

The social learning theory criminology essay

[Law](#), [Criminology](#)



According to Cox, 2011 examines the myths and realities around youth gangs in the UK. However, this research on the youth problem in the UK is led to the vast amount of research on the USA mean applied in the UK situation. The aimed of the research to discover the problem was related with the gang problem in the USA. In this research addressed these aims, secondary sources and web-based documents identify the gaps of different definitions of youth gangs, the use of sub cultural theories and the effects of media that influence public perception and government response that are shown in official statistics.

Back ground

The writer's comments about the media pointed out the themes of the wider social issues worse disguised by scapegoating of these groups among young people through creating a moral panic. This controls people's perceptions and beliefs leading them to a false concept of reality and the major social problems. Thus as Youth Workers we need to recognize such media processes like moral panic and scapegoating as they occur. Batsleer (2008) that:" In each generation, young men and young women are likely to be caught up in these spirals of escalating reporting and policy response."(Batsleer 2008: 28). Hence, in the same way young people who decide their belong to these groups and are caught up in the reporting policy response and scapegoating are subject to negative perceptions, discrimination and the burdens of society's crisis. As Youth Workers we need to be aware of discrimination at a personal, social and cultural level (Thomson 2007). It is recognised when young people are being targeted in

the media through moral panics are highlighted by the perceived gang problems in society.

Method

The Research Method used is secondary resources. These sources are statistics, academic texts, journal articles, the internet and various media. There were no primary resources put in place had shown the lack of published material to be based on youth gangs in the UK. This research carried out a qualitative perspective because it uses non-numerical data. (Batsleer 2008: 28) In order to understand why young men are attracted to gangs looked at Social disorganization theory, which grew out of research conducted in Chicago by Shaw and McKay (see Shaw and McKay, 1942). Statistics had shown that there was a larger problem in Cities in the UK, such as Manchester and London, had shown no evidence or made it clear that the data was related to ganging related crimes and issues with police recording (publications. parliament. uk). Reliable statistics may show that the problem of youth gangs is not as large as the media portrays it to be. Conflicts with both the British definitions to gangs were being labelled as criminal by the police and the media. Home Office (2002, 2008) and Euro gang steered away from using the term Home Office Tackling Gangs Action Programme (2008) was introduced to tackle the underlying issue's youths who turn to gangs. Home Office, 2006 found that between 6% and 10% of 10 to be 19-year-olds said they were in an evidence at suggesting with statistics have also been identified, there being multiple definitions of youth gangs in use, there is a difficulty in generalising findings; therefore, the true nature of the gang cannot be identified.

Media

According to Cohen (2005), societies appear to experience periods of moral panic. Stanley Cohen's study of "Folk Devils and Moral Panics", which looked at subcultures such as the Mods and Rockers who were stereotyped by the media. Media representations of youth gangs in this country to determine whether the media is exaggerating gang crime, concerning moral panic theory. This then leads on to an evaluation on the effects moral panics have on the individuals and groups involved, the influence it has on police and public reactions, and finally how the media directly influences government responses. The news item also looked at what is being done to tackle the issue of gangs. Recognition that gangs can give a sense of belonging and that this, alongside financial rewards can make it difficult for gang members to leave. A Report from the BBC NEWS (2012) Gangs may not be attractive to some people and may be a trap and hard to get out of. On Boxing Day 2011 in the Foot Locker store on Oxford Street in London rival gang members bumped into each other and an attack took place. This resulted in Jermaine Joseph stabbing and killing Seydou Diarrassouba. Then in November 2012, the jury cleared Joseph of murder and manslaughter arguing that he acted in self-defence. Evidence gathered showed that Joseph was trying to turn his life around and move away from gang life. This highlights that some people may become trapped in gang life, and that it can be extremely hard to get out of. However, this media coverage may be making an example of this case and may include government initiatives to encourage young people to leave gangs.

Social learning theory

The process of joining gangs, attitudes and orientations of youth are in these neighbourhoods. This process is linked to the Social learning theory for this study. Social Learning theory as illustrated by Bandura and Walters is a learned response to be social stimuli. This theory explains that people learn first from early-childhood experiences through observation and then internal mental processes. (Andersen and Taylor: 2008: 94) Furthermore, behaviours and attitudes develop the response to reinforcement comes from people around them. For example, a notion of this is in research by Fitch (2009) children who exhibit early behavioural problems tend to come from families with risk factors in multiple domains, such as parental mental-health problems, parental criminality and marital Rutland in Campbell, 2000).(www.nspcc.org.uk: Accessed 30/11/2012)

Rational choice theory

In order to assess why some young people possibly may find gangs attractive we have researched Rational Choice Theory. This theory attempts to explain conforming and deviant behaviour. Why people act the way they do in terms of how individuals make choices under the influence of their preferences, through calculative decision making. This theory draws heavily on a model of action used by economists to explain the use of choice in social exchange and economic exchange in markets. However, it can be applied to other areas such as familial and political spheres and in these case gangs. Moreover, it explains that actions can be aimed towards goals, and people choose from a range of courses of action by calculating the means by which is most effective to obtain their goals. For example, there

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may be a monetary reward for choosing to earn money from employment or from selling drugs. However, in order to apply rational choice theory to explain why people act like it is important to draw upon other action theories to show how people are able to read a situation and how their values, norms and beliefs influence the choice that they make (Fulture and Scott)ConclusionThis methodology chosen for this research has highlighted the advantages and disadvantages of using both primary and secondary sources. In this research, but chosen secondary research, it was preferred method due to the problems which have arisen from the primary research. The problems arisen from different definition of youth gangs were used from US definitions addressed to see if it was the same to the UK. The Research Method used was secondary resources. In conclusion, this has drawn from this research to look at involvement with the media; agencies such as education, police and probation are failing to tackle the needs of these groups. Scapegoating pointed out the themes of wider social crisis and is disguised by these groups among young people through creating a moral panic. To conclude this lead on to look at definitions to differentiate between groups among young people hanging around and criminal gangs. The focus then shifts on to what constitutes a youth gang, before finally evaluating the problems with applying the terms and how this can affect policy and research.