in other contexts.	1	1		It is unclear if co-researchers will wish to do this and, if so, how many. They will be supported in a risk/benefit analysis, in particular, the risks of subsequently regretting a decision to be named as co-authors of the study. These risks will be discussed within the research team and with the DoS.	
<b>Protection of Researcher</b>		NHS lone worker policies will be followed where the researcher is holding meetings in NHS and community venues	1	1	1	Standard safety protocols will be followed. A third party (e.g. DoS) will always be aware of the researcher's location, what time an event should have concluded and what to do if the researcher does not contact the third party to confirm they are safe.	1

**Review Date**

## Appendix T: Data Management Plan

### UEL Data Management Plan

Completed plans **must** be sent to [researchdata@uel.ac.uk](mailto:researchdata@uel.ac.uk) for review

*If you are bidding for funding from an external body, complete the Data Management Plan required by the funder (if specified).*

Research data is defined as information or material captured or created during the course of research, and which underpins, tests, or validates the content of the final research output. The nature of it can vary greatly according to discipline. It is often empirical or statistical, but also includes material such as drafts, prototypes, and multimedia objects that underpin creative or 'non-traditional' outputs. Research data is often digital, but includes a wide range of paper-based and other physical objects.

Administrative Data	
PI/Researcher	Cansu Ozenc
PI/Researcher ID (e.g. ORCID)	
PI/Researcher email	u2075224@uel.ac.uk
Research Title	A Participatory Action Research; Exploring the Economic Aspirations of Youth Within the Context Of The Community Wealth Building Initiative In Newham
Project ID	
Research start date and duration	May 2022- May 2023

Research Description	This research proposal aims to explore the economic aspirations of youth within the context of a democratic local economic strategy, the Community Wealth Building (CWB) initiative in Newham. CWB is explored as a possible example of how Community Psychology can operate at a macro level, engaging more meaningfully with the political economy. Since launching their CWB strategy, Newham Council has made a number of commitments to support YP in accessing a variety of education and skills pathways to improve employment outcomes. This research proposal seeks to shift the lens away from the decision-makers within the Newham council towards the young people in Newham to understand how they <i>themselves</i> view their future through using the Participatory Action Research approach.
Funder	<a href="https://www.ecnmy.org/">https://www.ecnmy.org/</a>
Grant Reference Number (Post-award)	No grant reference as such but can be provided by ecnmy if it is needed.
Date of first version (of DMP)	01/08/2022
Date of last update (of DMP)	
Related Policies	UEL's Research Data Management Policy UEL's Data Backup Policy UEL Statement on Research Integrity UEL Statement on Research Ethics The Data Protection Act
Does this research follow on from previous research? If so, provide details	No. This is a stand-alone research project.
<b>Data Collection</b>	
What data will you collect or create?	<p>Spreadsheet of contact information for participants and their assigned participant numbers in .xlsx format, contains personal information.</p> <p>Spreadsheet used during recruitment process including the names and contact information (email addresses and phone numbers) of individuals who express an interest in the project/ asked a query in .xlsx format, contains personal information.</p> <p>Consent forms will collect identifying participant data (names, ages and signatures) but no sensitive data. Consent forms either completed in .docx format or printed out and completed by hand and then saved in .pdf format. Contains personal data. Consent forms will collect identifying participant data (names, ages and signatures) but no sensitive data.</p>

	<p>Focus groups of six to eight people will be held; Focus group audio recordings in .mp4 format (12 files, approx.. 4.8GB total), contains both personal and special category data related to young people’s experiences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formats of audio files; MPEG-1 Audio Layer 3 format (mp3)</li> <li>• Nvivo will be used to analyse the transcript to identify relevant themes</li> <li>• Pseudonymised written transcripts in .docx format – hard copies may be printed during data analysis.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• - Documents in .dox format pertaining to the analysis and write up of the data. Recordings will not be kept for longer than is necessary to complete transcription.</li> </ul>
<p>How will the data be collected or created?</p>	<p>The first data collected during this project will be during the consultation and then recruitment process. A spreadsheet will be created to record the contact information of young people who express an interest in taking part in the study or ask a query (i.e., those who contact the researcher via their UEL email address or via youth workers in Youth Zones). This is to keep track of everyone who gets in contact with the researcher about the project and ensure that no one is missed. This spreadsheet will be stored on the researchers private UEL OneDrive for business under the organising structure detailed later on in this section.</p> <p>Consent forms will be distributed to participants and collected via a contact point at Youth Zones. Consent forms will be stored securely in locked file cabinets when not in use and will be handled only by researcher (myself) when actively used during the research project. It will be researcher’s responsibility to transfer these to UEL OneDrive immediately. These physical forms will be scanned using a UEL machine before the researcher leaves the research lab/ UEL campus and saved in .pdf format on the researcher’s UEL OneDrive for business. The physical consent forms will then be shredded/ put in confidential waste bins before leaving the UEL campus. All downloaded copies (before being uploaded onto the UEL OneDrive) will be erased.</p> <p>Up to three focus groups of up to 8 people lasting no more than one hour will be conducted. They will be held in a suitable room (taking into consideration the importance of privacy and safety during the duration of the focus group) and will be facilitated by the researcher (me) and two youth co-researchers. The focus groups will be audio recorded using a password protected recording device. At the end of each focus group, recordings will be uploaded onto the researchers UEL OneDrive for business immediately after the focus group (on the researcher’s personal laptop before leaving the focus group room) and will then be immediately erased from the Dictaphone device. Any copies in the Downloads folder</p>



	<p>on the researcher’s personal laptop will be erased immediately after upload to their UEL OneDrive for business.  This data will be transcribed by the lead researcher using standard word processing software. at this point all identifying information will be removed from the data and the original recording will be erased from the UEL OneDrive when the transcription is completed.  Transcripts will be anonymised and then analysed for relevant themes using NVivo.</p> <p>All data will be saved on the Lead Researcher’ UEL OneDrive for business cloud. Two overarching folders will be created.  One which will house all the pseudonymised data titled “Thesis Project” and one which will hold any identifiable information, titled “Sensitive thesis related data”, stored for the purposes of participants being able to withdraw/ be contacted about the results of this project or to be invited to take part in future research.</p> <p>The folder “Thesis Project” will be further sub-divided into the following sub-folders:</p> <p>Data analysis – which will hold documents involved the analysis of the data. The data will be analysed using Thematic Analysis so this Library, Archives, and Learning Services UEL Data Management Plan University of East London February 2023 may involve documents involved in coding the data and identifying initial themes/ sub-themes from the data. These are likely to be mainly word documents.</p> <p>Focus Group Transcripts – which will hold up to 2/3 t pseudonymised focus group transcript in .doc format (saved by focus group and participant number i.e., F1P1-F1P2... F2P13).</p> <p>Participant demographics – this folder will contain the spreadsheet of participant demographics (such as age), alongside their corresponding participant number. Demographic information will be kept to a minimum with only that deemed most relevant to this study collected.</p> <p>Project write up – this folder will include all documentation corresponding to the write up of the project. Documents within this are expected to mainly be in word format. The folder “Sensitive thesis related data” will be further divided into the following two sub-folders:  Participant contact information and consent forms – which will hold the spreadsheet of contact information for participants and their assigned participant number as well as signed consent forms saved in .pdf format.  Recruitment documents and queries – this folder will hold all documents involved in the recruitment process, such as advertisements, copies of emails with social media groups and the spreadsheet of individuals who have expressed an interest in the project/ asked a query about the project used. These two folders will contain all the sensitive and identifiable information about participants/ potential participants and will thus be stored separately to the pseudonymised data.</p>
<p><b>Documentation and Metadata</b></p>	

<p>What documentation and metadata will accompany the data?</p>	<p>A blank consent form, Participant information sheet, participant de-brief form, study advertisement as well as documentation containing the pseudonymisation process and file naming convention.</p>
<p><b>Ethics and Intellectual Property</b></p>	
<p>Identify any ethical issues and how these will be managed</p>	<p>Ethics approval will be sought from the University of East London (UEL) School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee (SREC). Before agreeing to take part in the research study, all participants will be given a Participant Information Sheet which details how their data will be kept secure, how it will be anonymised and how it will be pseudonymised and confidential as well as how it may be used for the project write up and other future dissemination activities. This is to ensure that they are fully informed about how their data will be used and stored before agreeing to take part in the study.</p> <p>In line with GDPR and the Data Protection Act, all personal data (as well as pseudonymised data) will be kept safe and secured by being saved on the lead researcher's UEL OneDrive for business account, accessible to the main researcher through a password protected user account using multi-Factor authentication and accessed via the researcher's password protected laptop. Data collected will only be used for the purpose of the current research project and where consent has been given for future dissemination activities.</p> <p>The only time personal identifiable data may be shared will be when transferring it over to the project supervisor (Dr Dave Harper) through the UEL OneDrive for secure storage after the project has been completed.</p> <p>The amount of personal information collected and stored will be kept to a minimum and the majority of the data (e.g., the focus group transcripts) will be pseudonymised – all identifiable information (such as names, places, precise dates etc) will be removed but participants can still be identified if needed (e.g., to withdraw their data or to contact them about future research) using the participant contact information spreadsheet. All identifiable information will be stored in a separate folder as detailed previously. The 'Motivated Intruder' test (ICO, 2012) will be conducted on a few random transcripts to ensure that the risk of re-identification from the pseudonymised data is minimal. After data collection has been completed and data analysis commenced, the spreadsheet linking participant numbers with their contact information will be deleted, making the data anonymised once the participant withdrawal period has passed.</p>

<p>Identify any copyright and Intellectual Property Rights issues and how these will be managed</p>	<p>There are no copyright and/or intellectual property rights issues anticipated for this project.</p>
<p><b>Storage and Backup</b></p>	
<p>How will the data be stored and backed up during the research?</p>	<p>Audio recordings will be transferred to the researcher's UEL OneDrive as soon as practicable after the focus groups and deleted from the Dictaphone. They will not be stored on the Dictaphone after transcription. The anonymised transcripts will be encrypted and backed up on the researcher's own laptop. Consent forms will be scanned and stored in a password protected folder on the researcher's UEL OneDrive, t Hard copies will then be destroyed and scanned copies will be deleted upon completion of the project. The thesis will be backed up to the researcher's UEL storage.</p>
<p>How will you manage access and security?</p>	<p>All data will be obtained and stored by the researcher.</p> <p>A password protected Dictaphone will be used for the audio recordings, and will be stored in locked filing cabinet until transfer of data can take place. The researcher's laptop is password protected. The researcher will access UEL storage and systems using Multifactor authentication. The researcher will share access to the pseudonymised transcripts with their supervisor and the examiners, but only the researcher will have access to the original audio files. Access to consent forms will be granted only if necessary and with participant consent. The access will be provided via secure links using UEL OneDrive.</p> <p>Any data shared with the supervisor will be done so via UEL email.</p>
<p><b>Data Sharing</b></p>	
<p>How will you share the data?</p>	<p>Anonymised data including anonymised focus group transcripts will be included in the final write-up of the research project, relevant extracts of which may be included in any subsequent dissemination of the project. The final write up of the project will be shared publicly through the UEL's Research Repository. This is to benefit the community, the public, and allow researchers to build upon the work completed and to encourage more connection and collaboration between researchers and to lead to better decision making.</p>
<p>Are any restrictions on data sharing required?</p>	<p>Only anonymised and/or pseudonymised data will be shared.</p>
<p><b>Selection and Preservation</b></p>	

Which data are of long-term value and should be retained, shared, and/or preserved?	All data will be stored on UEL OneDrive.
What is the long-term preservation plan for the data?	The anonymised transcripts may be stored on the researcher's supervisor's secure UEL server for up to three years for dissemination purposes. It will be deleted/destroyed.
<b>Responsibilities and Resources</b>	
Who will be responsible for data management?	Cansu Ozenc Prof Dave Harper
What resources will you require to deliver your plan?	Access to secure UEL One Drive Password protected dictaphone (already obtained).
<b>Review</b>	
	<b>Please send your plan to <a href="mailto:researchdata@uel.ac.uk">researchdata@uel.ac.uk</a></b> <b>We will review within 5 working days and request further information or amendments as required before signing</b>
Date:01/08/2022	Reviewer name: Leo Watkinson Assistant Librarian (Open Access)

## Guidance

Brief information to help answer each section is below. Aim to be specific and concise.

For assistance in writing your data management plan, or with research data management more generally, please contact: [researchdata@uel.ac.uk](mailto:researchdata@uel.ac.uk)

## **Administrative Data**

### **Related Policies**

List any other relevant funder, institutional, departmental or group policies on data management, data sharing and data security. Some of the information you give in the remainder of the DMP will be determined by the content of other policies. If so, point/link to them here.

### **Data collection**

Describe the data aspects of your research, how you will capture/generate them, the file formats you are using and why. Mention your reasons for choosing particular data standards and approaches. Note the likely volume of data to be created.

### **Documentation and Metadata**

What metadata will be created to describe the data? Consider what other documentation is needed to enable reuse. This may include information on the methodology used to collect the data, analytical and procedural information, definitions of variables, the format and file type of the data and software used to collect and/or process the data. How will this be captured and recorded?

### **Ethics and Intellectual Property**

Detail any ethical and privacy issues, including the consent of participants. Explain the copyright/IPR and whether there are any data licensing issues – either for data you are reusing, or your data which you will make available to others.

### **Storage and Backup**

Give a rough idea of data volume. Say where and on what media you will store data, and how they will be backed-up. Mention security measures to protect data which are sensitive or valuable. Who will have access to the data during the project and how will this be controlled?

### **Data Sharing**

Note who would be interested in your data, and describe how you will make them available (with any restrictions). Detail any reasons not to share, as well as embargo periods or if you want time to exploit your data for publishing.

### **Selection and Preservation**

Consider what data are worth selecting for long-term access and preservation. Say where you intend to deposit the data, such as in UEL's data repository (<https://repository.uel.ac.uk>) or a subject repository. How long should data be retained?

